

## Hatching Snake Eggs



David Wilkerson March 21, 1988

*"Hatching Snake eggs" is a biblical term, not a joke, and it has to do with walking in holiness before God. Isaiah the prophet discovered the secret cause of the spiritual breakdown of God's people, and God commanded Isaiah to sound a piercing trumpet against them. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" (Isaiah 58:1). Isaiah was told to expose the sins of God's people, those who were seeking Him daily, those who delighted to know His ways and to walk in righteousness, those who loved to approach God. "Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of Me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God" (Isaiah 58:2). But their prayers were not getting through, and their fasting was in vain. They came to the conclusion that all their sacrificing, all their praying, all their seeking after God was not paying off. And in fact, God was hiding His face from them. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).*

There was a good reason for God's anger. His people were going through all the motions; they were consistently in His house. They said all the right words: "We want to hear from God and do what He tells us." They seemed so obedient; they looked so religious. But their hearts were divided; they loved God with their mouths only. God revealed to Ezekiel that the Jews "...sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that has a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not" (Ezekiel 33:30-32). This is why God commanded Isaiah to cry out so loudly against His own people, those who appeared to be seeking after Him so diligently.

What sin caused God to withdraw His presence? It was the sin of "hatching snake eggs" and "weaving spider's webs" (Isaiah 59:5). The mind is the womb of the heart, and thoughts are seed or sperm. Evil thoughts are serpent seeds, which will become eggs if the seed is not immediately destroyed. God looks at what is going on inside the womb of the mind. He judges not by outward appearances; He considers the heart. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he..." (Proverbs 23:7). God's people were worshipping with lip service. They cried a loud amen to every call to holiness; they appeared to be devout lovers of truth. But their minds were snake dens. They were nests filled with serpent eggs, and they were sitting in God's presence, hatching evil thoughts. Their minds were poisoned; they were thinking of idols. They were weaving spider webs with flimsy excuses to indulge in forbidden things. They were fasting, praying, calling on God, doing religious things, but their minds were not cleansed. Thoughts and wild imaginations were not brought into captivity.

*There is nothing harmless or innocent about evil thoughts. If they are not cast down immediately they can poison the soul. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:6-9). Some Christians let the enemy sow evil thoughts in their minds, and then let the thoughts linger, doing nothing about them, not realizing the danger. Jesus compared these evil thoughts to tares or weeds, and "the enemy that sowed them is the devil..." (Matthew 13:39). Christians are to cast down such thoughts as soon as they appear. Christian life involves "casting down imaginations, and every proud*

thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). This activity is connected with verse 4: "Pulling down strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4). Evil thoughts become strongholds. Satan plants the thought, and he is determined to keep it alive and protect it until it conceives and becomes a full grown serpent. To coddle and put up with evil thoughts is to hatch a snake. God says pull it down, cast it out, bring every thought into captivity. Let not a single evil thought be allowed to roam at will. Go after that thought, capture it, and kill it.

## Injurious Thoughts Are the Most Dangerous

This is the first of three ways to conceive and hatch snake eggs that I will discuss. When someone misunderstands you and says hurtful things about you, do you begin to let those thoughts replay over and over again in your mind? If so, you are conceiving snake eggs. As an example, this ministry gets its share of critical mail. After we sent out last year's Christmas calendar, a holiness preacher sent back a cryptic note: "Take me off your mailing list. You and your wife look like two typical pentecostals." Were our smiles too large? Did Gwen's scarf bother him? Or perhaps her hairstyle? Furthermore, I'm frequently accused of bringing despair upon the church, of being all gloom and doom. One pastor's wife said, "I've never seen him smile in 25 years." Now, if we brooded over all these hurtful statements, we would conceive and hatch snake eggs of bitterness and resentment.

But God says, "Don't kick it around — kill it! Don't fight your accusers, don't react. Let all thoughts of justifying stop right now. If you continue with such thoughts, if you replay them over and over, you will conceive an egg and hatch a serpent." The Bible says, "...crush the egg and a serpent breaks out" (Isaiah 59:5). There are mothers and daughters, fathers and sons who are enemies. There are Christians who do not speak to one another. There are some who say, "I can't forgive what was said. I can't get over it." They have all hatched snake eggs, and the snakes now run loose through their minds, spreading bitterness and venom. Do you get injured easily? Do you boil inside? Fret? Brood? Stay up at night and burn, replaying every word? You are in a very dangerous place, for you are sitting on snake eggs, conceiving poison and death. Rather, let the heel of Christ crush the serpent's head. Suffer the wrong; take it; swallow the hurt. Cast away the thought of hatred and revenge; put it outside of your mind.

