

Leadership And The Covenants (Part Seven)

Marks of Sin Cannot Be Hidden

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As we begin today I am going to repeat the summary I gave at the end of the previous sermon, regarding the six principle points I believe are part of what the researchers call the Edenic covenant.

Remember that a covenant is a legal agreement that contains rules for governing a relationship. In this case, the Edenic covenant is for all of mankind, therefore it is classed as being universal. It applies to those who are unconverted as well as those who are converted.

1) It establishes God as Creator. This is the one that we have to deal with. 2) It presents His awesome gifts of planet earth, and our lives. 3) It presents the basic relationship to Him as His stewards of the earth regarding its general care. We are to take care of the earth and He lays some rules down. 4) The Edenic covenant presents the creation of Adam and Eve and the establishment of marriage. 5) This covenant also establishes the defining of sin and its ultimate result, which is death. 6) It also contains the special creation and sanctification of the Sabbath as once every week, on the seventh day of the week.

When I finished the previous sermon I assumed that I was finished with Genesis 2, but when I began preparation for today's message I discovered I was not, because instruction too vital to overlook is contained in it that is too helpful to pass, and we have to grasp it.

Genesis 2:25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Isaiah 47:1-3 "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne. O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind meal, remove your veil, take off the skirt, uncover the thigh, pass through the rivers. Your nakedness shall be uncovered, yes, your shame will be seen; I will take vengeance, and I will not arbitrate with a man."

Jeremiah 13:26 Therefore I will uncover your skirts over your face, that your shame may appear.

Ezekiel 16:37 “Surely, therefore, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved, and all those you hated; I will gather them from all around against you and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness.”

This subject of Genesis 2:25 has to do with nakedness and it is part and parcel of that Edenic covenant.

In searching the descriptors (nakedness), I found out that combined with the term naked, they are used 104 times to describe something. That is a fairly high number for a descriptor. Depending upon the context, nakedness can indicate innocence, defenselessness, vulnerability, helplessness, humiliation, shame, guilt, or judgment. There are times when it may be used, as it is indicating in those particular times, several qualities all at the same time. Thus one may have to read the context carefully to grasp most specifically how it is being used within that particular context.

In each case before us now, this distinctive illustration is used by God to portray somewhat different things. In the Adam and Eve case that is in Genesis 2:25, it indicates purity and innocence of conduct. In the other three cases it indicates a fall, a significant decline from being a respectable national power—one time Babylon, two times Israel—to being in the eyes of all those who beheld the object, that is the naked woman, of their wondering scorn.

I might title this section of this sermon, “*the marks of sin cannot be hidden.*” If a naked woman is seen out on the streets everybody is going to look, and the marks of sin cannot be hidden. Recently a brief excerpt from a sermon on Exodus 31 and the Sabbath sign appeared in the Daily Berean. It was drawn from a sermon that I gave, and I explain in it that a mark in biblical usage is impose on a person against his will, whereas a sign is something voluntarily accepted.

This usage of nakedness is an accurate illustration because God is on His throne judging the conduct of all to make the sinners visible as to whether it is a mark imposed on, as with Cain, or the Sabbath as a sign accepted because it is recognized as truth to be accepted and obeyed.

Settle this in your mind, because Genesis 2:25 is the bridge that leads to the first sins of mankind, which are exposed in chapter 3. I have no doubt that the nakedness in Genesis 2:25 was literal, not merely figurative.

Genesis 3:7-11 Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" So he said "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." And He said, "Who told you that you were naked?" Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I ate."

First thing to notice is that God asks "Who told you that you were naked?" God knew that nobody told them. He is asking the question to make you and me think about this episode that they had just been through. Before their sin they were naked but their minds were in no way aware that they were naked. It was simply accepted as normal, nothing unusual.

A vital lesson is coming for all of us, one that we either have never learned or we have easily forgotten after being made aware of it. When they sinned the first apparent result was that they were aware of their nakedness. Here is an answer to that: their proclivity to sin was exposed to them. In other words, something occurred in their minds with no effort whatsoever on their part—just like that their heart was beginning to change. Guilt and fear became a part of their makeup.

Look at the things that happened. 1) They knew immediately that God was aware of what they had done, nobody had to tell them, they knew that He was aware. 2) They no longer looked at things with the innocence that they did before, that quickly the mind was changing. 3) Now they were aware of their nakedness, and they are aware because their hearts had already changed. It took no action, just like that. 4) Fear became part of their awareness, they were not afraid of anything before, now there was fear. 5) They pathetically made themselves clothing from figs trees to cover their sin. They thought that if they covered the sin it did not happen. 6) They hid from God when they heard His voice. This is why I titled this sermon "*The marks of sin cannot be hidden.*"

Please understand that some of this sequence will happen to everybody who sins, except those who are so hardened that they are beyond any further change in that direction, they are completely hardened. The nakedness God is teaching us of here so

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that we can be aware, we did not go through this. God put this in the Bible so that we would understand about spiritual nakedness.

