

# EXODUS 4

## MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

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### KEYWORD

God (Plural)  
God (Singular)  
LORD  
GOD  
Lord  
lord  
El Olam  
Bara  
Asah  
Beth  
Numbers

### REVERANCE

Elohim (The Trinity)  
El  
Jehovah & or Yahweh (YHWH)  
Jehovah & or Yahweh  
GOD the Master (Kurios), Adonai  
Man the Master  
Everlasting God  
God creating from nothing  
God making or assembling from existent materials  
House

- 1 - Unity between God the Father & His Son Jesus (John 10:30)
- 2 - Represents union, division, and verification
- 3 - Harmony, New Life & completeness (467 times)
- 4 - Creation & The creative ability of God.
- 5 - God's grace, goodness and favor toward humans (318)
- 6 - Imperfection of man and the sin and weakness he has
- 7 - Perfection
- 8 - New beginnings
- 9 - Divine completeness or conveys the meaning of finality (49)
- 10 - God's authority, completeness, order, and divine perfection
- 11 - Disorder, chaos and judgment (11 - 24 & "11th" - 19)
- 12 - God's power and authority (187)
- 13 - Rebellion
- 40 - Represent completeness or wholeness.
- 70 - Perfect spiritual order carried out with all power.

### Keywords

"create" (bara), "make" (asah), and "form" (yatsar). In Isaiah 43:7 - All the three are used.

*Jehova* means the becoming one as God relates to man and man's needs and becomes to man whatever man may need.

## CORE

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Monday, August 7, 2023 @ 4:50 AM

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I was created in the beginning as a spirit. (Genesis 1:27) As a spirit I know God only in 1 dimension and that's God the creator.

However, God the creator desires that I know him in rather multiple dimensions such as but not limited to:

God the lover, healer, caretaker, friend, dad so much more

So he brings me on earth to experience and know him in all the different dimensions that are presented here on Earth.

You see it's only here on Earth that I will be given the opportunity to know him in all dimensions.

After I have known him in all these different dimensions, then I can worship him in truth and in spirit.

Then I can see him without the fear to run or be intimidated. Then he can dwell and I can dwell in him as one.

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**PRAYER**

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**Father we thank you for the privilege of studying your word together.**

Thank you for the records Jesus, that lead us to you and eternal life in you.

**Jesus let your Holy spirit now implant upon our hearts your truths.**

Thank you Jesus that revelation knowledge will flow freely, uninterrupted & un-hindered by satanic or demonic forces.

**In Jesus's name and everybody say Amen!**



### REVIEW

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Exodus chapter 4 continues God's dialogue with Moses at the burning bush and concludes with his initial meeting with the Jewish elders in Egypt.

This chapter also gives a prophetic summary of the deliverance of Israel before the events actually happened.

In Exodus 3, God dealt with two of Moses' objections:

- Who am I? and What is thy name?

And here, we find three more objections which God also deals with.

These being:

- They will not believe in verse 1;
- I am not eloquent in verse 10 and
- Send ... by the hand of whom thou wilt send in verse 13.

I have extensively explained these latter objections in the full episode.

*Please pick it up on our social media accounts if you haven't already watched it.*

Anyways after all the objections were dealt with;

Moses asked and received Jethro's permission to return to Egypt;

He was also assured by the LORD that the enemies who sought his life were dead;

So he began the journey, taking along his wife Zipporah and their two sons Gershom and Eliezer.

Now Moses had neglected to circumcise Eliezer.

So on the way to Egypt, God taught him that His law was not merely for the people, but for their leaders also, smiting him with some kind of a fatal malady, which both Zipporah and Moses recognized as punishment for failure to circumcise Eliezer.

So Zipporah circumcised Eliezer and God permitted the resumption of the journey.

However, at this point, Moses decided to send Zipporah and the children back to Midian, and continued the journey alone.

Then God instructed Aaron to go and meet Moses.

These long lost brothers eventually met and Moses gave Aaron a full account of all that had happened; and, together, they went before the elders of Israel, who believed them, and thus

the stage was set for the great series of miracles that would result in the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian slavery.

Now this goes without saying that ...

Moses' first two objections represented a lack of faith in himself and by contrast, his three objections to service represented his lack of faith in God.

Furthermore;

Moses' struggle with his faith should give hope to everyone.

I mean; If God was willing to select Moses knowing the weakness of his faith, there is no reason He cannot forgive you when your faith falters.

From Moses' failures, God reveals seven important lessons for every believer.

First, from Moses' doubt that others would accept him, He reveals that you must have faith in His promises for your life.

Second, from the three miracles that He performed through Moses, He reveals He will either transform you through your faith, or you will face His judgment.

