

Exodus 4:1-31
Objections in the Face of God

“In the ancient Palestinian-Israelite society, one’s staff was an essential personal possession, a means of protection and identification and even a symbol of one’s power... From the point of view of identifying oneself, a staff was in certain ways the equivalent in ancient culture of what a passport, wallet, or driver’s license would be today. From the point of view of protection, it was the ancient equivalent to what a sidearm would be today... A staff was so basic and prized possession that it might be mentioned metaphorically as the only thing a person possessed... Luke 9:3 (“Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money”). In many cases a person’s staff apparently was carefully carved with various markings and/or words to make it uniquely identifiable (Gen. 38:18). For those with a degree of societal power, a staff represented their authority. Misuse of a staff was a serious offense, akin to but potentially worse than forgery, depending on the circumstances, as Moses learned when he used God’s staff without authorization in Num 20:1-13.

Although Moses’ staff had potentially all the uses categorized above, it had yet another that elevated its importance far beyond that of any other staff. By divine designation it became not merely Moses’ staff but God’s.” Stuart

- I. Moses had to come to an understanding of God’s power so that his trust in Him would not waver in the many challenges he would face in leading God’s people out of Egypt. One of God’s incommunicable attributes is his omnipotence, meaning he is all-powerful. In his power, he created the heavens, the earth, all animal life and mankind. Therefore, the heavens and all that is in them, the sun, moon, stars, the heavenly realms, where he dwells, the earth with its weather, earthquakes, volcanos, wind, storms, the mighty roaring sea and especially man is under his powerful control. He has the power to calm the storm, throw Satan and his minions out of heaven and into hell, heal the sick, determine the destiny of a soul, and fulfill whatever he chooses and nothing or no one can stop Him, not even Satan or the powers of this dark world or the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. No one can pluck us out of His hand nor break the seal the Holy Spirit put on us the second we were saved through the mighty power of Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins. His power is what we’ve been given to help us navigate through the dangerous waters of living in a fallen broken sin sick world. It is made perfect in our weakness so that he may be glorified through our dependence on him. Like with Moses, we must come to that understanding if we expect to stand firm in the faith as we live His will no matter how difficult it might seem.

Ex. 4:1-9

2 Cor. 12:9-11

2 Peter 1:3

John 20:28-29

2 Cor. 5:7

1 Peter 1:8-9

“God’s incommunicable attributes are those characteristics that cannot be shared with His creatures. God’s incommunicable attributes are things that only God can have and that make Him distinct from creation. For example, God is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, sovereign, transcendent, immutable, and self-existent. We can define these attributes, but we often do not fully comprehend them and can never call them our own. The incommunicable attributes of God are what make God, God. They are His distinguishing features that only He possesses. The incommunicable attributes of God are cause for us to revere, worship, trust, and praise the Creator.” gotquestions.org

- II. Moses was shown an incredible display of God’s mighty power firsthand through two miracles that touched him in a personal way. They should have convinced him to put his full confidence in God to give him what he needed to face Pharaoh. If God were speaking to you through a burning bush, turned your staff into a snake and back again and turned your hand leprous and back to normal, would you have confidence then, to do what he asks of you, or would you hesitate? Moses’ hesitation speaks of the power of the flesh and our penchant to convince ourselves that the Lord will not give us what we need to do what he asks no matter what we are told about him. It seems to always boil down to our willingness to put our faith in God to be true to his Word and true to us despite our weakness in the flesh. God knows that it is a challenge for us to live by faith, yet it is what is expected of us. He makes that clear in Hebrews 10:38-39 where he says, *“But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back.”* 39 *But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.”*

Ex. 4:10-31

Acts 7:32

1 Cor. 12:4-7

Rom. 9:14-18

Gen. 17:11,14

“harden the heart” means to **“be/make stubborn.”** God did not allow his grace, mercy or compassion to penetrate Pharaoh’s heart, he left him to his own natural inclination, his own stubbornness.

“God does not harden men by putting evil into them, but by not giving them mercy.”
(Augustine)

Prov. 3:25-26 *Do not be afraid of sudden terror or of the ruin of the wicked, when it comes, 26 for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.*

Gal. 5:16-17 *16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.*