What reaction do you have when you are exceeding the speed limit and there is no police officer in sight, but then you spot one with a radar gun clocking you as you fly by? You take your foot off the gas. That is what happened to them but in a much more serious sense—that quickly.

Most people resent the fact that governing authorities have installed cameras throughout the cities to enable them to watch what is going on in the city. Psychologists tell us that people are very irritated by being stared at. Why? Because those being watched believe that their life is being pried into fearing what the ones staring at them is learning. Even though nothing may be entering the mind of the other person, yet that fear is there.

What I am leading you to see here is elements of what happened to Adam and Eve are part of our makeup now. Those who are being stared at feel exposed as though there is something wrong with whatever it is that they are doing. They feel naked, even though they are clothed.

The elements of Adam and Eve are alive in us. The circumstances might be different but we still fear being exposed and we try to hide from the exposure because we do not want to feel naked before others.

Rioters have no qualms during a riot, breaking into a store and stealing whatever is not welded down. They do this because they can easily get away with it because the attention of the police is diverted elsewhere. It is if though in that kind of situation the thief is invisible, even though they might be being watched on TV. If the police are not around, and all of this other activity is going on, they think they can get away it because they are invisible, because others are giving them a cover to their spiritual nakedness taking place in the thievery.

Before Adam and Eve sinned they had done nothing wrong, therefore they had nothing to be embarrassed about, even before God. This points to the reality that God had taught them thoroughly about the Two Trees. In other words, there was a background to their reaction in the sin, in the teaching that God gave them before they ever had to face Satan. If there was no teaching they would have had no understanding that what they were doing was wrong. God made it clear. This is why I mentioned that one of the six things is the revelation of what sin is. God taught them.

You can be sure of another effect of their sin. Not only did it alter their relationship with God, it also changed their attitude toward each other. Before the sin nakedness was nothing unusual, after the sin the nakedness became something they needed to cover. Humiliation was now a part of Adam and Eve's relationship with each other. They covered themselves before God announced Himself, so they were already humiliated between each other. They reacted the way they did as though the nakedness needed to be hidden from each other. Before there was no shame at all, now even between themselves it needed to be hidden.

Are you beginning to see a pattern here? The sin not only separated them from God, it also separated them from each other. You can imagine what adultery in a marriage does to one or the other regardless if the other commits it and the innocent one finds out about it. They did not actually see it but there is now a wall between the two of them.

Even though it separated them in their relationship with God, it separated them from each other, what about what it did to themselves? It put in them a sense that they had something inside of them that had altered them and they did not even look upon themselves with the same innocence that they did before, because now they were aware of sin and they were the ones who committed it.

There are three relationships that were changed in that one little sin. Here is the major lesson in all of this: do we honestly realize that we stand spiritually naked before God and that there is absolutely nothing that can be hidden from His view? That is the overall lesson from this. It is the spiritual aspect of it and though we cannot see God He is aware of us, and what He sees of us, what we are doing, cannot be hidden from His view.

One of the reasons I mentioned what I did earlier about the lesson that we either did not learn in the first place or that we forget, is that I believe there is a problem that all of us have in this day of electronics.

Cell phones are one example. In this day and age it almost seems as though we have to have something going into our ears or into our eyes constantly. You walk into the room and you immediately turn on the TV. I do a lot of walking very early in the morning. It is usually dark at this time of the year, and you would be surprised how many houses that I see in our neighborhood that have the TV set on at 3 A.M. I know these people are in bed, they are not at work, the TV set is still on and the first thing that hits their eyes in morning is the TV. They do not even have to turn it on. It is already going—all night long!

In addition to that even if their TV is on, there are other people, the first thing they do in the morning is they go into their kitchen and turn the TV on. They come home from work and they turn the TV on. There always has to be information coming into our eyes and coming into our ears. I am a victim of this. I get into the car and turn on the music, or sports, or news. I am driving along and that stuff is going into my ears.

I think that in a way this just about measures up to a major problem for us that is being brought upon us by our having easy accessibility to these electronic gadgets. We do not have time to think about truly serious things. There is the bad effect, because something else that is not at all important is already occupying our mind to our ears. Just think about that. So we do not have time to meditate on the relationship with God in the amount of time that we really should be giving it.