This is symbolized by the fact that the first two miracles involved the transformation of evil things into good things while the third miracle only involved judgment.

Third, from Moses' refusal to serve based upon his allegedly poor speech, He reveals that you must have faith that He will speak for you when you serve Him.

Fourth, through Moses' plea for God to send someone else, He reveals that you must have faith to accept His calling in your life.

Fifth, from Moses' failure to tell his father-in-law his real reason for returning to Egypt, He reveals that you should never fear telling others the truth when you are serving Him.

Sixth, from Moses' failure to circumcise his son, He reveals that you must have faith in the Word and fear Him.

This includes practicing what you preach.

As His representative, He does not want you to turn people away by being a hypocrite.

Finally, from the faith of the Jews in accepting God's Word as true, He reveals that He also wants you to accept His recorded miracles as confirmation of the inerrancy of His Word.

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*That's it, The Summary of Exodus 4*

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### EXODUS 4: 1

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And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

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What's happening is that:

God is looking for a volunteer to go and stand before the Pharaoh on his behalf and demand the release of His people.

He has chosen an 80-year-old man who had spent his first forty years in Pharaoh's court and knows very well the kingdom protocols.

This same man has also spent his last forty years as a shepherd, watching his father in law's sheep here in the wilderness of Midian.

So while here in Midian God spoke to him out of the burning bush, and He's still speaking as we continue into chapter 4.

So this man is called Moses and just like many of us Moses protested his own inability's and inefficiencies.

To which God answered that He will be all sufficient for Him.

And again Moses protested that the people won't believe that God sent him and that also the Pharaoh won't listen to him.

And then finally, we get to the heart of the issue,

*"I just don't want to do it, LORD."*

It's amazing how many times we go around the bush, and really, right at the bottom of the whole issue is, *"I don't want to."*

And so we see as the LORD eliminates the excuses one by one, he finally gets to the real problem:

*"I just don't want to do it."*

But again, it's amazing how many of the projects of God are halted because of "supposes."

You know...

"But suppose this or suppose that ..."

And, you know, how people can imagine more problems ☺

Now, I guess that's the difference between being an optimist and a pessimist.

In that ...

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A pessimist has the capacity of seeing every kind of a situation that might arise.

And so Moses is figuring out everything that might go wrong:

*"Suppose, LORD, they'll say to me, 'Ah, the LORD didn't really appear to you.'"*

Now in Exodus 3:18, God promised Moses that the leaders of Israel would listen to him.

He said,

*"They will heed your voice."*

So technically when Moses made this protest, he may as well have said,

*"But what if you are wrong, God?"*

It was good that Moses had no confidence in the flesh; but again it was really bad that he lacked confidence in God.

Surely in view of the burning bush, the voice of God, and the divine encounter, there was no place for Moses to say, "But."

But again...

This was quite a human thing that Moses did here.

When looked at purely from the human standpoint, what God was requiring of Moses was absolutely impossible.

Only one man, without money, without troops, without military experience, or without anything else that men would have considered necessary, Moses had been commissioned to deliver 2,000,000 slaves from bondage, thus depriving their earthly lords of fantastic benefits and profits!

Sure, Moses displayed a weakness of faith here, but, he finally obeyed, and because he is called a man of faith in Hebrews 11:24-29, let's be reluctant to say that he lacked faith.

Plus, this weakness of Moses magnified the power of God, making GOD, not Moses, the Hero and Mover in the Book of Exodus.

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### EXODUS 4: 2

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*And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.*

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This reflects a precious principle regarding how God uses people in that God used what Moses had in his hand.

Moses' years of tending sheep were not useless.

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## EXODUS 4 MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

Those years had put into Moses hand things he could use for God's glory.

God didn't use the sceptre that was in Moses' royal hand when he lived in Egypt, but He did use the simple shepherd's staff.

God likes to always use what is in our hand.

For example:

- In Judges 3:31; God used what was in Shamgar's hand.
- In 1 Samuel 17:49; God used what was in David's hand.
- In Judges 15:15; God used the jawbone of a donkey in Samson's hand and
- In John 6:9; God used five loaves and two fish that were in the hand of a little boy.

So Moses said, "A rod":

That rod of Moses would:

- Part the Red Sea.
- It would strike a rock and see water pour forth.
- It would be raised over battle until Israel won.
- It would be called the rod of God in Exodus 4:20 and 17:9.

How appropriate was such a choice on God's part!

The Egyptians despised shepherds; and now, it was to be a shepherd's staff that would humble and overthrow the all-powerful enemies of God's people.