Consider what Christ suffered: "False witnesses did rise up; they laid to My charge things that I knew not. They rewarded Me evil for good to the spoiling of My soul. But as for Me, when they were sick, My clothing was sackcloth. I humbled My soul with fasting, and My prayer returned into Mine own bosom. I behaved Myself as though he had been my friend or brother. I bowed down heavily, as one that mourns for his mother. But in Mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together against Me, and I knew it not. They did tear Me, and ceased not. With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon Me with their teeth" (Psalm 35:11-16). And also: "Mine enemies speak evil of Me: When shall He die and His name perish? And if he come to see Me, he speaks vanity; his heart gathers iniquity to itself. When he goes abroad, he tells it. All that hate Me whisper together against Me; against Me do they devise My hurt. An evil disease, they say, cleaves fast to Him, and now that He lies He shall rise up no more. Yea, Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of My bread, has lifted up his heel against Me" (Psalm 41:5-9).

*There are multiplied thousands who have left the church and forsaken the Lord, all because bitterness has eaten them up.* Somebody said something hurtful and unthinking, and they were wounded. Then they hatched those snake eggs of wounding thoughts and let the serpent make his nest in their hearts. Now, they can't forgive and forget. The Bible says, "The wicked...speak lies and their poison is like the poison of a serpent..." (Psalm 58:3-4). Lies, innuendoes, and gossip are all very poisonous to you and me, if we allow them to enter our hearts, if we dwell on them, if we defend ourselves and wish for revenge. God said, "...Vengeance belongs to Me, I will repay..." (Hebrews 10:30). If you will cast out all thoughts of vengeance and stay sweet, bringing all evil thoughts into captivity, you will live to see the day God balances the books. And it will be awesome. You will be so glad you did not take matters into your own hands.

Do you play and replay all the terrible things said about you and done to you? This habit can destroy you. Forgive! Forget! Let the Word of God cleanse it all away.

*Secondly, many Christians habitually hatch the snake eggs of crippling fear, the fear that brings torment, confusion, and anxiety.* There are too many kinds of fear to even begin to name, but all fearful thoughts are fatal if not cast out and killed because this kind of seed develops into the most poisonous of all snake eggs. For example, I had a friend in Texas, a perfectionist, who grew up trying unsuccessfully to please his father. As a result, he feared that

he could never please his boss or his family. I counseled him often, but the fear of failure had hatched in his mind, and he could not shake it off. He became moody and bitter. He thought that even God was too hard to please. Eventually, he took a shotgun to his stomach and ended his life. Now his son is the same.

So many wives are hounded with thoughts about losing their husbands, and vice versa, for they hear of so many friends getting divorced, even ministers. They live in the constant fear of, "Will I be next?" Parents fear losing their children to drugs. They see this generation going to hell and wonder, "how can I keep my son or daughter from all this confusion? Will the schools infect them with humanism? Will I wake up one day to discover my son or daughter is cold and bitter toward God?" Others fear for their jobs or for the economy, wondering if everything is going to collapse and if it does what will they do, how will they live, how will they pay the bills, and how will they eat? Many fear never finding their place in life, "Will my life count? Will I be useful? I'm getting older, and I don't seem to be making headway. Others are passing me by. Where am I going? What is my future?" For many there is the fear of a fatal illness, such as AIDS or cancer. With every lump they feel, they think, "Cancer!" Others think, "What if I get old and sick with nobody to love or care for me?"

Many Christians are sitting on a nest egg of fears. This habit of nurturing fearful thoughts must stop before it destroys you, poisons you, renders you helpless and crippled. Forget all the formulas on how to win over fear; the Bible has no four-step program to overcome fear. But God does tell you what to do when these fear-mongering thoughts invade your mind. You are in a spiritual warfare in this matter; it is not a child's game; it is a life and death issue.

*God told Moses not to send the fearful into battle, "...What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart" (Deuteronomy 20:8).* God sees thoughts of fear as very contagious and very destructive. The fearful and fainthearted did not believe God's Word; they doubted His promises of deliverance. God had said, "...Ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies; let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be terrified because of them. For the Lord your God is He that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you" (Deuteronomy 20:3-4). God prepared His people, warned them that things would look scary and hopeless, that they would see "...horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou — be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee" (Deuteronomy 20:1).

Has God ever failed you? Did He fail your parents who went through the last great depression? Did He bring out those who trusted Him through a wilderness? This is God's answer to all who fear: "When the odds look hopeless, when you seem overwhelmed with no escape or sign of help, fear not, for I am God and I am with you to save you." Or, in the words of the Psalmist, "In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock" (Psalm 27:5). Is God with us or not? Is He a loving heavenly Father who numbers our very hairs? Will He forsake His own beloved children? The sinfulness of fear is that it accuses God of neglect. It robs us of confidence in His loving care and concern. Cast out all fear. Bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of the Lord Jesus.

