

Title:       **THE SERPENT, SERPENTS & ANOTHER SERPENT**  
Text:       Exodus 7:1-13  
Subject:    *Aaron's Rod Devouring All Others*  
Date:       Tuesday Evening — May 8, 2007  
Tape #      Exodus 47

**Introduction:**

I want to talk to you tonight about snakes. My text is Exodus 7:1-13. The title of my message is — “**THE SERPENT, SERPENTS AND ANOTHER SERPENT.**”

(Exodus 7:1-13) And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. (2) Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. (3) And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. (4) But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, *and* my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. (5) And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them. (6) And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, so did they. (7) And Moses *was* fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh. (8) And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, (9) When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* it shall become a serpent. (10) And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down

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<sup>1</sup> Every time God allows me to preach, let me be certain that I...

1. Deliver a message. — Don't ramble.
2. Deliver His message.
3. Tell only what I know by experience.
4. Deliver the message in the power of the Holy Spirit.
5. Make Christ the object of my message.
6. My motive is the glory of God.
7. Deliver the message in the language of the people.
8. The message grips my own heart. — If it doesn't grip my heart, it won't grip anyone else's heart!
9. Preach in love.
10. Expect people to believe.

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his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. (11) Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. (12) For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. (13) And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

### **A GOD TO PHARAOH**

This chapter begins with a strange declaration.

(Exodus 7:1) And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

Did the Lord God say to Moses, “*I have made thee a god to Pharaoh*”? That is what he said. What does that mean? Look at the previous verse (Exodus 6:30). Being again commissioned of God to go to Pharaoh, Moses said, “*Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?*” This is the Lord's next word to Moses. — “*See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh.*” With that declaration, he assured Moses that he was sent with divine authority as God's messenger and that, as God's messenger, failure was an impossibility.

Moses had been commissioned as God's messenger to Pharaoh. He was clothed with power and authority from God as his representative to the King of Egypt. Civil magistrates are called “*gods*” (Psalm 82:6-7; John 10:34-36), because they are set over men with divine authority to whom we are responsible and whose laws we are commanded to obey (Romans 13:1-7).

Here, Moses is called “*a god to Pharaoh*” specifically because he was sent as God's ambassador, as a man with a message from God to deliver to Pharaoh. That is the position in which every man sent of God as his messenger stands before those to whom he is sent.

God's servants are all sinful men, just like you, nothing but sinful men. Yet, that man who is sent of God, carrying God's message to you, is clothed with divine authority. He is to be heard. His message is to be obeyed. The

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labor of such men is never in vain (Jeremiah 1:10; 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:1; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 2 Corinthians 2:14-17).

(Jeremiah 1:10) See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

(2 Corinthians 5:20-6:1) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (6:1) We then, *as* workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

(Hebrews 13:7) Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto *you* the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation.

(Hebrews 13:17) Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

(2 Corinthians 2:14-17) Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. (15) For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: (16) To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things? (17) For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

Moses received the message directly from God; but he did not personally deliver it to Pharaoh. He related God's message to Aaron, his brother, the man appointed by God to be high priest over the house of Israel. And Aaron delivered the message to Pharaoh.

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What a vivid portrayal that is of true preaching. God's servants seek and obtain a message from him. Then, they deliver the message back into the hands of Christ, the only Mediator between God and men, and implore him to deliver his message by them in the power of his Spirit.

And those men who are sent of God to speak for him, true gospel preachers studiously labor to know and to speak only that which God commands and all that God commands in his word (Exodus 7:2; Jeremiah 23:28; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 20:27).

(Exodus 7:2) Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land.

(Jeremiah 23:28) The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What *is* the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

(Matthew 28:18-20) And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

(Acts 20:27) For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Like Moses, God's servants are not free to preach what they desire, selecting what they think is appropriate. We are commanded and responsible to "*declare unto you all the counsel of God,*" to "*preach the Word*" (2 Timothy 4:30) in season and out of season, to "*hold fast the form of sound words*" (2 Timothy 1:13). — "*If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is a fool, knowing nothing*" (1 Timothy 6:3-4).

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With this qualification, “*I have made thee a god to Pharaoh,*” Moses went forth, acting as God’s representative. He ruled over Egypt’s proud king, commanding him, controlling him, and punishing him for his disobedience.