The might and glory of Egypt would be humbled and destroyed by a rod, yet it was merely an instrument in the hands of an instrument (Moses) of God!

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### EXODUS 4: 3

And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it.

Moses threw the rod on the ground and men; it turned into a serpent.

In fact, not only did it become like a snake; it became a real snake that was frightening enough to Moses that he ran from it.

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### EXODUS 4: 4

## EXODUS 4 MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

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This was a test of Moses' faith.

Snake charmers usually take snakes by the neck to prevent their biting.

The almost certain way to be bitten by a serpent is to take it by the tail!

As to what kind of a snake this was, we are not told, however, implicit in Moses' fear of it is the near certainty that it was a poisonous serpent.

Many have supposed that it was the cobra, of the type depicted on the headdress of Egyptian kings.

Here again, the symbolism is most important, showing God's power as infinitely superior to the serpent-crowned rulers of Egypt.

As such in this little incident Moses learned how to do what God told him to do even when it was uncomfortable.

Now it should be note that:

The serpent had been a constant enemy of the Seed of Woman (Genesis 3:15) and represented the power of the evil one which prevailed in Egypt.

Certainly the mission of Moses then beginning was a key factor in the bringing in of that Visitor from on High who would crush the serpent's head.

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### EXODUS 4: 5

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That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

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This miracle would make the children of Israel realize that the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob was with them and that the God of the covenant had not forsaken them.

So if they question, if they doubt, then just throw your rod on the ground. First sign.

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### EXODUS 4: 6

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And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow.

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## EXODUS 4 MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

The disease here called leprosy was definitely not the same as Hansen's disease, now called leprosy because the "whiteness" here mentioned and elsewhere is not found in Hansen's disease.

The type here was the worst form of leprosy and was considered incurable.

In fact the Hebrew word for leprosy covered a number of assorted diseases much as our word 'cancer' currently does.

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### EXODUS 4: 7

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And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.

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Each of the first two signs had to do with transformation.

Something good and useful (a rod or a hand) was made into something evil (a serpent or a leprous hand), and significantly, they were then transformed back again.

There was a real message in the first two signs.

The first said, "Moses, if you obey Me, your enemies will be made powerless."

The second said "Moses, if you obey Me, your pollution can be made pure."

Doubts in each of these areas probably hindered Moses, and before those signs spoke to anyone else, they spoke to Moses.

And so this is the pattern with all God's leaders.

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### EXODUS 4: 8

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And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

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Here, in the mouth of God Himself, is the evidence that miracles alone cannot actually give faith.

It was also true during the life of Christ that his miracles did not provide a lasting faith in those who witnessed them (at least, in countless examples, John 12:37).

People whose faith depends upon seeing signs often require a steady stream of miracles, or they forsake Christ (John 6:14,30).

In exactly the same way today we meet those who believe that the power and love of God are inadequately displayed in His providence, preservation, and transformation of lives through

## EXODUS 4 MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

the Gospel and so they demand that he show His favor and power by the gift of tongues and healing.

So here God is giving to Moses some signs by which the people may know that indeed, God has appeared to him.

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### EXODUS 4: 9

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And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.

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The third sign was simply a sign of judgment.

Good, pure waters were made foul and bloody by the work of God and they did not turn back again.

This showed that if the miracles of transformation did not turn the hearts of the people, then perhaps the sign of judgment would.

If they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice shows that if the sign of judgment was only given when unbelief persisted in the face of the miracles of transformation right before them.

Now this power of Moses to turn the waters of the great Nile into blood should be understood in the light of the status held by that river in the Egyptian culture.

River Nile was honoured as divine, and its waters were held to be the source of all that was good and desirable in Egyptian life.

Through Moses, God showed his power and superiority above the pagan gods of Egypt.

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### EXODUS 4: 10

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And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord,

(This is called an expression of unusual force.

It is identical with that which Joseph's brothers used in addressing the steward of Joseph's house in Genesis 43:20.

Judah used it when pleading with Joseph to spare Benjamin in Genesis 44:18.

Aaron used it when pleading for Miriam in Numbers 12:11.

And Joshua thus addressed God when speaking of Ai in Joshua 7:8.)

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## EXODUS 4 MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

After these remarkably persuasive signs, Moses still objected to God's call.

Moses revealed that he was not confident with his ability to speak – slow of speech is literally *"heavy of mouth."*

It seems that Moses' excuse was not justified.

Clearly 40 years before this Moses was not slow of speech and slow of tongue.

Acts 7:22 says Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.

Those years of eloquence in Egypt ended 40 years before this.

For 40 years, Moses only seemed to speak to sheep and unfortunately his self-confidence was gone.

However, for Moses all he needed was God confidence instead.