Hebrews 4:12-13 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Notice the word naked. 'All things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.' We are exposed before God to His searching scrutiny, we can run, we can hide, but such escapes are of no avail whatever. The only solution is to fight the battle and not sin.

Here is a brief summary of that one verse in Genesis 2:25. Nakedness has a positive imagery of innocent vulnerability with no self-consciousness whatever, but in most biblical uses it represents public exposure, humiliation, before all who look at the sinful shame of one's conduct.

Revelation 19:7-8 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Genesis 2:25 presents us with a picture of how it was when things began regarding mankind's relationship with his Creator and Revelation 19:7-8 reveals how it will end. How will it end? We will not be naked, we will be clothed with righteousness. That is the answer regarding what to do about being exposed before God. Always be clothed with

righteousness. That is the lesson of Genesis 2:25.

The second covenant is called by some researchers the Adamic covenant, others accept it as part of the Edenic covenant and make it one with it. I believe that it is best for clarity's sake to keep that somewhat separate because so much change was made when sin entered the relationship of God with mankind.

The sins changed life almost endlessly. This covenant is also a universal covenant. It is also sometimes titled the covenant with Adam, because the curses imposed by the sins of Adam and Eve created adjustments that all of mankind must deal with until all of those curses are lifted. In some aspects the curses will not be lifted until God's purpose with mankind are completed despite Jesus Christ being on earth governing all the nations of the world much of the time. However, His being on earth governing will greatly mute many of the effects of the curses God imposed by His judgment of Adam and Eve's sins.

I prefer to call this covenant, the covenant with mankind, part two, or even the Edenic covenant part two. Adam and Eve's sins, which resulted in God's judgment, created the natural world we are born into and live the entire length of time we are alive facing the dilemmas imposed because of sin. It was not just Adam and Eve, because all of their progeny, including us, also sinned and did damage to what God so freely gave us.

God's judgments have made life considerably more difficult than it was before the sins were committed.

Romans 8:18-19 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

Paul personified the creation to enable us to understand that what we live in was imposed on it. It is a reflection back to the imposition of the judgment there in Genesis 3. He presents the creation to us as if it is a human being and it has had disastrous things imposed on it. It did not do anything, but here it is suffering as a result of what Adam and Eve did.

So it is suffering right along with us and yearns, as if it were human, for the time when God releases it. It yearns because it was not guilty of having to endure what was imposed on it. Adam and Eve and all of their progeny have done likewise as their

parents Adam and Eve did.

It is very apparent that we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, but because of our merciful calling from God we are endowed with the hope of seeing the curses lifted and are admonished to persevere because they indeed will be lifted beginning when our Savior returns. That is a hope that we have, and it will begin when He returns and begins to restore things to the earth where they should be.

Genesis 3:8-10 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

The first element to learn is God's attitude in giving this covenant. Taking into consideration the indisputable fact that Adam and Eve knew God, they already had a measure of a relationship with Him, and thus the sins had devastating effects because they were so gifted. Have *you* seen God? No, you have not. They *did* see God, they walked and talked with God, they ate with Him, they fellowshiped with Him, He taught them.

Luke 12:42-43 And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.

Luke 12:47-48 And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much is required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

Because of the relationship established between God and Adam and Eve, they were gifted in ways that nobody else ever were. I believe that because of this it places Adam and Eve at somewhat of a position of being a converted person forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ, already having a relationship with Him, and therefore justified as having

Christ's righteousness imputed to them. They were gifted greatly and the curses that were put on them were really intense because of that gifting.

The most prominent teaching at the beginning of this scene is that nothing dramatic happened when the sins were actually committed, even though the sins changed the relationship dramatically. This is one of the sobering truths regarding sin. When Adam and Eve sinned lightening did not flash, thunder did not crash and reverberate through the skies. The earth did not quake, and a huge crevice did not open threatening to swallow them up thus taking them to their death.

Most sin occurs beyond the eye and ears of others. "Nothing good happens after midnight." What is being done is so often evil, out of the prying eyes of others, and people take advantage of darkness. Therefore, it is a pattern. Humans take pains to hide it even though they do not know God like Adam and Eve did. They still try to hide their sins. It is as though they feel that if no one sees that they will get away with it, and nobody is the wiser.

As time went on, nothing happened, even though one of the most momentous events in the history of mankind had just occurred. It changed the world tremendously and all Eve did was to take a bite of food. All he did was say, "Eve, that's alright, I'll take care of things." There was nothing violent in what they did, yet it changed the history of the entire world.

