

## Exodus 4

### Commission concluded, mission started



We're breaking into the account of Moses' lengthy "commissioning" – which actually becomes more and more a series of weaker and weaker excuses from Moses. But finally Moses agrees to God's appointment, and returns to Egypt.

One of the most curious passages in the whole of the OT relates to that journey. But no matter what we make of the incident, keep in focus the bigger picture here, of the start of Israel's rescue mission – this time under God's timing and terms, not Moses'.

#### ➤ **Signs to startle (1-9)**

Moses' next statement (1) is still somewhat plausible ... but, after what God had said (3:15-22, noting especially God's categorical statements of what will happen), isn't there too much doubt? Are there things that God has quite clearly declared, though, that we still find difficult to totally believe?

These are not just "wonders", but "signs" (8,9), which therefore do not *just* startle but also teach by pointing to something. So what might these three different signs *mean*?

#### ➤ **Words that work (10-13)**

Sounding far more like an excuse now – though could this still be true? How does God's two-fold answer answer Moses?

#### ➤ **Concession or complaint? (14-17)**

This is commonly translated as a final evasion – as with the ESV's "please send someone else". But a more literal translation is not that clear a rejection: "send now by the hand of whom you will send" (as AV) – more like "OK, have it your way", or even "whatever!". Still not overflowing with joyful obedience, even so.

Again, notice how God has *already* provided an answer.

But what do you make of God's *anger* here?

#### ➤ **Trusting and (eventually) obeying (18-26)**

What on earth do you make of the odd verses 24-26? How did God "seek to put him to death"? Illness? Any ideas? And *why*?

#### ➤ **Happy reunions (27-31)**

What an amazing faith-filled reception! Isn't worship right!