

Exod 03-02-16b

In our study in Exodus chapter 4, God answers Moses' question with a question. And that often takes place in our lives. Many, many times in the Bible, when someone asks God a question, He responds with a question.

Jesus does this when His opponents come to Him and when the disciples come to Him. Why is that? Well, if you've ever functioned as a parent or taken care of children, you know why this is. It is because you're trying to teach someone to think.

You're trying to get someone to use the knowledge that they have, the experience that they have, what you have told them in the past, you're trying to remind them of it. So, when Moses says, what do I do when they say the Lord has not appeared to you? God says, what is that in your hand? Well, it's a staff. He says, cast it on the ground.

He casts it on the ground. What did it turn into? It turns into a serpent. What do we know about serpents at this point in history? Why would it turn into a serpent? God could have done any kind of different sign.

He could have made a rainbow appear out of nowhere. He could have had a clump of ball lightning fly around and burn things. He could have had any possible supernatural manifestation you want to think of.

But He tells Moses to take the rod, cast it to the ground, and on the ground it becomes a serpent. Well, what's our theological background on serpents? We ask ourselves. I'm asking you.

I'm answering your question with a question. What is the background on serpents? What do we know about the garden? This is where the serpent was used by Satan to initiate bad thinking, temptation, and the fall. The curse on the serpent was to do what? He lost his legs.

On thy belly shalt thou go, and you will eat dust all the days of your life. So, when the rod hits the ground, it turns into a serpent. The rod is not in Moses' hand anymore, right? It's on the ground.

The ground is the place of the serpent. When Moses reaches down and grabs it by the tail, normally any self-respecting serpent would reach around and bite him on the forearm, bite him on the hand. But as soon as Moses takes it into his hand, it becomes a rod again.

On the ground it's a serpent. In the hand, it's a rod. And it's going to be called the rod of God from now on.

It's going to be called the staff of authority, God's authority, when it's in Moses' hand. What were we just thinking about in the last session? About the need for patience? And in order to have patience, you have to have self-control. Have you ever seen somebody who had no self-

control, but they were patient? Being patiently out of control? They don't really exist apart from each other, do they? If you have patience, you have self-control.

If you don't have self-control, you're impatient. You can't last. You can't stick it out.

Well, there is a power that God is going to give to Moses. He's going to give him authority to lead the nation of Israel out of Egypt. As long as he keeps that authority in his hand, it's the rod of God.

When he casts it down to the ground, it turns into a serpent. What does a serpent symbolize? You say, well, Satan, evil, but calamity. Let's take a look at some of the places where serpents occur in the Bible.

Of course, Genesis is one of the first places. But there's an odd place that you probably don't immediately think of. And this is in Numbers chapter 21.

In Numbers chapter 21, there were people who were speaking against Moses. This is after they've gotten out and are in the wilderness. They said, why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There's no food and there's no water.

And this manna that's coming down, they said, we loathe this miserable food. This provision that you have made for us, we don't like it. Not only do we not like it, we hate it.

We loathe it. We have no patience with it. So, in Numbers 21 verse 6, the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people so that many people of Israel died.

How many different ways could God discipline the Israelites for being ungrateful and impatient and unhappy? All kinds of different ways, but He chose to use serpents. So, what's the remedy for this? The people wake up and they say, whoops, we goofed, we sinned, this wasn't the right approach. We have sinned because we've spoken against the Lord and you.

Please intercede with the Lord that He will remove these serpents from us. We don't like being bitten by these serpents. There's lots of us that are dying.

So, Moses goes to God and says, oh God, be merciful, feel sorry for these people, take away the serpents, take away the calamity. So, the Lord said to Moses, make a fiery serpent. Fiery means made out of brass or bronze.

It's going to be an image of a serpent. And He says, put it up on a pole. Put it up on top of a rod.

Put it up on top of a staff. It shall come about that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live. So, you think, well now, is this kind of like the hair of the dog that bit you or the best cure for a hangover is another glass of what you just knocked yourself out with? Why is it that having been bitten by serpents, what do you do? Well, you look at the serpent that's raised up on this pole and live.

What does the serpent represent here? We say, well, go back to the garden, the serpent is Satan. No, it's not. Satan is not disciplining the people of God for their ungratefulness and their impatience.

It's God. It is a merciful God. It is a God who is removing their calamity from them.

And they're ungrateful and they're short-sighted and they're impatient. And so, God sends the fiery serpents. We think, now, wait a minute.

