

Exodus 3:11-12

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/exod/exod-3/exodus-311-12/>

Moses is not convinced that he is the right person for the job of delivering the Israelites. In fact, he responds to the LORD with five objections (3:11 – 4:17). The LORD constantly and repeatedly assures Moses that He will equip him for the job and promises His constant presence.

Moses' response to the LORD's commissioning was not one of faith but of doubt. In verse 11, the word *But* sets the tone for this section. Instead of responding in faith, *Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?"* Moses doubted that he was the one to do either of the tasks God is commissioning him to do.

The phrase "Who am I" shows that Moses was only thinking of himself. He did not question the LORD about the logistical side of the issue – organizing and planning the exodus. Instead, it also suggests that Moses did not think himself qualified to do the job.

It could be that Moses was questioning his ability to be a deliverer or just trying to get out of it. He had been a shepherd alone in the Sinai wilderness for around forty years by this time. Forty years of shepherding his father-in-law's flock (not a job with a lot of prestige) and spending enormous amounts of time by himself could have made him doubt that there would be anything more in his life. He is also by this time around eighty years old, not a season of life most people launch a new venture.

The LORD's response (notice that it is not a rebuke for a lack of faith here) includes two promises. The first is His guaranteed enduring presence because *He said, "Certainly I will be with you.* The Hebrew word (*ki*, translated "certainly") is used here to communicate to Moses the assurance of the LORD's presence with him. The LORD also promises Moses that *this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you.* Along with His vocal assurance of His presence, the LORD promises to give Moses a visual confirmation of His promise. This promise is in the form of a *sign* (the Hebrew word is frequently used for a miraculous and visible manifestation of God's working). The sign is an event that happens in the future – *when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain.*" This is, of

course, a reference to the arrival of the Israelites at Mount Sinai in chapter 19.

It is interesting that this sign is given to Moses after he obeys the LORD. Usually, signs are given to verify the LORD's commands before the person steps out in obedience (for example, [Judges 6:17](#)). It is possible that the LORD wanted Moses to step out on faith without some miraculous demonstration. This would be consistent with [Hebrews 11:1](#), which tells us that faith is believing something we cannot see as though it is in our hand, and [2 Corinthians 5:7](#) where Paul says the walk of faith is walking in the reality of things we cannot yet see. God is the same yesterday, today and forever.

The theme of worship is a prominent one in the book of Exodus (4:13; 7:16, 8:1; et al.). The Hebrew word translated *worship* in the phrase *to worship at this mountain* is the same as the one for "to serve" or "be a slave." The Israelites were slaves to Egypt at the time, but Moses was to lead them from this and bring them to the place where they would serve their Deliverer.

Biblical Text:

¹¹ But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" ¹² And He said, "Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain."