

## The Snake in Your Garden



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“And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). In Genesis chapters 1 and 2, we read of God’s magnificent creation. Adam and Eve shared sweet communion with their Father in the Garden of Eden — but there was also a snake in the Garden. “Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made” (Genesis 3:1). This cunning, deceitful creature tempted Eve, who brought her husband into the scheme, and they yielded to his voice.

When sin and shame entered the world, fellowship with the Father was broken (see Genesis 3:1-19). And from that time to this, there has always been “a snake in the garden” — some sort of challenge, opposition or trial designed to draw us away from our Father. God could have disallowed it from the beginning but it was part of his plan. The familiar phrase “testing your mettle” means to see what you are made of, demonstrating your true character. Unless the testing comes, you will not know how strong you are in Jesus Christ, how much power he has released in you, and the authority you have in his name.

We see this demonstrated when God left enemies in the land of Israel to test them. “Now these are the nations that the Lord left, *to test Israel* by them, that is, all in Israel who had not experienced all the wars in Canaan. It was only in order that the generations of the people of Israel might know war, *to teach war to those who had not known it before*” (Judges 3:1-2). God could have empowered the Israelites to destroy the Canaanites so that the other enemies could not come against them, but he left those adversaries in the land to challenge them.

What is the enemy in your life — the snake in your garden? Anxiety and fear? A sense of rejection? Loneliness and isolation? Secret sin? God wants to heal all these things through his unconditional love. Storms may come, enemies may oppose you, snakes may be in your garden, but Jesus will fill you with his love, his peace, his joy, his life and his victory!

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