There is no such thing as a sin that escapes the eyes of God, no such thing as a sin that does not effect anybody else. This is one of the reasons why this is in the Bible. Those two sins effected everybody who has ever been born. Leaven spreads. This is an unusual case but it illustrates the point that sin is not done in a vacuum.

Some justify sin by saying sin matters not as long as nobody gets hurt. Adam and Eve's sins are the first indication that there is no such as a sin done in a vacuum that affects nobody else. This also sets a pattern for God's reaction to sins committed by those descendants of Adam and Eve.

There is no outward effect that one sins. Notice that God notes that He called them out in the cool of the day, giving the impression of the passage of some amount of time, perhaps equating to late afternoon. Did they sin in the morning? We at least know that God did not call them out until late afternoon, He did not call them out immediately.

God did not arrive in a terrifying manner with fire, hailstorm, and thunder rolling. In fact He was apparently calmly walking about in the Garden. Look at Adam and Eve, terrified

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in anticipation of meeting up with Him and the knowledge of their sins against this wondrous Creator filled them with anxiety, to say the least.

The sins were not having an internal affect. Do you think that would not affect their progeny? It would. They knew enough about His character to know that they had done wrong. Even though they knew that there was no hiding, they were nonetheless still attempting to do it.

These are things that need to be thought of. That is why it is here—so that we understand God's reaction and Adam and Eve's reaction. A biblical example of this is Jonah's repeated attempts to flee from doing a job that God assigned him.

In Genesis 3, God spoke and they immediately responded but not necessarily to their good. Here is another lesson to keep in mind: when God speaks something happens. A couple of examples are, God spoke and light appeared, God spoke and Moses turned aside, God spoke and Lazarus came forth from the grave. God speaks from time to time and the Bible appears, containing His words and we are to respond by obeying.

So despite mankind's denial of its context it is still witnessing against them even though God spoke thousands of years ago. His Word is having its effect. Twice the apostle Paul says that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ and thus it is good for us to keep in mind that some day our name is going to be called for the purpose of judgment as was Adam and Eve in this context, and we, like them, will be impelled to respond. There is no resisting the voice of God. His voice is contained in this Book.

God is aware of what is going on in His creation.

Psalms 139:7-20 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? [David put a positive emphasis on it, but it also has a negative emphasis to it, and we can learn from both aspects.] If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You. For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.

And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them. How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You. Oh, that You would slay the wicked, O God! Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men. For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain.

By the time we get to the place where we are to be judged, I believe that we will fully understand that there is no hiding from God's awareness. Do we understand that anywhere near the level that Adam and Eve did? When sin occurs devastating effects take place, even though nothing may appear immediately at the surface.

What is this covenant teaching us at this point about God's reaction to a devastating sin? God is very calm in the face of our disloyalty but, at the same time, the working of disloyalty is damaging the relationship between us and God to some degree—despite His calmness. At the same time God is showing us through the actions of Adam and Eve that sin is affecting us physiologically through fear of the shame and humiliation to flee responsibility for what we did.

If we were watching a stage play of what happened, beginning in Genesis 1 through Genesis 3:9, this is what the scenes would show us.

First, would be the creation scene in which God would be alone, but intensely active as to working at what He was producing. The second scene would be a domestic scene involving God, Adam, and Eve in the Garden, as He prepares each of them for the benefit of the other and filling the earth with their children. The third scene would be the temptation scene featuring Adam, Eve, and Satan. It would end with the dirty deed accomplished by the tempter. The fourth scene would be a somber judicial scene involving God, Adam, Eve, and Satan.

The judicial scene all by itself would have four steps to it: there would be the arraignment of Adam, Eve, and Satan, followed by God's examination of them, followed by the sentencing, and finally the judgment. In this scene before us now the arraignment has already taken place.

Genesis 3:9-13 Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself." And He said, "Who told you that you

were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." And the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." So the Lord God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life."

God questions Adam and Eve, and the rest follows. The questions are not asked to gain information, God already knew what they did. They are asked so that the questions would be on their minds thus allowing them to convict themselves with their thoughtful and honest answers. They could not hide and they were aware of that.

Interestingly both cast a measure of blame away from themselves, so now we have another sin entering the picture here. They clearly believed that they really were not to blame and thus bear the full responsibility for their sin. Thus begins the practice of self-justification in defense of our sins.

The reality is, Satan did not *make* Eve sin, and Eve did not *make* Adam sin. They played a part but neither Satan nor Eve twisted anybody's arm. Adam's sin is particularly bad, he blamed God's gift of Eve on both Eve and God. Notice especially how the self-justification inspires other sins, making the situation worse. In this case their attempts to dodge responsibility motivated them to compound the initial sin by lying about the circumstance which made them sin.