We thought God was the one who reserved mercy for thousands, was gracious and compassionate, the loving God, the gentle Jesus. God sent swarms of snakes in to bite all the people. God did that? Yes, He did.

He's not happy with serpents. They're under a curse. But God will use cursed things to accomplish His purpose.

God will let evil into our lives. He doesn't create it. He doesn't sponsor it.

But what does He do? He says, you don't like the wall of fire I put around you? You don't like the protection and provision that I'm making for you? You're tired of manna? Fine. I'll just withdraw my presence and let you suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune here. And so, one of the denizens of the desert are these serpents.

So, they wake up and they say, well, we really got off track there. We made a mistake. We're sorry.

Moses, please tell God we apologize, intercede, have Him remove the serpents. He says, make this bronze serpent. Look at it and live.

We'll raise it up in the center of the camp. You're laying there. You've got a big old swollen leg that looks like a tree trunk.

The venom is traveling toward your heart. You're getting paralyzed and sweating and vomiting and all these terrible things. All you have to do is turn your eyes and look.

Somebody comes along and says, look, Moses put up a bronze serpent on a pole. If you look at it, you'll get better. Well, there's going to be some people that say, what? Look at my leg.

I've been bit by a serpent. I'm going to turn and look at something and I'm going to be cured? And people say, I'd rather die than listen to your rantings and wouldn't turn and look. God has lifted up the Lord Jesus Christ on the tree.

He has made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin. When you look at the cross, you see Jesus bearing the sin of the world. He is the serpent.

He has been made the serpent who was not a serpent. He is bearing the sins of the world. Look

at Him and live.

All you have to do is look. And there's people that are too rebellious, too self-absorbed to look. But He says, look at the serpent and live.

That's Numbers chapter 21. Moses made a bronze serpent, set it on the standard. It came about that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

It's just that simple. And Jesus reminded Israel of this. In case you think that's a loose analogy, Jesus said, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

And if I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto Me. There is a calling. There is a drawing.

All of us are convicted by God the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ is the Savior. We need Him to deliver us. We need Him for our daily life.

But the fact that we're drawn doesn't mean that we go. A lot of people got drafted back in the late 60s and early 70s. But not everybody went.

They got drafted. They got the letter. They burned it.

Burned their draft card. Went to Canada. Went to Mexico.

Did something other than what they were called to do. God does not compel us to salvation. He draws us.

He makes an offer. He puts the serpent up on the pole and says, look at it and you'll live. It's your choice.

So what does the serpent represent here? It is the problem of sin. It is the problem of calamity that comes to us because of sin. As you look at other biblical uses, we're only going to look at a few.

There are quite a number of them. For example, Psalm 58-4 talks about enemies who have venom like the venom of a serpent. Like a deaf cobra that stops up its ear.

It's a picture of bad things. Evil that comes into our life. Jesus called the Pharisees vipers and broods of vipers.

He says, you serpents, how can you escape the condemnation that is to come? If you don't let Christ cleanse and forgive sin, then you're the serpent. You're the one that is going to be crushed by the heel. Satan himself, of course, is called the serpent back in Genesis and in Revelation 20.

The dragon, that serpent of old, who is the devil, is grabbed and cast into the lake of fire. That's the ultimate destination. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 11, I am afraid that just as the serpent

deceived Eve by his craftiness, that your minds will be led away from the simplicity and purity of Christ.

It's simple. It's not complicated. It's not hard.

Look and live. That's what Israel is going to be called to when Moses casts that rod down on the ground. It's going to turn into a serpent.

And what does it mean? Yes, the Egyptians have oppressed them. Yes, the Egyptians have enslaved them. And it was wrong.

But God allowed it. God told Abraham it was going to happen. Why? Because Israel needed to learn dependence on God.

They were self-sufficient. They were prosperous. They were going their own way.

They disregarded God and forgot about God. God said, I'm going to have to let the serpent in. I'm going to have to let slavery and misery and Egypt come in until you turn back to me.

As long as that power and presence of God is in your hand, it's strength. It's authority. When it hits the ground, it turns into the serpent.

Well, don't leave it there on the ground running around scaring people, making Moses run off the mountain. Grab hold. Take hold of what God has given us by way of provision, by way of authority, by way of power in this life.

Where is the power of God for us? If you say, okay, I'm convinced. I don't want to be in the grip of the serpent. I want to look and live.

