

THE SERPENT

Good, Bad, or Ugly?

“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.” Genesis 3:1

Genesis 3 ¹ Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" ² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, "You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die." ⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

“Serpent worship in some form permeated nearly all parts of the earth. The serpent mounds of the American Indians; the carved stone snakes of Central and South America; the hooded cobras of India; Python the great snake of the Greeks; the sacred serpents of the druids; the Midgard snake of Scandinavia; the Nagas of Burma, Siam, and Cambodia...the mystic serpent of Orpheus’ the snakes at the Oracle of Delphi...the sacred serpents preserved in the Egyptian temples; the Uraeus coiled upon the foreheads of the Pharos and priests – all these bear witness to the universal veneration in which the snake was held. The serpent is...the symbol and prototype of the Universal Savior, who redeems the world by giving creation the knowledge of itself...It has long been viewed as the emblem of immortality. It is the symbol of reincarnation...” Manly P. Hall, *Secret Teachings of All Ages*, pp. LXXXVII-LXXXVIII, The Philosophical Research Society, 16th edition.

- Serapis (Egypt and Rome) – encircled by coils of a great serpent
- Shiva (Hindu) – serpents entangled in hair.
- Quetzalcoatl (mayas) – savior god
- Hopi Indians – snake dance
- Greek – Serpent wrapped around Orphic egg, the symbol of the cosmos.
- Yoga: symbolized as a raft made of cobras, and its goal is to awaken the Kundalini power coiled at the base of the spine in the form of a serpent



Historically, many societies/religions have deified the serpent or those associated with a serpent. Why?

Why, in so many cases, is the serpent considered the bearer of wisdom and benevolence?

In the U.S. is the serpent revered in any meaningful way?

Hippocratic Oath -- Classical Version

“I swear by Apollo Physician and Aesculapius and Hygieia and Panacea and all the gods and goddesses, making them my witnesses, that I will fulfill according to my ability and judgment this oath and this covenant., *etc.*”

Greek and Roman god of medicine: **Aesculapius** – serpent entwined staff: **Caduceus**

- Aesculapius was worshipped with snakes because of an ancient myth which said he had received a healing herb from at the mouth of a serpent.

Caduceus: wing-topped staff, wound about by two snakes, carried by Hermes. In earlier cultures, notably the Babylonian, the intertwined snakes symbolized fertility, wisdom, and healing. The staff was carried by Greek officials and became a Roman symbol for truce and neutrality. Since the 16th century it has served as a symbol of medicine; it is the insignia of the medical branch of the U.S. army.

How are serpents and the Serpent treated in the Bible?

- ❖ **Garden of Eden**
- ❖ **Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness: Numbers 21:1-9 ; II Kings 18:4**
- ❖ **Descriptions**
 - **Matthew 23:32**
 - **Deuteronomy 32:32**
- ❖ **Prophecies**
 - **Genesis 49:17**
 - **Psalm 91:12-14**
 - **Luke 10:18**
 - **Revelation 12:1-17**
 - **Revelation 20:1-3**



Is most of the world’s view of “the serpent” indicative of the spirit of anti-christ?