## Thoughts of Lust

Finally, there are those thoughts that end in sensual, fornicating action. Drug addicts testify that they can easily kick their physical habit, but not their mental habit, for their minds keep replaying old thoughts, serpent thoughts. I had a friend and staff member who was a kind, loving father and husband. He had started smoking marijuana at seven years of age in his father's garage; for over 25 years he was addicted. He got saved, but he kept falling back time and again. He excused his habit by saying the doctor told him marijuana would help his asthma. He repented dozens of times; he wept; he cried out for mercy. He went to a special program in the midwest, and he did well for a year. But marijuana was never out of his mind. He went back home, got his two sons involved, and left his wife. Today his heart is hard, and he is lost because he hatched snake eggs. His mind was never cleansed. He looked at the enemy and gave up. He saw Satan's iron chariots and said, "I'll never make it!" He surrendered in fear.

Why do so many who get delivered go back to their old habits? Why is the grip of sin not broken? Because when evil thoughts are later planted by lying spirits, they are not immediately cast down. Let a single lustful thought stay in the mind for even 30 seconds, and it will take hold. Soon it becomes an egg, with a snake waiting to be hatched. That is why God's Word literally screams, "Cast out the wicked thought!" Don't flirt with the thought; don't give it an inch. Run to the Lord; run to His Word; cry out for a cleansing of the mind. Let the fear of God drive out every evil thought. Be persuaded that if the thought is entertained, if it is conceived and becomes an egg, it will hatch and the mind will be bitten and poisoned. As soon as any evil thought comes to mind, the Christian must say, "This can kill

me. This will destroy me. This is deadly. I could lose my life and my soul if I flirt with it." The Christian must realize, "This thought is not mine; it is not natural; it is not my flesh; it is not just an old desire returning. This is Satan himself. This is a lying spirit from hell, sent to deceive and destroy me." The Bible promises, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). You must resist him in your mind by resisting the first thought of evil.

## The Terrible Consequences of Hatching Snake Eggs

God clearly reveals what happens to people who are ruled by evil thoughts. *First* of all, "Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths" (Isaiah 59:7). Isaiah was addressing a people who had been free for they had turned from their wickedness. They had rejoiced in new-found victory and freedom. But when Satan returned and dropped the evil seed thought, they did not cast it out and so the snake came forth. Nothing can stop such people now — no friend, no argument, no Bible, no prophet — for they are set to do evil, and they run to wickedness. Waste and destruction are in their path. All who are innocent are hurt.

By way of example, I knew a woman who was ill with throat cancer in a hospital in Houston; a portion of her throat had been removed, leaving a small hole through which she breathed. On her way to the operating room for a second operation, she begged for a cigarette and sucked the smoke in through the hole. There is no human power that can stop people on the way to indulge their lusts. A minister's wife in Illinois recently ran off with a young criminal, leaving two crying children and a broken-hearted husband. But those weeping children could not stop her. She was running toward her lust.

*Secondly*, people ruled by evil thoughts lose all peace and discernment. "The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings. They have made them crooked paths. Whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace" (Isaiah 59:8). They become the most miserable people in the land. Nothing satisfies them now. Why? Because they know better. Because they once tasted sweet peace. But now they are crooked and everything in their lives is going crazy. Nothing is straight. Their jobs go sour. Their home lives are all mixed up. They steal and rob the peace of loved ones: "...Whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace" (Isaiah 59:8) Warning! Never run with a husband or wife whose feet now run to evil. Don't give in. It will cost the righteous mate everything. Stand up, so the other will be convicted.

*Thirdly*, the mind ruled by evil thoughts eventually becomes blind and full of horrible darkness. "Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us. We wait for light but behold obscurity, for brightness but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes. We stumble at noonday as in the night. We are in desolate places as dead men" (Isaiah 59:9-10). The coldest, hardest hearts in all the world belong to those who were once loving, open, and happy in their knowledge of the Lord. Now, because of what sin did to them, they do not want to hear about Him; they are complete strangers to Him. Such is a former healing evangelist, who once preached to thousands. I recently saw him in my office, looking into space with a forlorn, faraway look in his eyes. I know another evangelist who lost his ministry over a homosexual charge. Now he is like a zombie; when you speak to him it is as though no one is there. They knew they were wrong; they kept getting deeper and deeper into sin, and they trampled the truth into the ground.

Fourthly, they develop very changeable Jekyll and Hyde personalities. "We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves..." (Isaiah 59:11). One minute they are ready to tear friend or foe apart — mean, violent, and angry. The next hour they cry, "I'm so sorry! I didn't mean it; help me, please." Israel, having hatched snake eggs, became like a raging bear and a mourning dove toward God and each other. They went from violent temper tantrums to sentimental sorrow. Today women stay with husbands who beat them because at times they are so kind and gentle. But God will have nothing to do with these up and down moods. These wild mood swings mean that there is satanic poison at work. The Spirit of Christ is always gentle, loving, kind, and long-suffering. Never violent. Never roaring like a bear.

There are ironclad promises from God, absolute assurances that no evil thought need conceive in any Christian and become a snake. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee — because he trusted in thee" (Isaiah 26:53). "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." (Romans 12:2). "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind..." (1 Peter 1:13). "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence comes my help...He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber...The Lord is thy keeper...The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore" (Psalm 121:1-8).

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