Where is the power of God for me? How can I live this life that pleases God and that brings blessing and opportunity and reflects the glory of God? How can I do that? The power of God comes into the life of the believer through the word of God and the spirit of God. One without the other doesn't work. We talked in the doxology this morning that if God were merciful and not omnipotent, if he just had mercy and didn't have power, then he's just going to be a sob sister on the sidelines saying, oh, I feel your pain.

I'm so sorry for you. If he had power and didn't have mercy, that doesn't work either. You just have an unbenevolent dictator.

God is both merciful and mighty. Well, in the same way, the power of God comes into our life by the word of God and the spirit of God. We need to look into the word of God.

Find out what it says. Find out what God's promises are. What are the principles? What does he want from us? We know that he wants us to develop love, sacrificial towards self, beneficial toward others.

He wants us to have faith, believe in what we cannot see. He wants us to have hope and expectation that regardless of what seems to be taking place in this life, there is a bright future where God's promises are fulfilled. They're all bound together.

Faith, hope and love have to exist together. Well, here we have in Exodus chapter 4 the first sign to Israel. This is a supernatural sign.

It's the power over evil. God says, I can throw evil down and I can take it up again. I can let evil in and I can make it go away.

That's my power. Why is he doing this? It's because they are asking, we don't believe you. We don't want to listen to what you have to say.

How do we know the Lord has appeared to you? So Moses, before the Israelites, is going to cast down the rod and it's going to become a serpent. He's going to grab it by the tail and it's going to become a rod again. This is not just a magic trick.

If it was just a magic trick, other people could do it and they will. We're going to see that there's going to be other people pull off this magic trick. It's what it symbolizes.

It's what it means. That's the first sign. So that they may believe, it says in verse 5, that the Lord, the God of their fathers... And how many times has he said this? I am the God of Abraham.

I am the God of Isaac. I am the God of Jacob. What does this remind us of? We need to remember what we've learned.

You can't have the Word of God be a power in your life if you don't think about it, if you don't remember it. Oh yeah, I believe he said that before. God of Abraham.

Who was Abraham? Who was Isaac? Who was Jacob? What did God do in their lives? Bring it to mind. Make it the basis of faith. That's where the power is.

It's not a rabbit's foot. It's not Aladdin's lamp. It's content.

It's propositional truth. Verse 6, the Lord furthermore said to him, Now, put your hand into your bosom. This is like Napoleon.

Stick your hand inside your vest. Hide it inside your clothing where you can't see it. So he put his hand into his bosom.

And when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous like snow. There are different kinds of leprosy. Different kinds of Hansen's disease, skin disease.

This is what they call white leprosy, where the outer layers of the skin die and fester and stink and slough off. This is the kind of leprosy in the movie The Robe, where people's noses and ears are falling off. The white leprosy was the most dreaded leprosy in the ancient world.

There was no cure. And once you got it, it was always terminal. And it was a slow, torturous, gruesome death.

I don't think this is what Moses was expecting. He stuck his hand in his shirt. God says, now take it out.

He takes it out and looks. And if he could have run away from his hand the way he ran away from the snake, I'm sure he would have, because this was a horrible, shocking sight. God says, now put your hand in your bosom again.

Now, this takes some faith. If you had leprosy in one part of your body, sometimes they would just amputate that part so that it would not spread to the rest of your body. It's spread by contact.

That's why nobody would touch a leper. Lepers had to cover their face and cry, unclean, unclean. Stay at a distance.

So God says, now that gruesome, dripping, stinking, dead flesh hand that you just pulled out of your shirt, stick it back in there. Stick it back in against your skin, inside your robe. Well, this takes a little bit of faith.

The last thing you want to do is be touched by leprosy. But he did. He put his hand into his bosom again.

When he took it out of his bosom, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh. Of all of the possible options for signs and for manifestations of power, why this? Well, we first seen in the rod turning to a serpent and back, the problem of evil and the problem of sin. The sin that Christ bore on the cross.

The sin of rebellion that was punished by serpents. And then looking at the serpent to be delivered. Now we have the problem of death.

Leprosy was a living death. We've gone many times to Leviticus 14 and looked at the symbolism involved in the sacrifice of cleansing for a leper and the identification of the blood with the dead bird and the living bird and resurrection and the cleanliness and the new birth. It's one of my favorite passages there in Leviticus.

So here you have death. Moses sticks his hand in his shirt and pulls it out and his hand is dead. Now you can't kill Moses.