### EXODUS 4: 11

And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?

This is one of the most difficult passages in the bible:

*As God here declares that He is the one who has created the mute, the deaf, the blind.*

He takes the responsibility for these physical handicaps.

God is here sort of putting Himself in a position of jeopardy of being accused by man of not being just or fair.

And yet, He has a purpose in all things.

God has made me as He has made me for His own purposes.

I may have impediments.

I may have genetic disorders, genetic weaknesses, and yet, God has a purpose in it all.

So unfortunately many think this is cruel of God.

However, the point here was not to analyse the origin of evil, but to show that God is so mighty that He can even call the mute, deaf, and blind to do His work.

Therefore, Moses' perceived inadequacies didn't matter at all.

So if Moses was a poor speaker, was this news to God?

Does God have trouble keeping track of who is deaf, who is blind, and who is mute?

Does Moses really think God made a mistake here?

If Moses was a poor speaker, it didn't matter – the mighty God said,

*"I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say."*

By extension, God is sufficient for us, no matter what real or imagined inadequacies we have.

### EXODUS 4: 12

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Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

The question that rises here is,

*Does God purposely make some people to be dumb (mute), deaf, or blind, and others with all such abilities?*

In some instances, this is surely true, as in John 9:1-3.

Although God is not responsible for all the cases of blindness and deafness.

Many human handicaps are clearly the result of sin and/or the violation (whether knowingly or not) of God's eternal laws.

The great lesson here is that one should not despise the gifts which God has given, nor refuse to use those gifts which men may deem less perfect.

Even the most gifted can find no grounds for pride and egotism, because, as Paul stated it in 1 Corinthians 4:7

*What hast thou that thou hast not received?*

The answer of course being **nothing!**

This verse also reminds us of what Jesus promised the apostles in Matthew 10:19:

*Be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak.*

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### EXODUS 4: 13

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And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

So, Moses is now trying to back out of the task completely.

*"Lord, send by whomever else You will, don't send me."*

I sometimes wonder why God chose to use imperfect men to do His work.

You know, it seems to me He could have done such a better job with an angel.

You know, at the time of Ezekiel, the LORD said,

*"I sought for a man among them, who would stand in the gap, who would fill in the hedge: and I found none. Therefore my judgment had to come."*

God was looking for a man to intercede for the people:

One who would stand before God, and the people and intercede on their behalf.

And there was none.

And, therefore, the judgment of God came against them.

I wonder how many times God is searching for a man and can't find one.

Here was Moses; all of the excuses that Moses is offering to the Lord, and as the LORD answers the excuses one by one, he finally gets to the place and says,

*"Lord, send someone else."*

So, Moses, at best, is reluctant to be God's instrument.

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### EXODUS 4: 14

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And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother?

(God's mention of Aaron as, not merely the brother of Moses, but as the Levite, indicates that, from that very moment, God ordained that the priesthood will reside in Aaron and the Levites.)

I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

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God was not angry when Moses asked *"Who am I?"* in Exodus 3:11.

He was also not angry when Moses asked, *"Who should I say sent me?"* in Exodus 3:13.

Neither was He angry when Moses disbelieved His Word when he said,

*"suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice"* in Exodus 4:1.

And even when Moses falsely claimed that he was not and had never been eloquent in verse 10;

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## EXODUS 4 MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

But God was angry when Moses was just plain unwilling.

There may be a hundred understandable reasons why Moses was unwilling, some of them making a lot of sense.

Perhaps Moses really wanted to serve but was unwilling because of past rejection.

Nevertheless, the basic truth was that Moses was unwilling, not unable.

When God brought Aaron to help lead with Moses, it was an expression of His chastening to Moses, not of His approval or giving in to Moses.

Aaron was more of a problem to Moses than help.

Aaron did turn out to be a source of problems for Moses.

Aaron instigated the worship of the golden calf, fashioning the calf himself and building the altar himself in Exodus 32:1-6.

Aaron's sons blasphemed God with impure offerings in Leviticus 10:1-7.

At one time, Aaron openly led a mutiny against Moses in Numbers 12:1-8.

And am sure that as these events unfolded, Moses must have looked back at why the LORD gave Aaron to him as a partner and that being that God was angry at Moses' unwillingness.

Now Aaron was a smooth talker, but a man weak on content.

Moses had to put the words of God into the mouth of Aaron.

In this sense Aaron was like a modern-day news reader, who does nothing but read what others have written for him.

It should be noted that Aaron wasn't God's spokesman; but rather Moses' spokesman.

This goes without saying that God doesn't need leaders like these.

It isn't God's way to have a man minister as a smooth talker but not be qualified for leadership.

