

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA
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Dearest Grandchild,

Today's letter will involve the Biblical description of Satan as a serpent. In the first book of the Bible he appears as a serpent (Gen. 3:1 ff.) and in the last book of the Bible he is still pictured as a serpent. Note: **“And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.” (Rev 20:1, 2)**

Let me begin with a story about a serpent from 1966, before you were even born. The family of Millard McDaniel was part of the Fairview church in Carthage. His brother, Ed. McDaniel, lived in Eldon, Mo. Eldon, of course, is also where Sarah Jane's husband, Cash Dowdy, comes from.

Are you fascinated by snakes? Ed McDaniel was. That's why he got a job at the Max Allen Reptile Gardens just south of Eldon. In Feb. 1966 he was cleaning the cage of a black mamba. This is one of the most deadly snakes in the world. If bitten, death can result in as little as 20 minutes. It's deadly venom has been know to kill an elephant. On that fateful day, the snake was coiled around an electric plug in the case which Ed was cleaning. When he tried to get it to move, it whipped forward and dug it's fangs into his middle finger.

When Ed yelled “It got me”, a co-worker, J.J. Vaughan, came to his aid and cut the wound with a knife, hoping to cause the poison to bleed out of his system. Then they went to the office where McDaniel received a general serum. From there they hurried to the Humphrey's Hospital in Tuscumbia, Mo. Since they needed more serum, an A T33 jet, piloted by Lt. Col. Don Scherrer, flew what they needed from a zoo 600 miles away in Ft. Worth, Tx. The jet landed at Jefferson City where the serum was raced to the hospital by the Highway Patrol.

According to Dr. Marshall Humphreys, owner of Humphreys' Hospital and Clinic, a deadly paralysis from this snake bite can paralyze your heart and lungs at any time for up to 16 - 20 hours. During this time Ed McDaniel was only a heart beat away from eternity.

According to an article in Guideposts, Ed was mad at God at this time and wasn't even going to church. Imagine, however, that you are lying in a hospital bed realizing that your heart could stop beating at any moment. As the clock on the wall ticks away, you face the stark realization that each breath may be your last. The death vigil lasts for 16 - 20 hours. Fortunately, not only did Ed McDaniel survive, he repented of his attitude toward God, went back to church and even became a Sunday School teacher.

Since we live in a secular society where faith in God is often ridiculed, it is important that you adopt a philosophy of live that deals with your own mortality. Even though you are now young and healthy, you are still only a heart beat away from eternity. Everybody struggles to keep

breathing, but everybody still dies. Please make God your friend, someday you will need Him more than you need anything or anyone.

Here is a brief video pointing out, among other things, that a black mamba can move faster than many people can run. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHt0ZiaSXo4>

The point of the story is to warn you of the deadly consequences of messing around with the devil. Paul put it like this to the Corinthians: **“I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”** (2 Cor 11:2, 3)

Here is an interesting article about snakes from the Detroit Free Press: *“Graham Peck, a well known authority on snakes, was asked his opinion regarding a snake's hypnotic powers. His reply was as follows: ‘There Is a certain power to fascinate in a snake's eyes and movements. I saw only the other day a typical illustration of the power of a snake to fascinate. “Over in the pine woods I saw a ground squirrel fascinated by a black gopher snake. The forked tongue darted out of the snake's mouth almost as regularly and rapidly as the needle of a sewing machine rises and falls. The squirrel seemed to watch it spellbound. The snake crept slowly nearer. When the gopher snake was within two or three inches of the squirrel it gave a leap and threw three coils about the squirrel. Instantly the spell was gone. The fascination or charm there had been over the little animal was no doubt broken the very moment the serpent's coils were about the squirrel, for the animal gave three convulsive, terrified chirps and realized that its death moment had come. I believe implicitly that all snakes have a certain degree of power to fascinate their victims to death. Black snakes, gopher snakes and racers have the power to a large degree. Rattlesnakes have the most fascinating power among all the poisonous serpents In the southwest. The indications of charming among poisonous snakes are deceiving sometimes. Poisonous snakes fang their prey once only. The poison does not kill at once. The victim flutters to a branch, it may be, or runs a short distance and stops. The snake watches it. The poison does its deadly work and the bird falls. Any one who comes up, not having seen the attack, might be readily deceived Into Imagining that it was the glance of the snake and not the poison that caused the victim to fall.”*

Please do not be ignorant of the way that old serpent, the devil, can mesmerize and destroy you!

Here is a sad story about a young man who was beguiled by the devil. His name is Ron Clements, and at one time he was in my Sunday School class.. When Uncle Paul was in the same class. Ron was highly intelligent, popular, and a good student. Unfortunately, he and a couple of friends became curious about Satan. Their fascination ultimately turned deadly. They began reading the Satanic Bible and doing drugs. Soon they were seduced into sacrificing animals to the devil. Finally, as irrational it is to thinking people, Ron and two friends murdered a 17 year old classmate named Steven Newberry as a sacrifice to Satan.

Here was Ron's sentence handed down by Presiding Judge, George M. Flanigan condemned Ron and his two friends to be in the prison for the rest of their lives without the possibility of parole. If Ron had only listened to Jesus he could have avoided Satan's deadly trap. Remember! The devil has always been a liar and a murderer. Jesus said it like this to the men who were planning to kill Him: **"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."** (John 8:44).

These evil men didn't listen and wound up crucifying Christ. Ron Clements didn't listen and will spend the rest of his life behind bars.

I pray for each of you by name every day. PLEASE LISTEN!

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce