

## Kissing the Serpent

There is a story Elder Ferrell tells in his article about the 'Master Number'. It tells of a strange practice observed among the serpent-worshippers of India.

"Murl Vance mentioned an old motion picture film that was issued, I believe, in the 1930s. I recall having seen it as a boy. It was called "Wheels Across Asia," and was something of an epic travelogue through Africa and then across the Near East and India. This film was not like the slicks that followed it in the 1940s and beyond. It showed paganism in all its reality. Murl's special interest lay in the scene in India of a woman kneeling before a coiled hooded cobra. She was intent on performing a great act in Hinduism. The snake was equally intent on biting her, and as, without uncoiling, his head would dart forward, she would as instantly move back with her head and trunk. Flecks and streaks of cobra venom could be seen staining her clothing. Then came that special moment; in an instant she darted her head forward -and kissed the serpent."

Who on earth would be so foolish as to want to kiss a deadly cobra? Most people have a natural distrust and fear of serpents, especially the poisonous kind. But there are some who seem to have a great attraction to them.

I recall a true story about such a person told in a book called "Eagle in my Bathtub" by J. Mannix. They worked with all kinds of animals and birds mostly for the movies, and they met a sweet little lady that had the most amazing collection of reptiles they had ever seen. She really seemed to have an affinity for them. Some even seemed to respond to her love and would come when called.

She had not only harmless snakes, but some of the most deadly, including a pair of large King Cobras. She worked with these serpents even handling them, they would strike at her but she was expert at quickly snatching her hand out of range or meeting the strike with a flat palm. The cobra has a rather small mouth and no long fangs like a rattler. They have to grab something and chew for the venom to enter the prey. So the flat palm gave them no grip.

This lady spoke lovingly of her cobras, but it was clear that they did not share this love as they would strike at her. Clearly their intention was to kill her. This never seemed to concern her though, and she continued to lavish her affection on these and others of the deadly serpents in her collection.

She had a tremendous knowledge of reptiles, clearly, at the time the Mannix's met her, there was no one on earth that understood reptile ways better than this little woman who loved serpents. But one day, the inevitable happened.

She was being filmed with some of her strange 'pets', and of course this included the magnificent King Cobras. Whether she was slightly distracted by the filming process, or had grown careless from long years of working with the huge snakes, no one knows. But suddenly one of the cobras darted forward, she met the strike with the palm BUT was just a shade off; the deadly beast fastened to the loose skin between her thumb and hand.

Quickly but gently she detached him and returned him to his container. She rushed to her anti-venom supplies, only to find the cobra antitoxin dried up and useless, the emergency kit had never been used and was ancient. She was so sure of herself that she never bothered to keep the kit up to date.

I can't recall from the story if she was taken to hospital or not, but she knew it was a vain hope as no hospital nearby would stock cobra antitoxin and the poison would kill in a very short

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time. The lady perished of that bite. The world's most knowledgeable person on cobras, died from the bite of her pet.

What about our devil worshipper in the first story? We know nothing about her, but we can easily see that if she kept up this practice, one day as she aged, or was in some way distracted, the cobra would succeed, and fasten to her face. She would die in minutes.

Why would a person play with a deadly serpent? There is a certain pride in taking risks, there is an exhilarating feeling that comes with doing something others are afraid to do. But there is another serpent that people seem to love to kiss. Just as deadly and just as hateful, they convince themselves it is a good pet to have around. Having it and using it makes them feel sophisticated. They think it is a sign of the 'better life', a symbol of being rich and affluent. The Bible tells us about this serpent.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, ... At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Proverbs 23:31,32

Yes, all too many kiss the deadly serpent of ALCOHOL and think it is beautiful and will never hurt them. They think that although other people may find their lives ruined, their bodies and minds damaged and destroyed, their family brought to sorrow and despair; this would never happen to them.

They are the experts, they can have the serpent in their home and kiss it regularly and yet they will not go to excess, they will not suffer harm from it. It gives them a prestige to play with the serpent and they would not want to be the one to say to friends, "No WAY! I will not play around with this harmful and deadly stuff!!" Of course not, they might be laughed at or considered 'straight-laced' or peculiar.

Friends, Alcohol is one of the biggest lies of the devil. We hear a lot about the 'drug scene', but it is no longer fashionable to tell the truth that ALCOHOL is the King Cobra of drugs and year after year wrecks more lives and damages more bodies than any other substance.

I am going to give you a few facts here that you may not realize. When in training for RN, I had the privilege of having a few lectures by the Chief of staff of Psychiatry in the hospital where I trained, who was very knowledgeable in the effects and addiction of alcohol. Here are a few things I learned from him and also facts that have been demonstrated by medical studies.

So many lies are told about Alcohol, and most people think that alcohol is just fine as long as you don't drink it too often or enough to get drunk. (By the way, I have never met any drunken person who would not tell you he had only had a couple drinks. The fact of drinking too much is something almost no-body will admit.)

The reality is that even one drink containing alcohol has noticeable and measurable effects on the circulation, brain and nervous system. These effects do not just go away in a couple hours. Here is a medical test that was done. A group of non-drinking young people was divided, and part was given one beer to drink in the evening, the others were not given any alcohol.

The next day, a medical expert examined each of the people, without knowing who had the alcohol and who did not. Invariably he could pick out each person who had been given the one beer the night before. Effects were still visible the next day. He used the eyes to examine, but the effects would have been found other places as well. So you see, even a person that does not drink, and is given one drink, will have effects from that drink. How did he spot this? The tiny capillaries of the eye would show groups of red cells sticking together and blocking the capillaries. Alcohol, even in a small amount makes red blood cells sticky. Bloodshot eyes? Yes, but the same effect is also in the brain.

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Now if a sticky mass of cells goes into a blood vessel where blood cells can only pass one by one, it gets stuck there. What happens to the cell at the other end of that vessel that needs the oxygen these cells are bringing? Well, it is damaged and even killed. When this happens in the brain, it is especially bad, because these cells are not replaced like those in most other parts of the body.

Now it has also been shown that if a person is in the habit of taking a drink each evening quite often or regularly, he is actually a type of alcoholic. His body will show signs of damage in many places and if he wants to quit, he will find withdrawal symptoms. In addition to that, it will take many months before all traces of alcohol and its effects are out of his body. An established alcohol dependant person takes more than a year to clear it from the system.

People think they can go out and party and get roaring drunk, then the next day, they are sober and off they go to work. This is another BIG lie, even for the person who only does this occasionally, it will be weeks before all effects of the alcohol are gone, and the brain cells killed by that 'party' are gone forever. What effect does this have on society? LOTS! Many accidents are caused by people who think they are sober when they are not.

Here is another way in which alcohol is cruel to your body. Your body requires a LOT of water to run its functions and clean itself; also your brain runs partly on hydroelectric energy it makes by running water through special tissues. If you are average sized man, you need about 2 quarts a day, just for your body to manage.

So you feel thirsty and instead of giving your poor body the good pure water it needs to do its work and keep you healthy, you give it something with alcohol in it. This is stupid and really is cruelty to your body. What little water the body can get from this, has to be used to try and flush out the poisonous alcohol and the body is left parched and having to do all kinds of extra work just to keep you alive.

A man, that once worked in a hot factory with my father, went home on a hot day and drank, instead of water, an alcoholic drink in large amounts. His body just quit on him and he died on the spot– victim of his own ignorance and stupidity. It is so much better to properly care for your body, and say "NO" to anything that is even a little harmful! People will make fun? Perhaps so, but if you are wise and they are foolish like that, you will have the last laugh.

No friends, kissing the serpent for whatever reason, is not smart, it is not sophisticated, it does not make you distinguished. It will make you extinguished sooner or later and every sip, gives permanent damage to the wonderful body God gave you to care for. =^..^=

### **Warning to "Party Drinkers"**

Alcohol is not a friend; it makes a fool of everyone who trusts it. It has killed more otherwise healthy people than all the world wars.

No one ever has any intention of letting it get the best of them, no alcohol damaged person ever intends it to do him any harm. The people in the true stories above never intended to be bitten. But it happens just the same.

There is also an influence on the children that grow up with alcohol in the home. They think the serpent is something to look forward to kissing as soon as they are 'big enough'. No one is 'Big Enough' to kiss that serpent and be unharmed, absolutely NO ONE!

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The Lord asks, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good:" Isa 55:2 Alcohol is NOT sophisticated, sipping wine is not distinguished— it is harmful and stupid. It is one of the things that is rapidly bringing our world to the point of the people before the flood, where, "... the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually!" Genesis 6:5.

This verse in the Hebrew means that even all his very purposes and desires were contrary to the Lord's will!

What about those who have pictures on the walls of the home, glorifying an alcoholic beverage, is heart-breaking! Sure I know Guinness is supposed to be 'good for you'. Well I beg to differ; nothing that contains alcohol is good for you! Where did this idea come from?

Well, in the days when the diet of people in Britain consisted almost entirely of white flour and greasy pork and beef, people became ill from lack of Vitamin B complex. This stout has some B vitamins in it. Nowadays we have ever so much better sources of Vitamin B complex, sources that do not contain the poison alcohol. If you want to glorify Ireland, hang up a harp, or even a potato—but not a bottle of alcoholic booze! Please think of those dear lambs! What are you going to say to God when He requires an account for those He entrusted to you?

Nobody intends the serpent to bite him, but it will, it is its nature; it will bite and destroy. We can't invite such things into our home without the devil coming with them. Do you think he will sit down and behave himself because you do not intend any harm from kissing the serpent? He don't care what you intend, he intends to destroy you, your family, and your dear children. Why not take hold of the Lord's strength today, and throw the serpent out of your life. Never kiss him again!!

None of my Business! You may say; I beg to differ; I can and will WARN! I HAVE learned the hard way. God was merciful to a fool and brought me out alive, but losses were great. He expects us parents to teach their children what they have learned and He expects the children to take heed! Never give an inch to the devil!