God wants to combine the offices of "talker" and "leader."

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### EXODUS 4: 15

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And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

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This passage teaches much about inspiration and how we should regard the Bible.

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Note that it was "words" which God gave to Moses, and that those same words were conveyed from Moses to Aaron.

Nothing in any part of the Bible indicates that God gave His prophets some general or nebulous idea, and that they then put it into THEIR words.

We either have the Word of God in the Bible, or we have nothing at all!

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### EXODUS 4: 16

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And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

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Now that's a very strange thing to say, isn't it?

*"You will be as God to him."*

What in the world is God talking about?

How does God deal with his prophets?

To some; God speaks, His prophets listen, and they improvise.

But No...

God speaks, His prophets listen, and they say exactly what God said.

God literally puts the words in their mouths.

Now listen to what He says.

*"You will be as God to him."*

You see, God is teaching Moses about what a prophet is here.

He's literally saying,

*"Moses, you're going to put my words into Aaron's mouth, and then he is going to speak exactly what I have told you to tell him to say."*

Prophecy is not according to the opinion of the prophet.

Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1:20-21+ that:

The inspiration of the prophet is not born of his own creativity but rather that he speaks God's word.

He's carried along by the Holy Spirit and he speaks only that which God has given him to speak.

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## EXODUS 4 MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

God has, in fact, given us a window on the doctrine of inspiration here.

The Bible is revelation. It's God's revelation of Himself to us in written form.

The words of the prophets are not their reflections upon an encounter with God but are God's words given to them to describe the encounter that they have had with Him and His word for His people.

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### EXODUS 4: 17

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*And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.*

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We tend to believe that a lot more can be done if we have large financial resources, talented manpower, and innovative ideas.

But these things don't matter to God.

Consider just a couple of examples:

In Judges 3:31+, a relatively unknown man named Shamgar delivered Israel from the Philistines single-handedly.

How?

He won a great victory by killing 600 Philistines with nothing more than an oxgoad (a stick sharpened on one end to drive slow-moving animals).

Here in Exodus, God went on to use that rod in Moses' hand to convince the people to follow him, to turn the Nile River into blood, to bring great plagues on Egypt, to part the Red Sea, and to perform miracles in the wilderness.

Moses' rod and Shamgar's oxgoad, when dedicated to God, became mighty tools.

This helps us see that God can use what little we have, when surrendered to Him, to do great things.

God is not looking for people with great abilities, but for those who are dedicated to following and obeying Him.

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### EXODUS 4: 18

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*And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law,*

*(The Hebrew word here rendered father-in-law actually means any close kin by marriage; and brother-in-law would probably be a better rendition here.)*

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It is possible that Reuel was deceased and that his son Jethro had succeeded him as tribal leader.

Through marriage to Zipporah, Moses had become a member of her clan, of which Jethro was head.

Tribal law in such a case required permission to leave.

Besides that; it would have been necessary for Jethro to look for a replacement of Moses on the duties of looking after the sheep.)

and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.

When the fire faded from the burning bush and when the voice of God was silent across the desert, then it was upon Moses to obey, and to do what God told him to do.

I can't help it but ask myself these questions:

- Did Moses have any idea what he was getting into when he agreed to take the LORD's call?
- Could he see the Egyptian army closing in, and God parting the Red Sea through Moses' hand?
- Could he see the song of victory, the water from the rock, the manna from heaven, the battles won through prayer?
- Could he see vision of God on Mount Sinai, the voice of God from heaven, the tablets of stone, the golden calf?
- Could he see the tabernacle built, the priests consecrated?
- Could he see the spies sent forth into Canaan, the response of unbelief, and a thirty-eight-year sentence to wander the wilderness?
- Could he see a lonely climb to the top of Mount Pisgah, where he would die looking out over the land of promise?
- Could he see the honor of sitting beside the LORD on the Mount of Transfiguration?

Did Moses have any idea what he was getting into?

**Evidently Not ☺**

It should also be noted that Moses was a good example of the truth that serving God doesn't mean neglecting your employer.

Moses made sure to his employer and father in law that it was clear for him to go.

"Even the call of God did not erase the need for human courtesy and respect for one's father-in-law."

As well, Moses didn't really tell his father-in-law the story behind his desire to return to Egypt.

Perhaps he just felt it was too fantastic and would rather let God demonstrate His Word through fulfilling it.

It is far more beautiful and more beneficial for others to see the fruit of God's guidance in your life than to hear you explain all you believe God said to you.

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### EXODUS 4: 19

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*And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.*

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So here we see that as Moses stepped out by faith, God spoke to him and encouraged him.

