

Throw Down Your Snakes
Exodus 4:1-8

Throw Down Your Snakes

- Even when faced with the truth, some people find it hard to accept
 - This sounds like Moses and probably us
- God has begun in the process of reshaping Moses
 - This is so difficult to do and takes time for true change to develop
 - God began by revealing who He is to Moses
 - **Exodus 3:5-6 NIV**, 5 “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” 6 Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

Throw Down Your Snakes

- God has begun in the process of reshaping Moses
 - This is so difficult to do and takes time for true change to develop
 - God begins by revealing who He is to Moses
 - But also, who Moses is and what he will be developed into
 - Egyptian failure hiding on the backside of a mountain tending some else's herd
 - To be transformed into a powerful leader of the Jewish people, standing up to Pharaoh, and leading over 750,000 strong-willed Jewish people to the Promised Land

Throw Down Your Snakes

- God has begun in the process of reshaping Moses
 - **Exodus 3:9-10 NIV**, And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. 10 So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”
 - What was God’s command to Moses?
 - Go, Begin moving in that direction
 - Moses cannot see himself as a servant of El Elyon, “the Most High God”
 - God could never want me, use me, develop me into the type of leader this will need

Throw Down Your Snakes

- God has begun in the process of reshaping Moses
 - **Exodus 3:11-12a NIV**, 11 But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” 12 And God said, “I will be with you.”
 - Let’s give a brother a little grace here this morning and that is what God gives Moses

Throw Down Your Snakes

- Moses has been trained to lead during his time in Pharaoh's house
 - Historian Josephus says that Moses was a military commander, which is not surprising since a high-born Egyptian son would be expected to fight in wars
 - Moses knows you can't lead people unless the people follow and asks God the question
- **Exodus 4:1 NIV**, Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The Lord did not appear to you'?"
 - What if they will not follow me?
 - Moses has now entered the "What if" phase of following God
 - This is God's problem, but we assume all parts of God's command are our responsibility

Throw Down Your Snakes

- Moses knows enough about God that simple obedience should follow but there are nagging parts of the command Moses does not understand
 - I need more God, show me more of your plan for me
 - We forget we are called to live by faith and not by sight
 - God graces Moses once again not with a detail plan but with a glimpse of what is inside of him and a glimpse into the redemption plan for mankind

Moses has some snakes in his life hindering God's work

- **Exodus 4:2-5 NIV**, 2 Then the Lord said to him, “What is that in your hand?” “A staff,” he replied. 3 The Lord said, “Throw it on the ground.”
 - Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. 4 Then the Lord said to him, “Reach out your hand and take it by the tail.” So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand.
 - 5 “This,” said the Lord, “is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you.”

Moses has some snakes in his life hindering God's work

- Moses used this staff as he lived out his life as an Egyptian failure
 - It would have kept him from falling so he leaned on it
 - He would have used it as protection for himself and the herd
 - He would have depended upon his staff
 - He was now to depend upon God as he had his staff

Moses has some snakes in his life hindering God's work

- God did not tell Moses to throw the staff away
 - So often we want to throw away things in our past that we feel God can't or won't use or we don't want people to know about
 - God did not tell Moses to hide his staff, so you don't appear weak
 - Hear God say, "Throw it down Moses, this is no longer you!"
- Instantly the simple staff became something very real and very dangerous
 - I'm assuming poisonous since Moses ran away

Moses has some snakes in his life hindering God's work

- Moses, there things in your life just as deadly as this snake
 - Failure, Fear, Pride, Disbelief
 - Just like this staff you've been leaning on Moses, your dependance upon yourself is like a serpent in your life and our relationship
 - Throw it down Moses, you don't need them anymore
- Moses' first act of faith was to come back to the snake, reach out his hand, and take the snake by the tail
 - It is no longer fear and failure that controls you Moses
 - Hear God say, "I am the God of your snakes Moses"
 - The purpose of this Moses is not show you off but Me, **Vs. 5**, "so they may believe"

