

# Here I Am, Send Him

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Preacher: Shawn Woo

- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey. And they will listen to your voice, and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us.
- And now, please, let us go a three-day journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God. But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand.
- So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it. After that, he will let you go. And I will give this people favor in the side of the Egyptians.
- And when you go, you shall not go empty. But each woman shall ask of her neighbor and any woman who lives in her house for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters, so you shall plunder the Egyptians.
- Then Moses answered, But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, The Lord did not appear to you. The Lord said to him, What is that in your hand?
- [ 1 : 1 4 ]     He said, A staff. And he said, Throw it on the ground. So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it. But the Lord said to Moses, Put out your hand and catch it by the tail.
- So he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand, 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.
- Again, the Lord said to him, Put your hand inside your cloak. And he put his hand inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous like snow.
- Then God said, Put your hand back inside your cloak. So he put his hand back inside his cloak, and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh. If they will not believe you, God said, or listen to the first sign, they may believe the latter sign.
- If they will not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground, and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground.
- [ 2 : 2 4 ]     But Moses said to the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.
- Then the Lord said to him, Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute or deaf or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.
- But he said, O my Lord, please send someone else. Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite?
- I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you both what to do.
- He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him, and take in your hand this staff, with which you shall do the signs.

[ 3 : 33 ] This is God's holy and authoritative word. As Christians, we know that we have been called by God to share the good news of Jesus Christ with our neighbors. But even though we know that, sometimes we don't for a number of reasons.

And all of those reasons fall under two general categories. First, concerns about people's reception. And second, concerns about our presentation. We have concerns about people's reception.

We fear that they will respond unfavorably, or even with hostility. We're worried that it will ruin our relationship with them and make things awkward. We also have concerns about our own presentation of the gospel.

We fear that we won't say the right things and give the wrong answers to their questions. We say, well, I don't have a seminary degree. I don't know apologetics, or I'm not a good speaker, and so on.

And these are exactly the objections that Moses raises when he is commanded by God to deliver the Lord's message of liberation to the Israelites. He says in chapter 4, verse 1, they will not believe me.

[ 4 : 44 ] This is worrying about their reception. They will not listen to my voice. In chapter 4, verse 10, And I am not eloquent, but I am of slow of speech and of tongue. But notice that all of these objections pertain to man, what people might do or can't do.

They will not believe me. I am not eloquent. God is conspicuously absent from this picture. And that's precisely the problem.

When God is in the picture, it changes everything. And in this passage, we are reminded of the Lord's promise, the Lord's power, and the Lord's presence. And that leaves Moses with no excuse.

And from this, we're to learn that the Lord accompanies and empowers us as he empowered Moses to proclaim the gospel as his hand and mouth.

So let's look at first the Lord's promise in chapter 3, verses 16 to 22. In verse 16, God starts to give Moses specific instructions for what he is to say and do when he gets to Egypt.

[ 5 : 48 ] He says, Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob has appeared to me saying, I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt.

And I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Interestingly enough, the first group that Moses is to address as soon as he gets to Egypt is not Pharaoh. It's not the Egyptians. It's not even all of the Israelites. It's the elders of Israel that represent Israel and govern Israel.

And this governing structure of Israel was taken over by the church in the New Testament, which is why we have to this day elder-led churches. And here he's supposed to present this to the elders so that the elders together with Moses are to go and confront Pharaoh.

So he says to gather the elders of Israel together and tell them that I have sent you. And then God says in verse 18, Moses is to go and confront the king of Egypt with the elders of Israel and say this, the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us.

[ 7 : 05 ] And now, please let us go a three days journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God. That's an interesting request if you're familiar with the Exodus story because in the rest of the book, there is no indication whatsoever that the Israelites intended to come back to Egypt after three days.

But he asks for a three days journey into the wilderness, which most likely a full day of journey into the wilderness, a full day of worship and sacrifice, and a full day journey back.

