

King Cobra

Healing Our Hell-Bent Hearts

April 20, 2020



Today we're making sure our Savior is secured in our heart and our mouth!



Because: **He is risen! He is risen indeed!**



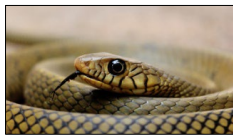
Because: **He died for us! He died indeed!** A heroic, self-sacrifice for sin, to heal the world from the enemy within, which causes us all, tragically, suicidally, inexplicably, to turn against Him! But: **Our Creator came as a kind man to save mankind.** And the Author of life returned to life, and left the grave, to lead us to life, having proved that He can set us free – if we choose to be – from our self-destructive slavery to sin. And thus: **We are free! We are free indeed!** So, ladies: **How many of you hate snakes?** Cuz that was part of the curse, that came with the promise, that came with the death, that came with the sin, that came with the serpent, that came with the garden.



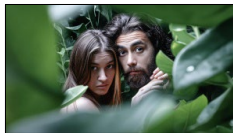
The Lord God said to the serpent ... "I will put enmity [hostility and hatred] between you and the woman, and between your offspring [the sons of the devil] and hers; [the Son of Man] He will strike at your head, while you [sons of the devil] strike at His heel." – Genesis 3:14-15 NAB



Cut to the cross, where God displays the authority of salvation by grace through faith, over the power of sin and death by means of the serpent. Not the cross of Christ, mind you. The cross of Moses. 1,400 years before. You see:



[The people] spoke against God and against Moses ... [for the umpteenth time, saying: "If only we had died in Egypt!" "We should ... go back to Egypt." "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt?" (Num 14:2-4; 20:5)] Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; [to remind them; and] they bit the people and many Israelites died. [So] The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us." ... [But] The Lord said to Moses, "[No.] Make a [bronze] snake and put it up on a [banner] pole; [and] anyone who is bitten can look at it [in faith] and live [by My grace]." So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and [sincerely] looked [up] at the bronze snake, [in faith] he lived [by God's grace]. – Numbers 21:4-9 NIV



And voila: **salvation by grace through faith to all who look to the cross.**

It's a foreshadow. But why a snake? Because they wanted to go back to Egypt, **under the rule of a king characterized by a cobra (poised to strike) on his crown.** This embodiment of several goddesses signified divine protection, and power, and authority. That's a statue of Thutmose III, the stepbrother pharaoh Moses met with. And the guy to whom God proved His authority, with a prophetic, mind-blowing, twist on a traditional Egyptian magic trick: the old "Ruler's Staff Into a Snake" routine.

Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and ... Aaron cast down his staff ... and it became a serpent. Then ... the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts. ... But Aaron's staff [snake] swallowed up their staff [snake]s. – Exodus 7:10-12 ESV



And on Moses' cross, God makes it clear that He's the King of the cobra King.

[And] Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty ... [because] You will only observe ... the punishment of the wicked. ... [because] [You will tread on] the cobra; [and] you will trample ... the serpent. "Because he loves Me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him ... I will deliver him and honor him ... and show him [who rests in the shadow of the Most High] My salvation." – Psalm 91:1-16 NIV

See it? The shadow of the salvation of the Most High to come? We're told:

These [OT signs and symbols] are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. – Colossians 2:17 NIV

"Now is the judgment [Jesus declared] ... now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to [look at] Myself." [And then just wait till Easter!] This He said, signifying by what death He would die. ... [Not at the hands of the Romans, as much as the tongues of the religious rulers; but] Among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him – John 12:31-42 NKJ

Now [three years prior] there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the [71 member] Jewish ruling council. [Called the Sanhedrin] He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know You are a teacher ... from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs You are doing if God were not with him." [But] In reply Jesus declared ... "No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." [You must believe in your heart – which he did – and confess with your mouth – which he didn't (Rom 10:9-10)] "How can a man be born when he is old? ... Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb" ... "You are Israel's teacher ... and do you not understand these things? ... You people [on the ruling council] do not accept our testimony. ... [But] Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, [to save those dying in sin, by grace through faith in God's power] so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone [in the world] who believes in Him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, [to be lifted up] that whoever believes in Him [though dying in sin] shall not perish but have eternal life. [By immeasurable grace, through even just a mustard seed of sincere faith] For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. [Therefore] Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but [just like those bitten by venomous snakes] whoever does not believe stands condemned [and dying in sin] already – John 3:1-18 NIV

[And after that] Jesus said, [to those rulers] "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the One I claim to be" [Because ... Easter!] ... Yet you are ready to kill Me, because you have no room [in your heart] for My Word. [Beginning with that first prophecy of the Son of Man versus the Sons of the serpent] ... [Because] You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. [To strike to kill] He was a murderer from the beginning ... and the father of lies." – John 8:28-44 NIV

You see, those *self-serving religious rulers* were a *New Testament type of venomous snakes*.