Moses has some snakes in his life hindering God's work

- Why a serpent or why was this the first sign?
 - Who betrayed Adam and Eve in the garden?
 - Who bit the Israelites in the wilderness after rebelling against God?
 - Who bit Paul on the arm on his way to Rome?
 - All signs of rebellion, all signs of sinfulness

Moses has some snakes in his life hindering God's work

- Even if your serpent is hissing, biting, intimidating, and aggressive, God has it in His hand if you will release it from yours
 - **Genesis 3:15 NIV**, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”
 - **Numbers 21:8-9 NIV**, 8 The Lord said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” 9 So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.
- **John 3:14-15 NIV**, 14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”

God demonstrates to Moses what happens if we do not throw down the snakes in our lives

- **Exodus 4:6-7 NIV**, 6 Then the Lord said, “Put your hand inside your cloak.” So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, the skin was leprous—it had become as white as snow.
 - 7 “Now put it back into your cloak,” he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh.
- The snakes in Moses’ life are poisoning him just like leprosy to a human body
 - Leprosy is a chronic and progressive infection that predominantly affects the skin and peripheral nerves causing permanent damage
 - It causes you not to feel hurt or pain
 - It is mostly hidden at first and easy to ignore

God demonstrates to Moses what happens if we do not throw down the snakes in our lives

- Moses put your hand in the first time, this is what I see on the inside of you caused by your snakes
- Moses put your hand in again, this is what I want to do in our life
 - Moses, I want to remove the effects of your snakes, not that you will forget, but they no longer are poisoning and controlling our heart, minds, life
 - This is what spiritual freedom looks like
 - God will use Moses' snakes to mold him into the man of faith we admire and respect today but they will not be his master

God demonstrates to Moses what happens if we do not throw down the snakes in our lives

- Unforgiven and unrepentant sin always brings with it a slow death and separation
 - **James 1:14-16 NIV**, 14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. 16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters.

God demonstrates to Moses what happens if we do not throw down the snakes in our lives

- Unforgiven and unrepentant sin always brings with it a slow death and separation
 - **Hebrews 12:1 NIV**, “let us throw off (*down*) everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us (*Se we can*) run with perseverance the race marked out for us”
 - **Ephesians 4:22-24 NIV**, 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

God answers the question Moses is afraid to ask but, on his mind, “What if I or they say No”

- **Exodus 4:8-9 NIV**, 8 Then the Lord said, “If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first sign, they may believe the second. 9 But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.”
- Blood is a sign of judgement in Scripture
 - **Hebrews 9:22 NIV**, In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.
 - We see this in the Old Covenant sacrifices

God answers the question Moses is afraid to ask but, on his mind, “What if I or they say No”

- Blood is a sign of judgement in Scripture
 - We see it in the cross of Jesus Christ
 - **1st John 1:7 NIV**, But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all (*every*) sin.
- Water represents life in Scripture
 - **John 7:38 NIV**, “Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.

God answers the question Moses is afraid to ask but, on his mind, “What if I or they say No”

