

[The God of Patience, part II](#)

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One of the greatest examples of the patient God is Moses. This man was chosen by God for a task of monumental importance, one of which anyone would understand had God asked them! Moses certainly understood and was so worried that he did not think twice about letting God know that he was not the man for the job. Moses was raised an Egyptian, he knew the ins-and-outs of Egyptian politics and he knew who and what a pharaoh represented. Moses knew of the magicians, he knew of the mindset and culture of Egypt. He was deeply scared of this task!

God wanted Moses for this job. As I read this account it becomes clearer each time that God could have said enough! I am going to get a man that is ready for the job! If God was looking for the decisive, powerful and compelling leader, it seems that Moses was somewhat behind. When you are searching for the right leader to free your people, do you want the immature man who hauls off at his first chance to kill a security member of the nation holding your own? Then he runs off to hide? The leader, pharaoh, seeks to kill your man, not a good start! The people you wish to free now view your leadership choice with skepticism. How quick would our own military or ambassador mission sideline such a "leader"? They need performance now! God is different than men though.

At the burning bush God tells Moses of the plan and Moses responds with the first answer that raises a red flag!

Exodus 3:11 NRSV

(11) But Moses said to God, "*Who am I* that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

Who am I? You are the one chosen by God! If God comes to me right now and tells me to go to the worst nation where Christians are jailed and persecuted to tell the leader to stop, I am not asking who am I! I might be running the other way like Jonah, I might complain of my fears, but if God chose me, he must have a reason!

Exodus 3:13 NRSV

(13) But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?"

Does Moses really not know who God is? Notice that Moses is not an "Israelite" here. He is finding every little way to distance himself from this task including separating himself from God's people- of which Moses apparently has no problem not being counted as or feels he is unworthy. God answers.

Exodus 4:1 NRSV

(1) Then Moses answered, "But suppose they do not believe me or listen to me, but say, 'The LORD did not appear to you.'"

Oh my goodness! Moses does not stop even after God tells him who God is! Does Moses not know that God is the God of the possible? That nothing is out of God's reach to accomplish? Moses still comes back at God with another red flag. But suppose....

God continues, no sign of anger, yet. God shows Moses two signs and one statement of what God will do to make sure Moses is believed. A staff turns into a snake, Moses hands withers and is healed, and God tells Moses about the bloody Nile. All good and powerful stuff right? Not enough for Moses!

Exodus 4:11-13 NRSV

(10) But Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."
(11) Then the LORD said to him, "Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?"
(12) Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak."
(13) But he said, "**O my Lord, please send someone else.**"

Moses goes for a fourth way out of this. Moses claims he can not talk the Egyptian political talk that he needs to sway pharaoh. Moses obviously forgot already that God was going to bring this about. Even after God again declares of His might, Moses finally goes for the big one...send someone else! Can you imagine telling God to send someone else? How many times do we hear, if God speaks you better do, do, do because if you don't there will be lightning bolts crashing around and on you! Yet, here we see Moses do this very thing.

Exodus 4:14 NRSV

(14) **Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses** and he said, "What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad.

Do you think at this point Moses finally gets that he is pushing the Creator of all the universe too far? God's anger is kindled; when God says "what of your brother", do you think there was some frustration with Moses? I believe there was. This was not a case where God said to Himself that He would pick Moses and Moses would talk back and kick several times, then God would get angry and Moses would finally listen! Here is a real conversation, a real relationship, here is God knowing He wants Moses for this task and Moses arguing that he is not the right one. God persuades Moses.

Exodus 4:27-31 NRSV

(27) *The LORD said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." So he went; and he met him at the mountain of God and kissed him.*

(28) Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which he had sent him, and all the signs with which he had charged him.

(29) Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the Israelites.

(30) Aaron spoke all the words that the LORD had spoken to Moses, and performed the signs in the sight of the people.

(31) The people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had given heed to the Israelites and that he had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

Look how quickly Aaron listened and obeyed! Not a peep in protest that we know of. From here we know the rest of the story. After numerous signs, wonders, and pestilence, Israel is finally set free. Moses even picks up the speaking to pharaoh by himself.

God is patient. His love knows no end, no bounds. Are there other examples? You bet! The next one is a favorite of mine. See you soon!