

IT IS HUNTING SEASON

December 16,2014

All living things that roam the earth leave some kind of a track in their wake. It may be the track of a deer or raccoon, it may be the unmistakable marking of a sidewinder rattlesnake, or it may be the print left by a family member in the backyard sand pile. Hunters, survivalists, and lovers of nature have for years trained in how to identify the various tracks of animals. The purpose for having this skill varies from person to person. Alderleaf Wilderness College states on its website, “Identifying animal tracks and sign, as well as interpreting and trailing, are primary skills of the wildlife tracker. Historically, animal tracking skills helped people find food, avoid dangerous predators, and read the stories on the landscape” (<http://www.wildernesscollege.com/identifying-animal-tracks.html>). Notice that one of the primary purposes for being able to identify an animal track was so the tracker could avoid danger.

Does tracking lend itself only to the physical world? Peter warned, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). He describes Satan as a lion that walks about the earth in search of the souls of men in order that he may destroy them. Like a physical lion, Satan, leaves behind tracks that can be readily identified and, therefore, avoided.

The tracks of Satan come in many forms but can always be traced back to his denial of God’s authority, his appeal to man’s pride, and his reliance that man will always look to his own reasoning. These same techniques were highlighted by the apostle John when he said, “For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 Jn. 2:16).

The first track that Satan left in our world has been recorded in Genesis chapter three. God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden with certain restrictions regarding the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. They were warned against eating from it because, in the event that they ate, they would “surely die” (Gen. 2:17). However, Satan left a track of dishonesty when he told Eve, “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die” (Gen. 3:4). Within that short statement, he denied God’s authority, “Thou shalt not surely die;” he appealed to human pride, they would become “as gods;” and he used human reasoning to guarantee their downfall, “Eve saw that it was good.”

The garden would not be the last place that Satan would leave his tracks in mankind’s history. In the desert plain of Shinar, lays an empty city. The wise tracker, though, is able to identify the “stories of the landscape.” God commanded His people to replenish the earth, which would require their migration from the common area they shared. However, in their own wisdom they decided, “let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth” (Gen. 11:4). The same beast that left his tracks in Eden left the same tracks in Babel, the denial of God’s authority and an appeal to human pride and reasoning.

Satan’s tracks are found all throughout the religious world. Have you ever seen the track that boasted, “One church is just as good as another?” Those tracks will not lead a person to the one church that Jesus said He would build, “**That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it**” (Mt. 16:18). Paul later declared that the body and the church were the same institution (Col. 1:18) and that there was just one body (Eph. 4:5) that was ordained by

God. Again, we see the tracks of dishonesty in the denial of God's authority and the appeal to human pride and reasoning.

Satan's tracks can also be found surrounding myriad of ways a person can reach heaven as claimed by the numerous manmade religions of the world. Christ said, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"** (Jn. 14:6). No matter what men may say concerning salvation or how good it sounds, we must keep in mind, "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth...Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:10-12).

Like Peter encouraged, we must be sober and vigilant because Satan is always looking for his next victim, and if we are going to be able to avoid his dangers, we must be able to identify his tracks and be ready to resist his advances (Js. 4:7). So, be on guard because it is hunting season and Satan is the hunter!