In Exodus 8, when Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron to go sacrifice to your God within the land, Moses insists on having to go out into the wilderness to do so. And this is what he says there in verse 26 to 27 of chapter 8.

The offerings we shall sacrifice to the Lord our God are an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice offerings abominable to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us?

We must go three days journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord our God as he tells us. Then Pharaoh briefly relents before he changes his mind later, and he says this, I will let you go to sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness, only you must not go very far away.

[ 8 : 19 ] So it seems that Pharaoh does understand Moses' request not as a demand for permanent emancipation and departure from Egypt, but as a temporary leave of absence for religious purposes.

This is why the Egyptian foremen say of the Israelites in Exodus 5a, they're idle. That's why they're saying let us go and sacrifice to our God. They think they're just being lazy and making excuses to get out of work.

So this raises a question, then why does God tell Moses to tell Pharaoh this? Why not just start from the get-go and say, hey, we're gonna go, we're leaving, we're out of here.

We're never coming back. Moses, most likely the three-day journey into the wilderness was designed to be a ruse to fool Pharaoh. They'd leave Egypt with the pretext of going on a three-day journey into the wilderness in order to make sacrifice to the Lord, but then they would flee and never return.

And Pharaoh was likely aware of that risk, which is why he was so reluctant to let them go. And this interpretation has troubled some Christians over the years, and because it makes it seem like God was commanding Moses to use deception, to lie.

[ 9 : 31 ] And Numbers 23, 19 says, clearly God is not man that he should lie, or a son of man that he should change his mind. But I don't think this has to trouble us because God does not ever lie in the sense that he never goes back on his word, and he always fulfills his promises.

Every word of scripture is true. However, this doesn't mean that using a calculated ruse like that is off limits in every context.

So let me explain. So for example, lying is also condemned in scripture. I mean, not just lying, but lying is condemned in scripture. It's one of the Ten Commandments. So you guys know, familiar with Exodus 20, 16, you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Leviticus 19, 11, so you shall not lie to one another. In Proverbs 6, it says, a lying tongue is one of seven abominations that God hates and despises.

And the reason for that is because lying is something that erodes trust. It's the foundation. The truth-telling is the foundation for any kind of relationship or community. And so it is decidedly anti-social behavior to tell a lie, and it unravels the very fabric of society.

[ 10 : 47 ] However, there are contexts where deception is appropriate. And the ethical commands in scripture are always to be interpreted contextually. So for example, killing is also prohibited in scripture, but it is explicitly allowed in cases of capital punishment and when you're at war with an enemy.

Stealing is also forbidden, but plundering your enemies in war is permitted. Likewise, deceiving an evil, hostile force is not the kind of lying that is forbidden in scripture.

So in Joshua chapter 8, verses 1 to 2, it's the Lord himself who commands Joshua to lay an ambush against the city of Ai. So they send one part of their army in a frontal assault, and then they pretend, they feign defeat, and they start retreating and fleeing.

And so when all those people in the city of Ai come out to pursue them out of the city, the people lying in ambush behind the city claim the city and burn it, and then surround the enemy from front and back.

That's deception. Appropriate deception. And so that seems to you what's going on here. It's like 1 Samuel 16 is another example that people use often.

[ 12 : 02 ] Samuel is commanded by God to go and anoint David, one of Jesse's sons, as the new king of Israel because Saul has been unfaithful to him. But then Samuel understandably objects, saying, Saul will find out and then he'll kill me.

And then God tells Samuel, go and tell them that you are hosting a sacrifice. And then have the sons of Jesse come and I'll tell you what to do. It's intended to deceive Saul.

So in the same way, the three-day journey into the wilderness is designed to help the Israelites escape without a violent confrontation. And that's not, in any way, does it undermine God's character because he is always truthful and he is always reliable.

But of course, the Lord already knows that Pharaoh will not let them go like this. And the fact that Pharaoh is not even willing to let them go on a three-day leave of absence reveals how hostile and stubborn he really is. So he says in verses 19 to 22, but I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand.

