

JUNE 16th

CHECKING GOD'S CREDENTIALS

“When Pharaoh says to you, ‘Prove yourselves by working a miracle,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.’” So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent.”

EXODUS 7:9-10

“Snakes, why does it always have to be snakes?” These are the words of Harrison Ford playing Indiana Jones in Raiders of the Lost Ark. Most people have a fear of snakes. The technical term for this phobia is ophidiophobia. It’s an intense fear that interrupts normal activities of a person when snakes are present. Maybe you are a little different and actually enjoy snakes, but I’m sure that if a snake moved across your living room floor that it would cause quite a response! Moses and Aaron have finally listened to the Lord and appear before Pharaoh. Pharaoh doesn’t respect them and he certainly doesn’t respect their God. Why should he? He believes himself to be a god and uses snakes to strike fear into his subjects. John Currid comments that Pharaoh used a female cobra crest on his headdress to remind people of his power. What makes this so significant and how does it challenge us as men?

God knows exactly what will happen with all these interactions with Pharaoh. He knows the heart of Pharaoh, since he created him. These lofty words that Moses and Aaron speak to Pharaoh demand a rebuttal. Here’s how he might have responded: ‘If your God is so powerful and worthy of your people to worship, prove it! What sign can show me that you’re legit representatives of your God?’ Pharaoh is checking credentials. Are they really God’s reps like they say they are? Or are they impostors? Aaron wastes no time to throw down the staff...and it becomes a serpent. Pretty big miracle, right? An old piece of wood turns into a cobra! But this doesn’t impress Pharaoh or his court. He simply calls out his own magicians, and they do the same thing! Wow, you have to admit that’s pretty impressive too. But that’s not the end of story. In the next moment, Aaron’s staff swallowed their staffs. Moses almost seems to write this act by Aaron’s staff as an aside, like it’s no big deal. But we know that it is a big deal. God has begun showing Aaron, Moses, Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and the Hebrews that He is supreme over all gods. There is no God like our God!

God has already told Moses that the signs and wonders performed will show the Hebrews and Egyptians that He is the LORD. All these plagues that God performs are an act of judgment against the false gods that the Egyptians worshiped...every single one. And yet we haven’t even touched the deepest meaning from the battle of the serpents...God is supreme over all physical and spiritual realities, including Satan himself. Think about it this way, when Satan tempted Eve, what did he appear as? That’s right...a serpent. Satan comes as deceiver and a liar that wants to steal, kill, and destroy. He didn’t begin these acts when you were born. He’s been doing them since the garden of Eden. You see, God doesn’t just show Himself to be supreme over Pharaoh here. He also shows Himself to be supreme over Satan.

Pharaoh tested God’s sovereignty here. Satan has tricked people to believe that God isn’t truly in control. But God. God crushes the head of Satan with the work of the cross and resurrection morning. But Satan hasn’t given up his fight. He wants to deceive not just non-believers, but believers too. Men, here’s a question for you...how often have you tested God? How often do you ask God to give you His credentials by showing you a sign? Hasn’t God shown us enough by His actions we find in the Bible? Satan’s primary work has been to get believers to doubt God’s supreme power and plan over the world. Our question today is: will we trust what God has already said in His Word?

Spend some asking God for strength to believe that what God has already said in His Word is enough for you.

For Further Reading: Exodus 7:1-25