Adam is saying, "God, if you didn't give that woman I wouldn't have sinned" Eve is saying, "If you didn't allow that serpent in the garden, I wouldn't have sinned." Today we might say, "It was in my genes to sin," or "I grew up in a bad neighborhood, my parents didn't teach me. My father or my mother was a drug addict, or alcoholic." Those things may be true but they do not really make us sin. That is a dodge.

Do we understand that God is teaching us that in regard to sin, circumstances bear little assistance in God's judgment? That is very clear. God did not accept what they did. What is the lesson? Our reaction to circumstances is to be controlled. Those of you who are a bit older surely remember comedian Flip Wilson and his, "the Devil made me do it" justification. What it really was though was a backhanded way of blaming God because He created the being who became Satan.

What we can learn from this context is that if we do not honestly and fully accept responsibility for the sins, the overall effects of sin are these: the fruit of sin, regardless of the actual circumstance in which it is committed, is always the same regardless of when in history it happened.

The fruits are these; 1) Like leaven it spreads from the initial point of origin. That is why God has the Days of Unleavened Bread to teach us that lesson. If we do not stop it through repentance and God covers it, it is going to spread into other areas of life. 2) As shown by their justification, it tends to lead us into becoming blind to God's goodness in giving us all of those wonderful gifts, beginning with His creation of us so that we have life. He gives us all of the opportunities that come with life, but when we dodge responsibility we are sacrificing those gifts, and just like Adam and Eve, we are in a negative way blaming God.

God gives us a mind that can gather information, reason by means of it, store the information, and use it influenced by a spirit that makes us human with a potential to be like God. The reality is God is not guilty of how we choose to use His gift. He gives them and we make the choices. This is a reality that we must come to terms with.

Genesis 3:14 So the Lord God said to the serpent [serpent actually means both Satan and the serpent as the animal that God created]: "Because you have done this you are cursed more than all cattle [Satan is not an animal. He is talking here about the snake. He is judging the snake], and more than every beast of the field [Satan is not a beast of the field, he was so far above them there is no comparison. He is a thinking, choosing discerning person]; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life."

It is interesting that God has no questions for Satan. God's first sentence and judgment is given to the tool used by Satan to affect the sin, that is, the serpent. This is somewhat similar to what the liberals do today by blaming murders on the existence of guns. The gun is just a tool. In this case the snake was just a tool that Satan used. It looks that way but God has His reasons in mind.

Ezekiel 28:12-15 "Son of man take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God [he is not talking about a human being]: "You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering; the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and

pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created. You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of a fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till the iniquity was found in you.”

I believe enough was said there to show that there is some possibility that because of Satan's pride regarding himself, Satan chose this particular beast because its beauty was somewhat of a reflection of him. He did not choose a mule to help him, he did not choose a lion, he chose a snake, and you can be sure that because of the vanity we know was already in him, he chose one that beautifully represented him. That was a serpent.

In addition it is possible that God affected great physical changes to the snake. What is important is that we grasp that the serpent and Adam and Eve, are representatives in our story rather than their story. These are lessons for us. The snake represents nature as God created it, awesome and beautiful.

It looks on the surface that if we are correct in this assumption—that Satan in his vanity chose an animal that really reflected the beauty that he had in him as well—that the serpent was beautiful. When God begins to hand out the sentences here, the snake represents nature as God created it. Now sin enters the picture and it is changing things.

Satan represents the demonic realm, Adam and Eve represents all of mankind. We have three players in the game here, nature, demonic realm, and mankind. God is handing out judgments on all three and all three have been greatly affected by what happened here in Eden. Because it happened, we have to deal with its effects thousands of years later.

Based on the comment ‘you shall go upon your belly,’ it appears snakes originally walked upright and were desirable and beautiful in appearance. It was an eye-catching, fitting representation of what Satan was when he walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

Where it was once beautiful and crafty, a snake became cursed and loathsome. Why would God do this? In a way there is simple lesson here. It is a reminder to you and me that beauty is as beauty does. Sin does not make things more beautiful, it never works. Whether or not physical changes were made, the statement regarding eating dust all of

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yours days does not indicate the serpent would literally eat dust. Rather, it indicates a constant aversion against it, thus snakes are no longer acceptable. What was formerly beautiful, and everyone would come out to greet it and hug it, and say, "You're really something," now snakes are an aversion, rejected by mankind that it was used to sin against.

That phrase, eating dust, in the Hebrew indicates total defeat. When you are defeated you are face down in the dust and you are eating dust. Nature, which the snake represents, has really suffered as a result of what one of its members did.