So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it. After that, he will let you go. And I will give this people favor in the side of the Egyptians. And when you go, you shall not go empty, but each woman shall ask of her neighbor and any woman who lives in her house for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing.

[ 13 : 22 ] You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters, so you shall plunder the Egyptians. So these four verses serve as kind of an outline that will kind of systematically be fulfilled in Israel's Exodus from Egypt.

So God stretching out his hand and striking them with wonders summarizes Exodus 7 through 11, part of 12, where God strikes Egypt with the 10 plagues or disasters. And then Exodus 12, 30 to 5, 36, almost word for word fulfills verse 21 and 22, which is, again, a fulfillment of Genesis 15, 14, and even an earlier promise to Abraham that God would bring judgment upon Egypt and that Israel would leave Egypt with an abundance of possessions, with great possessions, plundering the Egyptians in the process.

But the word plunder, while it suggests a bloody battle and greedy looters, it's not what's in view here. This is war, but it's not war that the Israelites will fight.

It's war that the Lord himself will fight on their behalf. So it says, the Lord will stretch out his mighty hand and strike Egypt. The Israelites will not have to engage Egypt in battle.

It says, the Lord will give Israel favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that when the woman asks their Egyptian neighbors for silver and gold jewelry and clothing, they'll just give it to them. It's not men with swords intimidating people and exacting silver and gold from them with threats.

[ 14 : 51 ] It's the woman peaceably going and simply asking and they will be enriched through that. And what good is silver and gold jewelry for people who are going into the wilderness?

You might ask, these precious jewels will be used in the construction of the tabernacle later on for the worship of God, which also shows God's foresight, his sovereignty over all the events in the book of Exodus.

And the fulfillment of these promises remind us that God is the Lord, as we learned last week, that he is the Lord, the Yehovah, I am who I am, the unchanging one, the faithful one, one who fulfills all of his promises.

So bring to mind all the wonderful promises of scripture. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you to the very end of the age.

These promises will be fulfilled. The Lord accompanies and empowers us to proclaim the gospel as his hand and mouth, and that's the Lord's promise.

[16:12] And then we see the Lord's power in chapter four, verses one to nine, and Moses has yet another objection. He says in verse one, but behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, the Lord did not appear to you.

This seems like a reasonable concern until you remember that God promised Moses in chapter three, verse 18, they will listen to your voice.

So this is a direct contradiction of what God just told Moses. God says, they will listen to your voice, and then Moses says, nah, they will not listen to my voice.

You know, God would have been fully justified, you know, in getting angry with Moses here, but God patiently accommodates him and gives him signs that demonstrate his power. He says in verses two to five, the Lord said to him, what is that in your hand?

He said, a staff, and he said, throw it on the ground. So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it. But the Lord said to Moses, put out your hand and catch it by the tail.

[17:18] So he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand, 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.

Of all the animals he could have chosen, you know, why does God turn Moses' staff into a serpent? The ancient Egyptians used the uraeus, the decorative, kind of upright, cobra, kind of sculpture, you know, they used that as a symbol of sovereignty, of royalty, and even divine authority.

So if you look at Pharaoh's headdress, it's shaped in that form of a cobra. It was a symbol of the Egyptian goddess, Wedjet. And so this miracle is a demonstration of the Lord's power over both the Egyptian goddess and Pharaoh.

And the Lord has total control over this snake. He commands Moses, put out your hand and catch it by the tail. Right? Intuitively, because the tail is the furthest away from the head, that seems like the natural place to grab a snake because it's the safest place, spot to grab a snake, but that's actually not a good spot to grab a snake because they are very flexible and they can coil around and they can bite you all over your body.

And so the best way to kind of capture a snake or make sure it doesn't attack you is to grab it right behind the head. But God tells him intentionally to go grab it by the tail to show his total mastery over this snake and over Egypt and over Pharaoh.

[18:52] And as soon as he obeys, it becomes a staff, reduced to a staff in his hand. And then God gives a second sign in verse 6 to 8.