It kind of spoils the plan if Moses dies in front of the bush. So it's just his hand. But the idea is there is death here.

How many different kinds of death are there? Well, in Scripture, there's six or seven different things that are characterized as death. Unfruitfulness is called death. An unfruitful womb is called dead.

Sarah's womb was dead. She couldn't bear children anymore. There is spiritual death.

There's operational death. There is being dead to something. You're dead to sin and alive to God.

It means you break the relationship. You're cut off from it. So this sign talks about the fact that not only is God going to deliver Israel from the power of evil that they've been under for a couple of hundred years, this slavery, but also from death.

They are not able to be fruitful and multiply and fill the land of promise. They don't have the land flowing with milk and honey. And in the largest sense, it is a picture of our spiritual condition when we are enslaved to sin before salvation, before the cross and the application of the blood.

We are in the grip of evil. We can't get out of it. We're enslaved to sin.

And we are dead. The Bible says over and over, you are dead in trespasses and sins. You can't get anything done.

You have no life to spend with God. You have no life that has any meaning. Both of these things, God has the power to cure.

God has the power. Moses doesn't have the power. Moses didn't run down and dip his hand in the Jordan seven times.

He obeyed God. Obedience to God produces deliverance from the serpent. Obedience to God produces deliverance from death.

This is the picture for Israel. If you'll be obedient, if you'll trust God and do what He says, the problem of the serpent will go away. The problem of death will go away.

That's what these signify. But, God says in verse nine, if they will not believe even these two signs, or heed what you say, then you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. And the water which you take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.

This is the third of three signs that God gives Moses on the mountain. Do you notice something different about this one? What happened with the rod? Moses does it right there at the mountain, right? He gets a preview. He sees that it works.

You know, otherwise, if God just said, well, it's going to happen, Moses might be afraid. Well, if I throw it down and it just rattles on the deck there, I'm going to look like a big fool. What did you throw your stick down for, Moses? If I stick my hand in my shirt and pull it out, nothing happens.

I'm going to, you know, try several times. It's like the guy who keeps digging around in the hat looking for the rabbit, and it's not there. Or the one who cracks the eggs in the hat and is

supposed to come out, and it just drips all over his face.

So Moses experiences firsthand these two signs, the serpent and the leprosy. This third one, he doesn't have any water from the Nile. He's not at the Nile.

And it has to be water from the Nile. That is key. Take water from the Nile, pour it on the dry ground, and the water which you take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.

Why does blood enter into this? We've had serpents, we've had death, and now we have blood. What's the significance of the blood? When's the first time in history that blood was shed? Be careful. When's the first time in history that blood was shed? The fig leaves were drying and curling.

Embarrassment was about to ensue. What did God do? God slew animals, shed their blood to make a covering of skins for Adam and Eve. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission, there is no covering.

That was a positive shedding of blood, and it was reenacted in the sacrificial system. Abel slew a lamb from the flock and brought it to God, and God was pleased. The sacrifice recognizes that shedding of blood is necessary.

There was also a bad shedding of blood. When does that take place? Cain takes Abel's knife and he says, Well, you like slitting throats so well, let's see how you like it. And he slits his brother's throat with the sacrificial knife, because that's the only kind of knife they had.

The only reason they needed to kill anything was for sacrifice in those days. They were still on a vegetable diet, didn't eat meat yet. So, what happened after that? God comes and confronts Cain, and what does he say? Your brother's blood cries out to me from where? From the ground.

The dry ground has been moistened with this blood, and it cries out to God for recompense, for justice. If they will not believe you or heed that witness, take them back to the beginning. Take them back to the beginning of the shedding of blood.

I am the God who covers you by sacrifice. I am the God who recompenses wrongs that are done in the shedding of blood. So, Moses now has these three signs.

Three is the number of completion and perfection. That's why it's the number of the Trinity, right? So, you would think, well, here are three signs. Moses is going to kick start the engine and get moving, right? Look at verse 10.

But Moses said to the Lord, Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in times past, nor since you have spoken to your servant. The new King James says, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.

You've picked the wrong man, Lord. I appreciate the demonstration of power here. It's real interesting running away from the serpent and grabbing it by the tail.

I'm really glad my hand is restored. But you've picked the wrong man. I can't go speak.

I'm not going to be able to convince with force of words. This is going to take a lot of convincing. Somebody eloquent, somebody who is persuasive, somebody with charisma is going to have to come in.

Somebody who can hold people's attention and sway their opinion. That's what it's going to take. And I am not that man.

