

Children's Story for Health Emphasis Sabbath, February 16, 2013

Recently, I heard a story that reminds me of the way our enemy tries to trap us and keep us from being like Jesus.

The story is about a wealthy man who had his own zoo. One day he heard about some rare and beautiful gazelles that lived in Africa. They were such beautiful animals that he decided he must have some of them in his zoo. He thought, "I will go to Africa and bring some of them back to my zoo."

When he got to Africa, he found where the gazelles were living and went with his helpers to catch them. The people living nearby said it was impossible to catch them because they ran too fast. But the zoo keeper had a plan. First he poured a blend of oats and barley sweetened with molasses on the ground. For two weeks he spread the feed on the ground. Night after night the animals came and ate.

On the first night of the third week he scattered the feed again, but this time he put a big post in the ground 20 feet away. The next night he put another post in the ground on the opposite side of where he scattered the sweet feed each day. Day after day he kept adding posts. Then he started nailing boards between the posts.

Six weeks rolled by. Every night the animals found the gaps between the posts until, finally, he watched the entire herd squeeze through the final gap. He moved in behind them and nailed the last board in place and the animals were trapped inside the coral. He chose the animals he liked the best and took them away to his zoo. These beautiful gazelles were no longer free to enjoy their beautiful land.

[Ask the children] "How did the zookeeper trick the animals?"

[Answer] He gave them what they wanted – the sweet food

Perhaps our enemy - the devil - is like this zoo keeper. He traps people with things like beer, cigarettes, drugs, or too much candy, soda, video games and other things. Sometimes peanut butter, jelly, crackers and cookies make us feel better when we are sad. But if we eat too much that is not good.

God says: "Whatever you eat or drink or whatever you do, you must do all for the glory of God.." (1 Corinthians 10:31 NLT).

*Story is based on "Catching the Prize" pages 8 & 9 of Mastering the Seven Decisions That Determine Personal Success: An Owner's Manual to the New York Times Bestseller, The Traveler's Gift, Andy Andrews, Thomas Nelson – publishers, 2008.*