Again, the Lord said to him, put your hand inside your cloak and he put his hand inside his cloak and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous like snow. Then God said, put your hand back inside your cloak and so he put his hand back inside his cloak and when he took it out, behold, it was restored like the rest of his flesh.

If they will not believe you, God said, or listen to the first sign, they may believe the latter sign. It's translated leprous here but it could refer to a broad range of skin diseases that cause flaky skin, flaky white skin.

And so, it's interestingly that the first two signs that God gives are both connected to Moses' hand, right? Reach out your hand and grab the snake and put it and reach out your hand and let it go and then it's put your hand in your pocket and then take it back out and it becomes leprosy.

And I think that's intentional because the word hand occurs repeatedly throughout the book of Exodus and especially here in chapters 3 and 4 because in chapter 3, verse 8, what did God say?

[ 20 : 03 ] I have come, I have come down to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Egyptians. And in chapter 4, verses 19 to 20, God says, I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand so I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it.

After that, I will let you go. There's a contrast between the hand of the Egyptians, the hand of Pharaoh, and the hand of the Lord and that's a deliberate play on an Egyptian idiom.

One of the frequently used titles for Pharaoh was the Lord of the strong arm. Early 15th century, Pharaoh Thutmose II is described as, great of power, mighty of arm.

But this so-called Lord of the strong arm will now be compelled by the mighty hand of the Lord. And throughout the book of Exodus, the Lord's outstretched arm or mighty hand is repeatedly mentioned.

And this is also why Moses and Aaron are often seen stretching out their hand or stretching out their staff as extensions of their hand because they are extensions of the Lord God Himself.

[ 21 : 12 ] And Moses' staff features prominently in the Exodus narrative for this reason because it's an extension of the Lord's hand. And it's called the staff of God in Exodus 4.20 and 17.9.

And a staff is significant because, I mean, when you think of a staff, you just imagine a walking stick for someone that's having a hard time walking. But a staff was carried around by a lot of people in the ancient Near East.

It served almost as a form of personal identification. That's what you see in Genesis 38 in the interaction between Judah and Tamar. He uses his staff as kind of a down payment or guarantee of his payment to her and as a form of identification.

It was also a form of self-protection, much like a baton that law enforcement officers will carry. And so it's a very important and symbolic piece of equipment.

And the Lord uses the staff as an expression, as a representation of his identity and his power. And that same word in different places of scripture is sometimes translated as scepter if it's in the hand of a king.

[ 22 : 29 ] So with God's powerful presence, Moses' lowly shepherd staff becomes the scepter of the king of the universe.

And then in verse 9, God gives the third sign of turning the Nile into blood, which is the first of the ten plagues. And this too shows God's authority and power over Egypt. The Egyptians' livelihood depended on the Nile and the river was personified in the Egyptian God, Hapi.

And by turning the Nile into blood, which symbolizes life and atonement on the one hand, but also death on the other, he's signaling the fact that he will bring salvation to the Israelites, but death and judgment to the Egyptian oppressors.

All of these signs point to the Lord's powerful personal involvement in the deliverance of Israel. Israel. This is instructive for us because sometimes we hesitate to obey God when he commissions us to do something.

We hesitate to tell people the good news of Jesus because we don't truly believe that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. We are full of fear and doubt when thinking about evangelism or other forms of obedience because we think, to put it bluntly, that salvation is up to us.

[ 23 : 51 ] We think, I need to save my father. I need to save my niece. I need to save my sister-in-law. I need to convince them of the gospel.

I need to make them believe. And that's too daunting, indeed an impossible task for all of us. But Ephesians 1a tells us that it is God who gives the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him so that the eyes of the, our hearts are enlightened.

To see him, that's the only way people can see God. 1 Corinthians 1 tells us that apart from the spirit of God, human beings in their nature cannot understand or accept the things of God.

The decisive work is done by the Lord, not by us. We are merely instruments in the hand of the Lord. And in his hand, even the lowly shepherd's staff becomes a mighty royal scepter.