He says, I wasn't a long time ago. I haven't been recently. And now that you've spoken to me, you did the thing with my hand, but my tongue is just as slow as ever.

And this word where it says slow actually means heavy. It's from Kavod. K-A-V-A-D.

And this is where we get kavod. And kavod in Hebrew is the word for glory. The glory of the Lord is kavod.

Why is it the word for glory? Because somebody who was glorious was rich. Had lots of heavy jewelry. Mr. T, remember all the chains that guy used to wear? Shining, sparkling.

Jewelry that is made of platinum or gold or something like that is heavy. And they used to talk about the academy rings being heavier than other college rings. They said, oh, that's just a mark of how special that is.

Well, the idea is heaviness. And also somebody who was very prosperous and very glorious would get physically heavy because they ate well. Had lots of servants bringing them legs of lamb and that kind of thing.

So heaviness became associated with glory. So kavod is from the word that means to be heavy. But here Moses says, he doesn't say my tongue is glorious.

He says my tongue is heavy. It's thick. I don't speak well.

Never have. So he says, I'm slow of speech and slow of tongue. Well, the Lord's judgment is being impugned here.

Moses is saying, Lord, you know, you've got this thing all set up and that's great, but you picked the wrong man to carry it out. Do you ever feel this way? Do you ever feel like, you know, there are people much better equipped to do whatever this thing is, to survive whatever this test is. I see people around me who could just do this standing on their head.

Do it with both hands tied behind their back or whatever. You've put me in the wrong situation. I am not the man for this crisis.

I am not the person for this situation. Pick somebody else. So what does God say? What is His answer to us? Who has made man's mouth? Who do you think is the expert in the mouth department? Do you think I forgot or I overlooked this important detail? Was there a flaw in my planning that you're trying to bring up to me here? Who also makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing or the blind? Who assigns capacities to people? God does.

He's got it all written down. In eternity past, you can think of it this way, there was a book. Fill in your name in the left-hand column.

For me it would be Samuel Curtis Hall. And then to the right, there are these attributes and characteristics. Certain kind of a face.

Certain kind of a body. Certain kind of a brain. Certain kind of a metabolism.

Certain color of hair. Certain color of eyes. Certain type of voice.

They could speak but not sing. Certain kinds of talents and lacks of talents. Certain things I can't do at all.

I have no capacity to do. Certain kind of personality tendencies. All written in the book.

You're the same way. Don't be looking at me. There's a line with your name on there as well.

You just think about your line on the book. Think about there are certain areas of strength, areas of weakness, areas of giftedness, areas of lack. God wrote it all down.

God says, look, I'm the God that filled out your line in that book. Don't be crying the blues that you can't sing or don't be crying the blues that you're not a rocket scientist. Don't be crying the blues about this thing or that thing or the other.

Don't be crying because your nose is too small or too large or your ears are pointed or got attached lobes or disattached lobes for the wearing of earrings or whatever else it might be. Don't be crying the blues about how many freckles you've got or the hair or lack thereof you have on top of your head. God filled out the line in the book and he did it for a reason.

We have been specifically equipped. I used to, you know, all of us, I think you can get self-conscious. You can feel bad about certain things.

And then I realized it's blasphemy. What you're saying is God made a mistake. God goofed when he put my line in the book.

He should have given me this and he didn't. It's arrogant and it's blasphemy to say, I know what I really need in this life better than God does. It's pride.

And once you get the humility to say, this is the way God made me, he made it this way for a purpose, so let's see what that purpose is. Obviously, it's not a opera career. Obviously, it's not

a musician career for me.

Obviously, it's not to be a chess master or a mathematician or some sort of scientist for NASA. I have some other calling that God has fitted me for. And that's why we have the attributes we have.

Who has made man's mouth? What's the answer to that question? Can you control your ability to learn a foreign language or your ability to elocute, to speak? You can't. It's either there or it's not. Who made the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Had not I the Lord? Now therefore, go.

Now, this is an imperative. God doesn't give him any more signs. God doesn't say, try this, Moses.

See if you can speak Ugaritic. Read a couple of lines of Swahili just to show you that your mouth is going to be okay. God is through with the signs.

He says, look, he gave you the rod to a serpent in back. He gave you the hand, leprosy in back. I told you about there's an ace in the hole sign.

If people don't believe the first two, we're going to do the water to blood from the Nile. So go. Stop giving me a bunch of static.

