

**Bible Devotions: Lock Stock & Barrel
Devotional Reading for Outdoorsmen
(Old Testament)**

Deuteronomy 7:16

Snares

Also you shall destroy all the peoples whom the Lord your God delivers over to you; your eye shall have no pity on them; nor shall you serve their gods, for that will be a snare to you.

It's an efficient way to catch an animal. Just ask any professional trapper or rodeo cowboy. In fact, boys of all ages have tried to catch critters large and small with it. It's so simple that even prehistoric man figured out how to use a noose to snag his evening meal, no offense to his intelligence.

I'm talking about snares, of course. They've been made out of everything from plant fibers to horsetails to sinews to wire. Take a strand of material and loop it through a slipknot tied on one end. That's it. More advanced designs use stops and locks, pads and swivels. But they all function the same.

Snares work best when set in an unsuspecting way. Bait can be used to attract the prey but still the whole setup should be rather natural-looking. Strategically placed sticks and stones help to funnel the animal toward the awaiting loop. In the jungles of Burma, trappers chase small game toward a prearranged series of hidden snares, apparently a rather productive tactic (Bateman, 1973).

Whatever trapping method is used, success depends on knowing every move and habit of the prey. Stanley Hawbaker suggested, "To become a really successful trapper one should make himself part of the wild life" (Hawbaker, 1974). Every outdoorsman knows that the more time he spends outdoors, the better woodsman he becomes, or fisherman or naturalist or whatever his pleasure.

Catching animals in some form of device is mentioned well over one hundred times in the Old Testament. The Israelites must have known something about it. They surely would have understood that the snare of idolatry meant certain destruction, like an animal in a trapper's snare (Deuteronomy 7:25-26).

Yet we know that idolatry was one of the chief sins that trapped the children of Israel. Even after the dire warnings God gave them, they plunged headlong into idol worship and got snared in their sins, not like an unsuspecting animal that walks into a trapper's noose but rather like prey eager to enjoy the bait until the predator takes his life.

The Bible is clear about sin, whether idolatry or lying or rebellion, or whatever disobedient thing it is. Sin will destroy you. Solomon in all his wisdom affirmed this when he said, "*As a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know that it would cost him his life*" (Proverbs 7:23).

The problem of getting caught in the snare of sin wasn't unique to the children of Israel. We're all caught in this lethal loop. We're all sinners (Romans 3:23). No one can free himself from this grip of death.

There's only one way out and Jesus paid for it with His own life. It was the only way He could *destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage* (Hebrews 2:14-15).

Indeed, He has broken the snare for the one who confesses his sins and confesses Jesus is Lord. And on behalf of every person freed from sin, the psalmist sings our joy:

*Blessed be the Lord, who has not given us as prey to (the enemy's) teeth.
Our soul has escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers;
The snare is broken, and we have escaped.
Our help is in the name of the Lord.
(Psalm 124:6-8)*

Bible Devotions: Hook Line & Sinker (study guide)

Deuteronomy 7:16

Snares

HOOK

1. Name three items commonly used today that function like a snare (think outdoors, hardware).

2. How would you keep a wire snare from injuring an animal and/or harming its fur?

3. Let's say that you're lost in the wilderness. Describe how you would catch an animal to eat.

LINE

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The Bible is clear about sin, whether idolatry or lying or rebellion, or whatever disobedient thing it is. Sin will destroy you.

The problem of getting caught in the snare of sin wasn't unique to the children of Israel. We're all caught in this lethal loop. We're all sinners. No one can free himself from this grip of death.

There's only one way out and Jesus paid for it with His own life. It was the only way He could destroy the devil and release those who are in bondage to sin. Indeed, He has broken the snare for the one who confesses his sins and confesses Jesus is Lord.

What temptation do you struggle with the most? How do you rely on Jesus to help you?

How do you react when you are around someone who does something that you find sinful? Give some examples (but no names!) and describe how you express your restraint and/or opposition.

SINKER

Take a few minutes to write your thoughts on this devotional. Reflect on your own experiences.

Key words: snare temptation escape