Moses is no longer timid, hesitant and discouraged. He never again mentions his own inability, but goes forth in the name of Christ, as God’s messenger to men, full of confidence, not in himself, but in God whose servant he was. Let every man called and sent of God do likewise

**GOD’S PURPOSE**

In verses 3-5, the Lord God tells Moses plainly that he would be to Pharaoh a messenger of death and of judgment. It was God’s purpose in sending Moses to Pharaoh to harden Pharaoh’s heart by his Word and by the wonders he would perform before his eyes.

(Exodus 7:3) And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

Here we see the great sovereignty of our God displayed in wisdom and justice. God hardened Pharaoh’s heart by every renewed declaration of his Word and by every wonder performed before his eyes. By these things the children of Israel were more and more convinced that the Lord was about to deliver them; but Pharaoh and the Egyptians became more and more hardened in their hatred of God. The same sun melts the wax until it be dissolved, hardens the clay into brick (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Hebrews 3:12-13; Isaiah 6:9-10; Romans 11:5-10; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12; Romans 1:28-32).

Many try to blunt its keen edge of Holy Scripture in order to make it more acceptable to the carnal mind. Instead of acknowledging with fear and trembling that God’s Word teaches precisely what is here stated, that the Lord God actually hardened the heart of Pharaoh, most argued that He did nothing of the kind, that He simply permitted the Egyptian monarch to harden his own heart.

While it is true that Pharaoh did harden his own heart, the Scriptures specifically tell us that the Lord God himself hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and that he did so precisely according to his own sovereign pleasure and eternal

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purpose. Pharaoh was responsible for hardening his heart. He did so because he hated God and refused to bow to him. Yet, even Pharaoh's hardness of heart was accomplished according to God's purpose (Romans 9:15-23).

(Romans 9:15-23) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (16) So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. (17) For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. (18) Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth. (19) Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? (20) Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus? (21) Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? (22) *What* if God, willing to show *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: (23) And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.

**TWO GREAT ENDS**

But God's purpose in hardening Pharaoh's heart was not an arbitrary, capricious whim. He raised up Pharaoh, hardened his heart, and dumped him in the Red Sea in order to accomplish two great ends: the glory of his own great name and the deliverance of his people. We see this clearly in verse 4-5 (Psalm 105:25-28).

(Exodus 7:4-5) But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, *and* my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. (5) And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.

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The Lord God turned the Egyptians “*to hate his people, to deal subtly with his servants.*” Then...

(Psalms 105:26-28) He sent Moses his servant; *and* Aaron whom he had chosen. (27) They showed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham. (28) He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word.

And “*led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name... led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble. So didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name*” (Isaiah 63:12-14).

**THE MEN**

In verses 6-7 the Spirit of God describes the men God chose to be his servants by whom he would deliver his people. He does so by declaring just two things about them.

(Exodus 7:6-7) And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, so did they. (7) And Moses *was* fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh.

**Moses and Aaron were faithful men.** God only requires one thing of his servants. — “*It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful*” (1 Corinthians 4:2). — “*And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, so did they*” (Exodus 7:6). They never again showed the slightest reluctance, or made any objection to any message commanded to deliver or any work they were commanded to do, but went about it at once, and performed it with all readiness of mind and cheerfulness of heart. — May God the Holy Spirit give me grace to follow their example, for Christ’s sake!

**They were faithful men; and they were old men.** — “*And Moses was fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh*” (Exodus 7:7). I see several things here that are important.

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- They were men of considerable experience.
- They were mature men, seasoned with the experience of life in this world.
- They had been in training for a long time.
- They were wise, prudent men of great age, sedate and composed.
- They were weak, old men.

**A. W. Pink** wrote, “This reference to the ages of Moses and Aaron seems to be brought in here in order to magnify the power and grace of Jehovah. He was pleased to employ two aged men as His instruments.”

**THE SERPENTS**

Now, let’s look at the serpents mentioned in verses 8-12.

(Exodus 7:8-12) And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, (9) When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* it shall become a serpent. (10) And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. (11) Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. (12) For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods.

