

## The Serpent

Last Sabbath, I was busy copying out scriptures for my study on Sowing and Reaping. The phone rang at 11:30AM, it was my mother, "Leigh, there is a 1 metre long rinkals in the house!" My heart leapt, this is one reptile I'm really scared of. It behaves just like a cobra, spits its venom accurately as well as having a poisonous bite; the venom can blind you if it gets in your eyes. I don't like dealing with snakes because they are so quick, especially these poisonous ones.

I told my mother, "I'll be there in 30 minutes," and ran to change into long trousers. Whilst I was driving down to their plot, I prayed for wisdom to know how to deal with the creature. When a snake is in the grass, one can easily shoot it, or hit it with a spade; but in the house and under a cupboard, what then?

When I arrived my parents were emptying out the long sideboard cupboard. "Where is the snake I asked?" "He's gone in under here," My father replied. I fetched some planks to hold the cupboard tilted back, and also a loose pickaxe handle, rakes and brooms. I wasn't looking forward to facing this snake, when my movement is restricted by interior walls and furniture.

After we emptied out the cupboard we tilted it back and pushed the planks underneath to hold it back. We waited ... nothing happened. I put on my safety glasses and got down on the floor to look ... nothing! My heart sank. I asked my father, "Are you sure he's under here?" "Yes he hasn't come out at all," my father replied. I was secretly hoping, he was much smaller than my mother had told me.

Then as I looked again, I caught sight of the end of his tail. He had gone up between the wall and the side of the cupboard, and as I touched his tail with the broom handle he pulled it up and started to hiss loudly. Great! He is angry already, and we haven't done anything to him yet! We prepared brooms, and the pickaxe handle to hopefully chase him out through the open back door.

I was just about to pull the cupboard away from the wall, when a thought entered my mind, "Check the back of the cupboard." I walked around, and there from the gap on the other side, up off the floor, hung about six inches of the middle of the snake. I quickly grabbed the pickaxe handle, and trapping the snake between the wall and the head of the handle, I hammered the exposed middle of the snake. As I worked, more of the snake's body came out, he was trying to move away, but as he moved to escape, he exposed more of his back. After crushing about a foot of the snake I realised that this injury would slow him down a lot. We carefully pulled the cupboard away from the wall and I got quite a shock. It was a full grown adult, now he was really mad, hissing and coiling. I struck him repeatedly with the pickaxe handle, and eventually hit him on the head. My IT skills proved quite useful as I increased his bandwidth, partitioned and reformatted his harddisk.

These snakes often pretend to be dead, so its best never to pick them up with your hands. After making sure he was well, Beyond-Economic-Repair; I picked him up on a broom handle and took him out, throwing him far into the veld. While I was cleaning up the blood, my hands were shaking, my breathing was shallow, and I was sweating profusely. I felt the effects of the experience for the rest of the afternoon. My parents were thrilled, we had disposed of the snake, without damaging anything or sustaining injury to ourselves. I thanked God for the solution He had provided to the problem. After cleaning up the mess, we replaced the cupboard and packed all the crockery back in.

As I was driving home, my hands were trembling on the steering wheel. I hate to kill things, but poisonous snakes can't be tamed. Their little dog had been bitten on her back some months before; which had gone septic and needed lancing and cleaning by the vet. I hoped that the snake I had killed, was the one responsible for the dogs injury. Over dinner I was talking to my wife when I suddenly realised, that there is a spiritual lesson in this story.

When confronted with evil; one does not need to expose it completely and attack its dangerous head first. Too much exposure opens one up for injury. One only has to deal with the part which is presented to the person, as I had done. By attacking the exposed part of the threat first, it weakens the attacker.

This is basically what I have been doing with my website. As I saw a problem or error being preached on TV, I would research the topic and write a study to illustrate what I had discovered. People often point to the occult, alcohol, tobacco and various other vices, as the reasons for the total decline of public morals. I think the truth is: That its not so much the serpents outside the church, which cause the problem, but the one which is in the church! Yes, the external threats all contribute, but the head of the problem is, 'Peoples ignorance of what the Bible really teaches'.

Hosea 4:6 says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

People want to go to church and have others teach them what they need to know. This is not a practical approach, because we need to know all the Bible intimately, and be able to see the cross references from the Old to the New Covenant. I have worked out, that if one spends 90 minutes each Sabbath reading the Bible, one can go through the Bible once in less than a year. It is very important to highlight the texts which mean something to us whilst reading. Texts which relate to other texts, should also be noted immediately, because later on the reference may not be seen when one is in a different frame of mind.

I was astonished how easy it is to calculate the history of mankind, I also discovered how the earth was created, and how it was transformed in three major stages. What really scares me, is the realisation, that the so called non-canonical books all actually agree with and support the Bible. Why people reject these books is a mystery to me.

I have tried to illustrate by the scriptures alone, how they also proclaim the truths found in the Bible. Various Churches may reject my studies, but I have only typed out the scriptures which declare the truths on a particular subject. I am not earning anything from these studies. I see this as doing my part in proclaiming the Gospel. When I began a few years ago, I tried to get answers from preachers as to why they preached what they did. I was unsuccessful in discovering why, as most weren't interested in reading my emails or even replying. It seems there are many who are in ministry today for the wrong reasons! To date no one has written back to me to explain why I'm wrong on a particular topic! Only three people have ever given me feedback on my work, and they must be three of the busiest and productive people on the planet!

I cannot stress it enough, read your Bible cover to cover. It is the first and most important defence against false doctrines, and there are many about. Know the Truth and bruise the serpents head, before he bruises your heel. Amen?

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