Because the Lord accompanies and empowers us to proclaim his gospel. And that should embolden us for witness. But here, the assurance of the Lord's power is still not enough for Moses.

[ 25 : 05 ] He objects yet again in verse 10, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you've spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.

Some people infer from this that Moses had a stammering or a stuttering problem or some people say that he just had forgotten so much Egyptian after 40 years away from Egypt that he was not fluent enough to speak to them.

It's hard to say exactly, but judging from verse 14, where God brings Aaron to help Moses and specifically notes that Aaron speaks well, he seems like Moses doesn't speak well.

Acts 7.22 does say that he was mighty in his words, but Moses, while he did say mighty and grand things as instructed by the Lord, according to this, he was not a fluent, you know, impressive speaker.

He was not the kind of person whose words just roll off their tongue. He was no Frederick Douglass or Martin Luther King Jr. But the Lord answers him in verses 11 to 12, who has made man's mouth?

[ 26 : 10 ] Who makes him mute or deaf or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now therefore go and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.

God once again is hearkening back to his name, which means, among other things, I will be with you. And now God promises, I promise that I will be with you and that means I will also be with your mouth to teach you what to say.

God is the one who sovereignly makes a man mute or deaf or seeing or blind. He's the one who knits us in our mother's womb intricately, intimately.

and yet do we think that God will not enable us to do what he has called us to do? Would a luthier, a master guitar maker, not know how to tune a guitar?

Would a potter not know how to put the pot he made to use? If God is calling you to do something, he can enable you to do it.

[ 27 : 23 ] Maybe God is calling you to confess some sins that you can't imagine yourself admitting to, you think it would ruin your life. But if God commands you to do it, which he does, he will enable you to do it.

He will empower you to do it. Maybe God is calling you to share the gospel with your parents, but you can't imagine yourself doing it. It's too hard. They would never listen. There's a generational gap.

I wouldn't even know what to say, but since the Lord commands you to do it, he will enable you to do it. And maybe God is calling you to step up into a ministry within a church and you feel totally inadequate.

But if the Lord is calling you to do it, he will empower you for it because the Lord accompanies and empowers us to proclaim his gospel as his hand and his mouth.

The crux of the most, the crux of Moses' problem is not all these excuses that he is rattling off. The crux of Moses' problem is that he thinks he is the protagonist of the story.

[ 28 : 25 ] When in reality, God is the protagonist. God is the principal actor of this story. How much of our reluctance to obey God in life is due to the fact that we mistake ourselves to be the center of the story, the lead of the story because we think it depends on us.

18th century English missionary William Carey has a famous saying, quote, expect great things from God, attempt great things for God. Do we never attempt great things for God because we don't expect great things from him?

Because we only expect to have our own abilities and our own resources and our own connections at our disposal. Successful proclamation of the gospel does not depend on our eloquence.

1 Corinthians 1.17, Paul writes, for Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel. And not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

If we persuade people to believe in and follow Jesus with our eloquence, then it would deprive the cross of Christ of its power, of saving power. James Denny, a 19th century Scottish pastor, once warned the preachers, no man can give the impression that he himself is clever and that Christ is mighty to save.

[ 30 : 01 ] God uses lowly shepherds as princes. God uses lowly shepherd staff as scepters because that's what brings most glory to him.

When he takes people who are weak and makes them strong, when he takes people who are incompetent and inadequate and supplies all that they need to accomplish his mighty purposes, that is God's modus operandi.

That is how he works. I'm not denying that God uses our gifts and experiences. Surely the fact that Moses grew up in Pharaoh's court was an asset in this mission and surely the fact that Moses had this idealism and reacted strongly against perceived injustices helped him to undertake this mission as well and surely the 40 years of humbling and taking his sheep around the wilderness of Midian to find grass equipped him to lead a very stubborn nation that wouldn't follow him and also to know where to take them in the wilderness, to navigate the wilderness.