"You brood of vipers, [Jesus said] how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks." – Matthew 12:34 NIV



For it is with your *heart* that you *believe* [as many of them, like Nicodemus, *did*] and are *justified*, [in your belief of truth] and [then] it is with your *mouth* that you *confess* [your faith in truth, as many of them, like Nicodemus, *didn't*] and are *saved*. [From yourself!] – Romans 10:9-10 NIV



[Because] "He who [actually] believes in Me ... out of [My Word in] his heart will flow rivers of living water." [Rather than deadly poison] – John 7:38 NKJ

[Which is why] The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life – Proverbs 10:11 NIV

[Because] The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; [and] the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook. ... [But] A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are a snare to his soul. ... [So be warned] Death and life are in the power of the tongue – Proverbs 18:4, 7, 21 ESV

Though *evil is sweet in his mouth*, and he *hides it under his tongue*, though he *s pares it* and does not *forsake it*, but still *keeps it in his mouth*, yet ... [inevitably] it becomes cobra venom within him. ... [And so, ultimately] He will *suck the poison of cobras*; [and] the viper's tongue [flowing from his suicidal heart] will slay him. – Job 20:12-16 NKJ

And there's no *charming a hell-bent heart*. Long after *Moses lifted the snake*, and long before *Christ was lifted in like fashion*, the Lord warned of the *poisonous religious rulers to come*.

"How can you say, 'We are wise, for we have the law of the Lord,' when actually the lying pen of the scribes has handled it falsely? [Therefore] The wise will be put to *shame*; [on Easter] they will be *dismayed and trapped*. [By the cross] Since they have *rejected the Word of the Lord* ... all [who "have no room for My Word," (Jn 8:37) unwittingly] practice deceit. ... See, I will [once again] send venomous snakes among you, vipers that cannot be charmed, and they will bite you," – Jeremiah 8:8-17 NIV

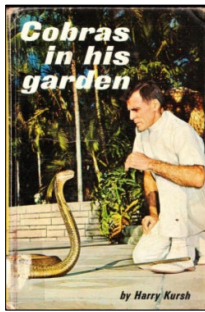
[Which is why Jesus said] "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you *escape being condemned to hell?*" – Matthew 23:33 NIV

[And why David said] *Rescue me, Lord, from evil people* ... who devise *evil things* in their hearts ... They *sharpen their tongues like a snake*; [and] the venom of a viper is under their lips. [How far under? About twelve inches; cuz it starts in our hearts] ... [They] intend to *trip up my feet*. ... [But] The upright will dwell in Your presence. – Psalm 140:1-4, 13 NIV

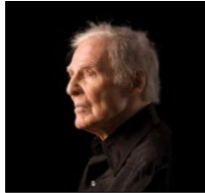
[Because] Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty ... [You will tread on] the cobra; you will *trample* ... the serpent. "Because ... I will *rescue him* ... *deliver him* ... and *show him My salvation*." – Psalm 91:1-16 NIV



Turns out, **the cross of Moses and Jesus were both a type of God-given anti-venom**. Know how you *make antivenom*? It's fairly simple. 1) **Get a brood of vipers**. 2) **Get bit**. 3) **Don't die**. (Or die and rise from the dead.) 4) **Drain and purify your blood**. And then, 5) **Use to transfuse for healing**.



The world's foremost snake handler, *Bill Haast*, injected himself over the years with *small doses* of venom from every *poisonous snake*. His *immune system* became so *powerful* that, before *dying* in 2011 (at the *age* of 100), he'd been *flown* around the world 21 times, to save hopeless *snakebite victims* by his blood. Well, you and I and this whole world are in desperate need of **the anti-venom of the King of the kings of the cobras**, because we're the otherwise hopeless victims of every trace of *sin*, that *hides* so well within, and ultimately becomes the *deadly venom* of our own demise. And poor Nicodemus comes so close to taking a stand for the truth.



[The chief priests and Pharisees] asked [the Temple guards], "Why didn't you bring [Jesus] in?" "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared. "You mean He has deceived you also? ... Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? No! But ... Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of [the ruling council's] own number, asked, "Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?" – John 7:45-52 NIV



That's it. That's *all* we get from ol' Nic. Until, that is, Jesus is *lifted up* on the cross. That's when the *time-bomb*, that Jesus had *planted* in his heart, went off. The curse. The serpent. The promise. The cross. The snakes swallowed up. And Isaiah's prophecy that a day was coming when:

[The Lord Almighty] will swallow up death forever. [And] The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; [on Easter! And] ... In that day [in broad daylight] they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in Him, and He saved us. [From sin] This is the Lord, we trusted in Him; let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation." – Isaiah 25:8-9 NIV

Not to mention, David's foretelling that it won't be only the heel that the enemy strikes. Saying:

A band of evil men has encircled Me, they have pierced My hands and My feet. ... [And] They divide My garments among them and cast lots for My clothing. – Psalm 22:16-18 NIV

And then, while Jesus is dying, Nic's out buying, in broad daylight, what he'll need to publically mourn and bury Jesus' body. Nicodemus and Joseph, another former secret disciple serving on the ruling council, broke rank on the day Jesus died, and grieved bitterly for failing the Son their own council condemned. And in so doing, Nic and Joe became the fulfillment of an incredibly specific OT prophecy.

"[I will pour out on] the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, "Father, forgive them" (Lk 23:34)] so that, when they look on Me, on Him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over Him, as one weeps over a firstborn." [But as they say, Sunday's comin'!] – Zechariah 12:10 ESV

[Because] He was pierced for our transgressions – Isaiah 53:5 NIV

So that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— and free those ... held in slavery by their fear of death. – Hebrews 2:14-15 NIV

Because: **He is risen! He is risen indeed!** And thus: **We are free! We are free indeed!**