After delivering God’s message to him, Pharaoh demanded (as God said he would) that Moses show him a sign, a miracle. Like multitudes throughout the ages, he seems to have said, “I will believe God, if you can prove that I should.” And God gave him a sign. But, remember, it was God who chose the sign. — Aaron threw his rod to the ground, and it immediately turned into a serpent. Then Pharaoh’s magicians in did the same thing with their rods by “*their enchantments.*” But Aaron’s serpent swallowed the serpents of Pharaoh’s magicians.

The serpent was the emblem of Pharaoh and his power. His head-dress featured a raised cobra. The fact that Aaron’s serpent devoured the other



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serpents amounted to nothing less than the Lord God declaring his sovereignty, supremacy and power over Pharaoh and his gods.

But it showed even more than that. This sign, by which God originally declared himself to Pharaoh, was a display of our Lord Jesus Christ and his dominion triumph and over Satan, by which he would accomplish our redemption and eternal salvation.

**Aaron's rod clearly represents Christ himself.** It was the rod of power, that budded with life. When it was thrown on the ground, it became a serpent. That is exactly what happened when our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world in human flesh.

- **It was a serpent, Satan, the god of this world, who beguiled Eve and brought Adam into ruin.** This was by God's design (Job 26:13; Isaiah 27:1).

(Job 26:13) By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

(Isaiah 27:1) In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that *is* in the sea.

- **When our Lord Jesus Christ was portrayed in his redemptive power and grace, he was portrayed as a serpent** (Numbers 21:9; John 3:14-15).

(Numbers 21:9) And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

(John 3:14-15) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: (15) That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

The serpent Moses made and held up in the wilderness for the saving of the people was a serpent of brass because brass has within it a toxin, or

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poisonous element; and our blessed Savior, when he died in our place at Calvary made the toxin, the poison that ruined us his own, when he bare our sins in his own body on the tree. The serpent was made of brass, for another reason. — Brass is the color that most resembles the color of the noxious reptile. And our Lord Jesus, in order to redeem and save his people from their sins, was made a curse for us. Therefore, when Moses portrayed him in his redemptive character, he made the image of a serpent, the only creature of God that is said to be under the divine curse.

**Pharaoh's magicians, "with their enchantments," threw their rods on the ground and made them appear as serpents.** It really does not matter, but I am inclined to think these magicians did not actually turn their rods into serpents, but that they simply made them appear to be serpents, just as false prophets ever seek to imitate true prophets and seek to give out imitations of Christ for Christ himself (2 Corinthians 11:13).

(2 Corinthians 11:13) For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

**Then, Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. The rods of Jannes and Jambres were entirely consumed by Aaron's rod** (2 Timothy 3:1-8).

(2 Timothy 3:1-8) This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. (2) For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, (3) Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, (4) Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; (5) Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. (6) For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, (7) Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (8) Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

- **Our Lord Jesus Christ has, by his sin-atonement sacrifice, utterly destroyed the devil and cast him out** (John 12:31-33; Revelation 20:1-6).

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(John 12:31-33) Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. (32) And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me. (33) This he said, signifying what death he should die.

(Revelation 20:1-6) And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. (2) And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, (3) And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. (4) And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (5) But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. (6) Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Christ has bound the old serpent with the chain of his omnipotence, having utterly consumed every evil the evil he brought upon God's chosen. Soon, just as "Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods," our blessed Savior shall completely rid the universe of the slime of Satan upon His creation! — "And there shall be no more curse!"

- **Because Christ died and rose again, because he has swallowed up the curse, God's people have nothing to fear from the serpents Satan spawns in this world** (Isaiah 11:8-9).

(Isaiah 11:8-9) And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. (9) They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters

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cover the sea.

**A HARDENED REBEL**

Pharaoh's heart was hardened by that which, it would appear, should melt any heart (Exodus 7:13).

(Exodus 7:13) And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

The fact is, so hard is the heart of man that it cannot be melted to repentance, except God himself melt it by his grace. But the primary emphasis of this statement is the fact that our great God is in absolute control of all things, both the good and the evil (Psalm 76:10; Proverbs 21:1; Revelation 17:17; Romans 11:33-36).

(Psalms 76:10) Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

(Proverbs 21:1) The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

(Revelation 17:17) For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

**Let us worship and adore Him.**

(John 3:14-16) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: (15) That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. (16) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

(Romans 11:33-36) O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (34) For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? (35) Or who hath first given

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to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? (36) For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.