

Prophets 9

So that we have these signs thus given to authenticate the prophet for the immediate and for the distant and we have the encouragement given for the immediate in the different and the different purposes enter in to the action of the prophet in coming up and showing God's disapproval of unbelief right at this vital point in the beginning of the actions of the king. Mr.---? (Discussion with students). Yes. To us--we have to judge. We have a responsibility to judge. Now in this particular case it would be easy to judge. They had a remarkable sign. Now, of course, when Moses went down to Egypt and he said, "I am a prophet of God" and they said, "Let's see the proof", and he took his stick and threw it down and it became a serpent, "Well!" they said, "That's wonderful but let's see what the Egyptians can do," and they did the same thing, so Moses' sign wasn't worth much then because the Egyptians could do just as good but of course in that case went on till he did things the Egyptians couldn't do. But there always is the responsibility to test the evidence. God doesn't give us things so that we are relieved of the necessity of testing and judging. In this case he made less of testing than in most cases. It was a very vital situation at the beginning of the apostasy of the northern kingdom and he gave the sign in the clearest way. Well now it continues then and the king then sees the situation as rather hopeless and the king experiences a death bed repentance. I don't mean the king was dying but I mean it was a repentance which was perhaps as insincere as some death bed repentances^{are}/. Doubtless there are many that are thoroughly sincere but there is always a question laid upon them and in this case here is the king in a difficulty and he comes to God, and when people turn to God in a difficulty they may have a true repentance and they may not have. We can only tell later on. We can't go too much by what they say right then. But the king says, "Intreat the face of the Lord. Pray for me," so the man of God besought the Lord and the king's hand was restored again and he could draw it back now, so there was a further sign that he was a true prophet. He prayed to God and God heard his prayer. And so the king said to the prophet, "Well, now," he says, "I was wrong. I thought this man was an imposter. I see now he is a true man of God." He said, "Come home with me and refresh yourself and I will give you a reward." Of course that's the way Satan always does. He tries to destroy the true prophets of God and if he can't destroy them then