Perhaps Moses' hesitation and repeated excuses were based on fear of death at the hands of the Pharaoh who had sought to kill him after killing the Egyptian in Ex 2:15+.

Fortunately for Moses that evil Pharaoh had died and so had all the men who were seeking to kill him.

This declaration by God reminds us of the angel's message in the New Testament to Joseph in Mathew 2:19-20+

*"But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and said, "Get up, take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child's life are dead."*

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### EXODUS 4: 20

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*And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the **rod of God** in his hand.*

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Note this is not called the "Staff of Moses" but the "Staff of God!"

God is practical and will use what you have, often the simpler, the better, for then the glory clearly goes to the One Who deserves it!

Regarding his sons we had previously only learned of Gershom (Ex 2:22+, Ex 18:3+), but in 40 years in Midian the couple obviously had another son whose name we later learn is Eleazar (Eliezer) (Ex 18:4).

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Now ...

In Mark 6:8+ Jesus mentioned the staff in His instructions to His 12 Disciples when He sent them out.

*"He instructed them that they should take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff--no bread, no bag, no money in their belt"*

The staff Jesus referred to was a common walking stick, and was used by most ancient travellers.

Of course the purpose of the staff for the disciples was not the same as it was for Moses, but it is nevertheless an interesting parallel for both were sent on mission by God and both were entering the spiritual battle of a lifetime.

*When God uses a man, He does not need anything but the man.*

Wholly His instrument, holy, set apart, useful to Him and prepared for every good work (2 Ti 2:21+).

Are you that man or woman?

If He calls and commands, then go, for you will be entering into the adventure of a lifetime.

Today we go not with dependence on a staff, but in complete dependence on supernatural power of God's grace (1 Cor 15:10+) and the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 1:8+, cf Col 1:29+), Who gives us everything necessary for life and godliness (2 Pe 1:3+) to accomplish the will of our Father (Jn 4:34+).

Now to some of you it is tempting to think of God's staff as a magic wand and to wish that we could have one ourselves.

But what the staff represents is available to us today!

The staff was a visible sign of God's saving power, and now God's saving power comes through the cross.

The place to find God's power is not in some supernatural wonder but in the message of the cross where Christ was crucified for sinners.

The cross is God's sign...

It is through the cross of Christ that God has accomplished the greatest exodus of all, leading sinners out of bondage to sin and into relationship with him.

The divine power represented by God's staff is available to everyone who lays hold of Jesus Christ.

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### EXODUS 4: 21

And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.

---

So God is saying, "Go, but you're going to have a tough time. I'm going to harden the heart of the Pharaoh.

He's not going to let the people go, it's not going to be an easy task."

You know sometimes, it says that:

- God hardened the heart of Pharaoh in Exodus 4:21.
- Pharaoh hardened his own heart in Exodus 8:15 and
- Pharaoh's heart was hardened, without saying who did it in Exodus 7:13.

But who really hardened Pharaoh's heart?

We might say that it was both God and Pharaoh; but whenever God hardened Pharaoh's heart, He never did it against Pharaoh's will.

Pharaoh never said,

*"Oh, I want to do what is good and right and I want to bless these people of Israel"*

and God answered,

*"No, for I will harden your heart against them!"*

When God hardened, He allowed Pharaoh's heart to do what Pharaoh wanted to do.

In otherward; God gave Pharaoh over to his sin even as we read in Romans 1:18-32.

It should also be noted that God does not harden men by putting evil into them, but by not giving them mercy.

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### EXODUS 4: 22

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And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn:

To the ancient Egyptians, the firstborn son was special and sacred.

And so it is interesting that God instructed Moses to tell Pharaoh that Israel was God's son, His firstborn, for Pharaoh believed that he alone was the *"son of the gods."*

I see a bit of *"in your face Pharaoh"* implied in this declaration by God. ☺

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### EXODUS 4: 23

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And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn.

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This is a serious warning to give to the ruler of the most powerful nation on earth.

It could easily result in losing one's head.

Yet despite the "risk" Moses did not make any excuses or try to get God to soften the message.

The Pharaoh had killed many of Israel's firstborn sons and this would be an "eye for an eye" judgment on Egypt and a direct assault on the royal line as the firstborn of Pharaoh was likely the one who assume the throne when Pharaoh died.

These verses look forward to the final plague against Egypt described in Exodus 11 and Exodus 12, the plague that would force Pharaoh to drive Israel from his sight (and site!)

Note that this warning to Pharaoh appears to be given at the beginning of Moses' interactions with Pharaoh.

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### EXODUS 4: 24

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And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him.