Therefore, go. I will be with your mouth. I will teach you what you shall say.

What a wonderful promise. I myself will be with your mouth. I will teach you.

You will be the most eloquent man that has ever walked the planet because I'm going to be with your mouth. Every word that falls from your lips is going to be exactly right. Don't you wish you had this gift in conversation, in relationship, in communication, in whatever capacity you have to speak to people, that God would be with your mouth and everything you said was perfect.

Write it down in the inspired scriptures like the Lord Jesus. That's the promise that God has just made to Moses. And what does he say? Verse 13.

Oh my Lord, please send someone else's hand. Please send by the hand of someone else. Ouch.

Do we ever do this? Do we say, Lord, I see this situation I'm in. I see your provision. I see the way things are all mapped out, but I really think somebody else ought to be doing this.

This is not for me. Let somebody else reflect your glory. Let somebody else exercise faith.

Let your power be manifest in somebody else. This is, you're going to be surprised, this is pride. This is arrogance.

I have a superior knowledge of where I fit into the world scheme than God. God has made a

mistake assigning me this particular role. So look at verse 14.

The anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses. This is not a happy place to be. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, it tells us over in Hebrews.

The anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses. We are going to see this anger flash forth, not right now, but just a few verses down the road. People have often wondered, why does Moses nearly die on the way back to Egypt? Well, the seeds of it are right here.

The anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses. But he doesn't strike him down, doesn't say, you think that hand was leprous? Watch this. You think that rod turned into one serpent? Watch this.

He says, look, is not Aaron the Levite your brother? Why does he say Aaron the Levite? Well, you remember my theory that Miriam and Aaron are not in loco parentis family, brother and sister, that they are cousins, that they are in the same clan, but not in the same family, because Miriam goes to the child's mother, not to her own mother, to report about the princess and so on. Is not Aaron the Levite your near kinsman, your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you.

When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. You're fearful about doing this alone.

And look, even though God is angry, God knows what the real problem is. Moses is feeling like he's got the whole burden of this alone. Can I stand there alone in front of all of the nation of Israel? Can I stand there alone before Pharaoh? He says no.

I'll give you some, what we would call Christian fellowship. I'll give you some encouragement and some comfort, someone to stand by your side. If you think he can speak better, you can tell him what to say and let him say it.

I will be with either one of your mouths. Two are better than one, and a threefold cord is not quickly broken, it says in Ecclesiastes. Two are better than one.

He will be your spokesman to the people. He himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God. What does this mean? Aaron's going to fall down in worship? No.

God is giving Moses the words to say. He says, okay, you'll be like God. I'm God giving you the message.

You'll be like God giving him the message. What you say to him is all the same as if it came straight from me. But God is not going to deal straight with Aaron.

God does not talk directly to Aaron. God talks to Moses. Moses talks to Aaron.

There's a structure. There's an authority scheme here. Notice, God does not talk to Aaron.

God says to Moses, you're going to be God to him. You're going to speak for me. You're going to be like the angels who come down and are called the angel of the Lord and speak in the first person singular on my behalf.

You're going to be to Aaron like the angel of the Lord. You will take this rod in your hand with which you shall do the signs. This rod, that rod that started out as a shepherd's rod, a nothing stick out in the wilderness is going to be the rod of the Lord.

Well, we have a great teaching point here for ourselves. God has called us. It doesn't matter that it seems like there's a lot of evil involved.

It doesn't matter that it seems like we're being afflicted by the serpents. It doesn't matter how we got here. Here is where we are.

God has power over the serpent. Look and live. Be patient.

Have faith. The deliverance is in the works. Don't be raising a bunch of objections.

Don't be saying it's for someone else. Don't be doubting. The one who doubts, it says over in James, is not going to receive anything.

We have a great provision. The deliverance of Israel from Egypt is going to be the identifying name of God. Forever after, He's going to say, I am the God that brought you out of the land of Egypt.

That same type of deliverance is available to you and to me. That same power is available to us through God's Word and God's Spirit. It just remains for us to claim it.

Let's close in a word of prayer. Father, we thank you for your mercy, your patience and your faithfulness toward us. We ask that your Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts, help us to see their meaning and application in our walk through this life.

We pray that we will not be those who fall away to perdition, but those who by faith and patience inherit the promises. We thank you for the examples in Scripture that you have given us. We pray that they will inspire us, comfort us and encourage us in the days ahead.

We thank you for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and we pray these things in His name. Amen.