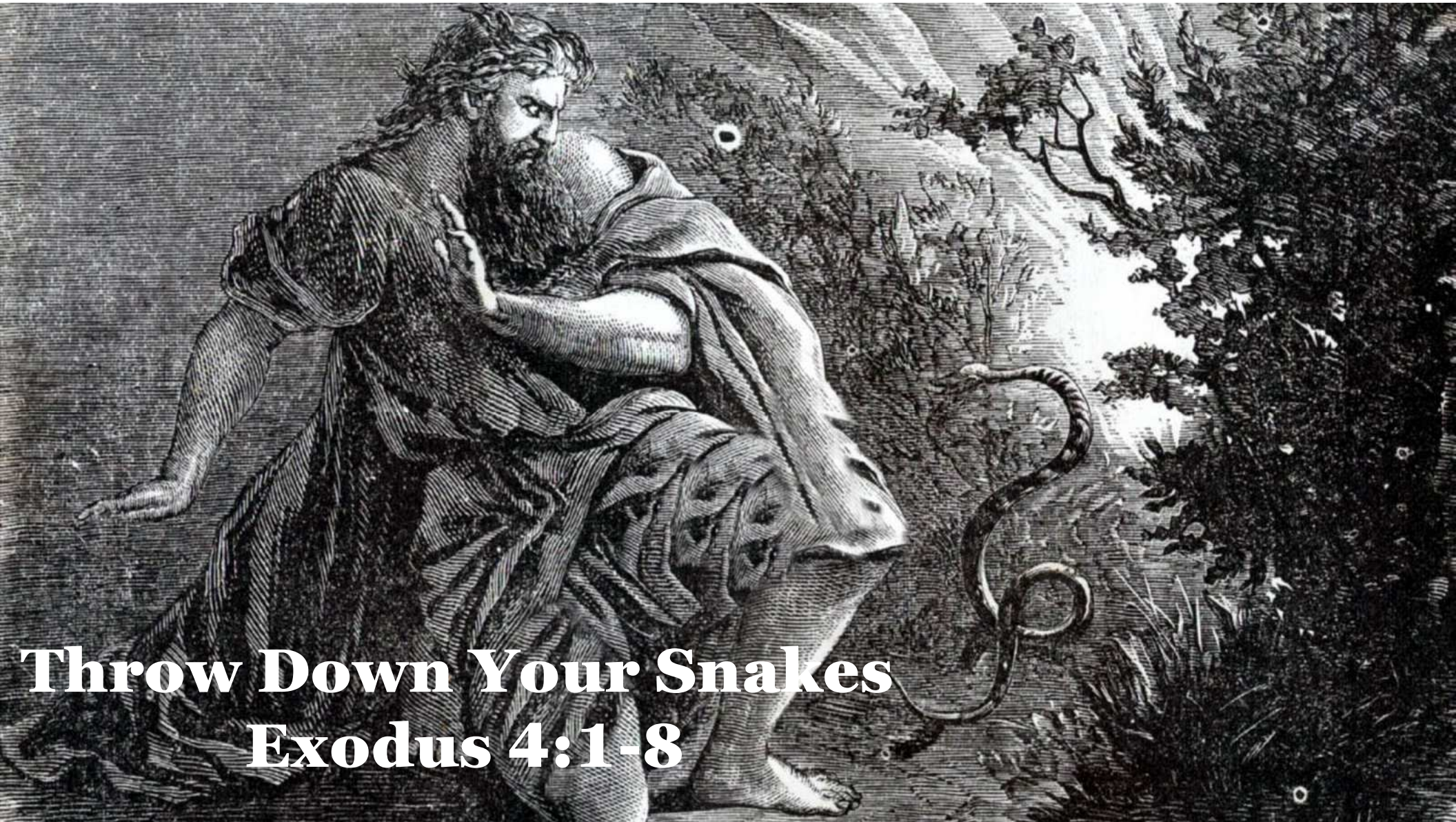
- The water of life will be changed into the blood of judgement
 - God’s judgement is coming to Egypt because they would not honor Him with obedience
 - God’s judgement is also coming to the Israelites if they refuse to believe God’s signs and commands – remember entering Promise Land first time
 - God’s judgement is coming to Moses if he refuses to “Go”
 - Do you really think there is any advantage to telling God, “no”, either by word or action?
 - They all have freedom and life in front of them, but they could refuse God’s grace and mercy and God’s redemption

God answers the question Moses is afraid to ask but, on his mind, “What if I or they say No”

- Judgement is coming to the life of those who refuse to accept God’s gift of salvation
 - **Revelation 3:20 NIV**, “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”
 - Hear Jesus say, “Throw down you snake of sin and let me hold it for you”
 - “I have already defeated your sin on the cross”
 - “Please, set aside your pride and just simply believe and receive”

Thrown Down Your Snakes

- What is it that God is asking you to throw down today?
 - What is it that you are holding onto that is keeping you from stepping into the assignment God has for you?
 - What excuses are you using to avoid moving forward?
 - What if your **ONE** move away from a divine life-changing moment?
 - Throw down your snakes and truly live



Throw Down Your Snakes
Exodus 4:1-8