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This may be Moses' third "near death experience," (so to speak) - Ex 2:15, Ex 3:14 (not mentioned but clearly a risk as Uzzah discovered), and here in Ex 4:24-26.

I say "may be" because "him" is not specifically stated to be Moses.

Moses himself was circumcised, but Gershom was not and theoretically he would have been the one at risk of being cut off.

One reason most commentaries suggest it was Moses whose life was at risk is because some of the translations have added "Moses."

For example, the excellent NET (NLT, NIV are similar) has "Now on the way, at a place where they stopped for the night, the LORD met Moses and sought to kill him."

Note that the NAS (ESV, CSB) does not add "Moses. "

Note however that although Moses is not in the Hebrew text in the next verse (Ex 4:25), almost every version inserts it.

So ...

- How did the LORD manifest Himself in seeking to put him to death?
  - How did Zipporah know there was a life or death situation?
-

➤ How did she know that the issue in question was her uncircumcised son Gershom?

We simply do not know.

One has to wonder why does this somewhat mysterious event occur at this point.

Clearly God is addressing an episode of significant disobedience in His servant Moses!

Circumcision was to be performed at 8 days of age, and presumably his son was considerably older by this time.

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### EXODUS 4: 25

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Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.

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Perhaps Zipporah objected to the rite of circumcision.

She was not an Israelite and may have thought it a barbaric custom.

Perhaps this was why God held Moses accountable (for not doing what was right, even though his wife didn't like it), but disabled Moses so that Zipporah had to perform the circumcision itself.

Some wonder why Moses' wife seems so bitter here.

Perhaps for the first time she recognized the serious nature of her husband's call and how important it was for their whole family to walk in the ways of the LORD.

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### EXODUS 4: 26

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So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.

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Now here is Moses: he is to be God's instrument in bringing to the people the deliverance out of Egypt, and then also, to bring to them the law of God.

When God commanded the circumcision as a badge for the people of God, "All of the males are to be circumcised", God said that if they weren't circumcised, they were to be cut off from Israel.

Actually, you were not an Israelite because you were born into the family, you were an Israelite once you became circumcised.

Otherwise, you were cut off from being a part of that family.

Now, when Moses' first son was born, they probably circumcised him because the indication here is that there was only one son that was circumcised.

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## EXODUS 4 MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

Which would indicate that the other one had already been circumcised.

His wife, being from Midian, no doubt, did not like the whole idea.

When her second son was born, she probably objected to Moses circumcising the second son.

And Moses was a very meek person, he's not one to fight, and so he probably said, "Oh, well, all right", and let it go.

Now, he is on his way to do the work of God and to represent God before God's people.

But he had neglected the commandment of God in the circumcision of the second son.

And so, the LORD met him and sought to kill him.

That is, he probably had some kind of a seizure, perhaps he had a heart attack.

Just how, the Scripture does not indicate; but his wife knew exactly what was going on.

When she saw her husband in the death throws, she knew what was happening; and she took a sharp stone, and circumcised the second son.

But she wasn't happy about the whole thing.

She threw the foreskin at Moses' feet and said, "You're a bloody husband to me."

Now, it would appear that at this point, that Moses sent her and the boys back to her father: for we do not find Moses' wife or sons again until they come out of Egypt, and they come to meet him as he comes into the area of Midian with the children of Israel.

So, there was probably the tension over this whole thing, and Moses allowed them to go on back to her father, because they're not mentioned at all in the record until they come out.

So the LORD let him go: then she said, You're a husband of blood or a bridegroom of blood, to me, because of the circumcision.

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### EXODUS 4: 27

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And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him.

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Go carries the idea of a command, not a suggestion.

In Ex 4:14 God had told Moses his brother Aaron *"is coming out to meet you."*

This was not just a trip across town but was some distance across a barren wilderness.

Clearly God in some way had spoken to Aaron and paved the way for him to make this journey to Mount Horeb, aka the mountain of God.

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## EXODUS 4 MOSES' COMMISSION FROM GOD

The text does not tell us whether God told Aaron why he was to meet Moses.

But hey what are the odds that after 40 years 2 brothers are going to meet at some remote mountain in the desert wilderness at the same time?

It follows that this reunion is an example of God's providence, of God behind the scenes but orchestrating the scenes He is behind.

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### EXODUS 4: 28

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And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.

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In short, Aaron now knows Moses has been sent to deliver Israel and that he would do so only after God had brought 10 plagues on Egypt (aka all the signs).

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### EXODUS 4: 29

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And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel:

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Presumably Moses and Aaron came into Egypt together but there are no details of this journey.

One can imagine it would be quite a time of banging kabozi about their ups and downs in the previous 40 years.