All of these things are assets that Moses had but notice that scripture never credits these things. the emphasis in scripture is squarely on the Lord's presence with Moses not on Moses' capabilities.

Moses will not succeed because he is capable or knowledgeable no he will succeed because Yahweh is with him. however real and debilitating our inadequacies and incompetencies are they are in the final analysis irrelevant because God overcomes them all.

[ 31 : 54 ] God's calling upon our lives is not about us it's about him. so now Moses is running out of excuses and so he resorts to just stubborn flat out refusal.

He says in verse 13 oh my Lord please send someone else. It's a wonderful line. It's such a contrast in Isaiah chapter 6 verse 8 remember when God calls him what does Isaiah say?



Here I am send me and here's Moses the great Moses earlier in chapter 3 verse 4 he said here I am and now he says send him anyone but me you know and now the Lord is angry and justifiably so he says in verse 4 then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said okay now pause here for a moment what do you expect God to say right after that sentence?

He says anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said like how would you complete that sentence? This is how I would complete that sentence. You insolent faithless stubborn ungrateful useless bum I'm going to burn you up in this burning bush and find someone else to do this job.

that's how I would finish that sentence but look at what God says and what God does in his anger in verses 14 to 16 then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said is there not Aaron your brother the Levite?

[ 33 : 35 ] I know that he can speak well behold he is coming out to meet you and when he sees you he will be glad in his heart and you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both what to do he shall speak for you to the people and he shall be your mouth and you shall be as God to him God is so gracious and compassionate God knows Moses' weakness God knows Moses' lack of faith God knows Moses' fears and before Moses had given any of his five excuses God had already sent Aaron on his way to meet Moses to serve as a spokesperson for him before he even asks God knows what kind of God who knows us and cares about us this way what kind of God condescends to our weakness and has compassion towards in this way

God is not a rigid harsh taskmaster God is patient with us God knows our weaknesses God is compassionate with us I think and I think you would agree with me that Moses has done quite enough here to disqualify himself and lose this job but still God insists on using him even though he uses Aaron to help Moses and this is a concession this is an accommodation of Moses' weakness and faithlessness it's still Moses that will be his primary instrument he says he that is Aaron shall be your mouth and you shall be as God to him Moses is God's chosen representative God is faithful this passage ends with God reminding Moses not to forget the staff in verse 17 and take in your hand the staff with which you shall do the signs in the immediate context a sign refers to the miracles that God will do but a sign is not necessarily miraculous later in

Exodus the eating of unleavened bread is called a sign to remember God's Passover a sign at its heart is something that points to something directs us to something here the sign that God gives is proof pointing to the reality of God's indwelling presence that God has been with God has appeared to Moses and that God now goes with Israel his people and God has given us an even greater sign the ultimate sign Jesus says in Matthew 12 39 and 40 evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish so will the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth this is the sign of Jesus death and resurrection on the third day this is the ultimate sign that God gives us to prove to us to point to the reality that he is with us that he keeps his promises with us because

God being holy cannot dwell with sinners and we as sinful humanity have generation after generation sinned against him and insisted on our own ways but because God has sovereignly decided to save a people for himself and because God has irrevocably tied himself committed himself by covenant to his people and because that is who he is Yahweh I am who I am the one who keeps his promises the one who is always true to himself he sends his son so for his name's sake Jesus comes to die on the cross for our sins so Moses was used to crush the serpent of Pharaoh but the Lord Jesus crushes the ancient serpent the prince of this world through his death and resurrection and that's what gives us the assurance that God is with us wherever we are and whatever we do in his name the risen

Lord accompanies and empowers us to proclaim the gospel remember the cross when you feel alone when you feel inadequate in what God has called you to do remember the cross that he is with you he goes with you you're his hand and mouth to proclaim the gospel among all nations let's pray Lord we do want to be your your hand and mouth to do your deeds to speak your words grant us the faith to remember your promise your power your presence that we may be faithful witnesses to you and thank you for your compassion for being so patient and merciful to us bumbling servants that we are in Jesus name we pray amen and from to