The Septuagint for assembled is the Greek verb sunago which is the root of the Jewish word synagogue (sunagoge).

One might say this was the first "Jewish Synagogue" meeting!

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### EXODUS 4: 30

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And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people.

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Recall Moses' unwillingness in verse 14 which resulted in God passing the baton for most of the speaking engagements to his brother Aaron (Ex 4:15-16).

Moses received the word from God but it had to be spoken to the elders by his brother Aaron because he had resisted the LORD's commission.

It reminds me of the priest Zacharias who was the father of John the Baptist and who was struck mute by the angel after expressing doubts in Luke 1:18+ regarding John's birth (Lk 1:11-19,20+).

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### EXODUS 4: 31

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And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

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And so, one of the fears that Moses had,

“They won’t believe that You sent me, they won’t believe that You appeared”, is alleviated as Aaron and Moses meet with the elders.

They show the signs that God had given: the rod turned to a serpent, and the water to blood, and the leper’s hand.

The people believed, and they bowed their heads and worshipped because God had remembered them.

Years before when Moses offered himself as a deliverer to Israel, they rejected him.

Now the time and the circumstances were right, and God’s destiny for Moses’ life would begin to be fulfilled.

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### THE LESSONS WE LEARN FROM THIS STUDY ARE:

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1. What excuses are you making to avoid doing the work of God that scares you?

We know Moses wanted his people freed from Egypt (Acts 7:25), but when God gave him the opportunity, He resisted and made excuses.

You will always be able to think up excuses and dream up “what if” scenarios for things that could potentially go wrong.

The question is whether we are going to live in fear and do nothing or take on the challenge of God’s work with trust that He will bless our circumstances and work through our weaknesses.

2. Through Faith, Trust in God’s Promises for You.

At the burning bush, Moses questioned God’s calling by doubting whether others would believe him.

3. Through Faith, God Will Transform You, or You Will Face Judgment.

Instead of judging Moses for his lack of faith, God showed His mercy and grace by offering to perform three miracles through him.

The first miracle involved turning Moses’ staff into a snake and giving Moses the ability to turn it back into a staff by acting in faith by grabbing the tail of the serpent.

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### 4. Through Faith, God Will Give You the Words to Speak for Him.

Even after God comforted Moses and offered to perform miracles through Him, Moses refused to accept God's calling.

At this point, Moses claimed that he was inarticulate and not a gifted speaker.

### 5. Through Faith, Accept God's Calling to Serve Him.

God's offer to perform miracles through Moses was ultimately not enough to convince him. Because his faith was weak, he pleaded with God to send someone else.

### 6. Through Faith, Never Fear When You are Doing God's Will.

After Moses' miraculous encounter with God at the burning bush, Moses failed his first test of faith.

He was unwilling to even tell his father-in-law the real reason for his planned return to Egypt.

### 7. Through Faith in the Word and Fearing God, Practice What You Preach.

In addition to resisting God's calling, Moses also failed to circumcise his son.

As God's representative, Moses had to be free from hypocrisy before he could lead.

Thus, God threatened to strike Moses down if they proceeded further without circumcising the son.

### 8. Through Faith, Accept God's Miracles as Confirmation of His Word.

Finally, although Moses was not faithful to God, God showed that He is faithful to His promises by causing the Jews to believe in Him through the miracles performed through Moses.

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We will start from Chapter 5 next week ...

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**IF YOU HAVEN'T RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOUR, I WANT YOU TO PRAY THIS PRAYER WITH ME RIGHT NOW**

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- Heavenly Father, I realize that I'm a sinner
  - But right now I repent of my sins
  - I make you my Lord
  - I receive the free gift of forgiveness of sin
  - I need you, Jesus
  - Be my savior
-

➤ So right now I declare by faith that I am saved in Jesus' name. Amen & Praise God

If you just prayed that prayer with me online, please let us know through our website and we shall send you a free eBook as a gift to you today.

Otherwise, welcome to the family of God. Amen!

### LET'S STANDUP FOR THE FINAL BLESSING

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us:

- Be with you, bless you and keep you
- May the Lord cause his face to shine upon you and give you peace
- May your heart be filled with his love
- May you walk in the spirit
- May you be strengthened by the work of his Holy spirit in your inner man
- May you be increased in knowledge and understanding of His word, His will and His purposes for your life that you might walk before the Lord in a way that's pleasing unto him
- And may God increase your faith and your trust
- May he work in your life in a beautiful way as he natures you and as he leads you into that path of fellowship with him self
- May your life be enriched in all things in Christ Jesus
- And May the Lord and his blessings be upon you while we are absent from each other until we are brought back together again to continue our fellowship and our growing together in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ
- Amen