

What to Do When You Don't Know What to Do – 2. When You Have to Listen

Exodus 3:1-17

April 30, 2023

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One of my favorite times of day is when all our boys get home, and we have that little space between getting home and working on dinner and bedtimes. The boys are filled with energy and are run into the house with smiles on their face and an extra skip in their step. But someday, it gets very loud, very quickly.

Earlier this week, the older boys had come home, turned on some music, and were running around dancing and playing. Our youngest came in to join the fun, and inevitably, even though it's just one more little body, the volume increases exponentially. At the same time, I was trying (and failing) to finish up a project.

Then, simultaneously, the boys are all asking for something. Someone wants a snack, another wants to listen to a new song, another wants to get their brothers attention. And, of course, the dog wants outside. So we've got music and voices on top of voice clambering for attention. And in the middle of this, I thought, "I can't even hear myself think!"

You've been here, right? Even if your home doesn't have three little boys, you know what it feels like to be so distracted by what's around you - that you can't even seem to hear your own thoughts. It's sensory overload, and let me tell you - this does not set the scene for my best and most patient and attentive parenting.

The only solution, is to bring down the noise. To turn off the music, to set aside my project, and bring a sense of calm to the chaos. Ours is a world filled with distraction —whether its the noise in our house, the feeds of our social media, or even the endless opportunities to fill our schedules... it can be difficult to *hear ourselves think* in the middle of our life. It's no wonder then, that sometimes we can feel like we are missing out on *listening* to God, too.

Today is week two of our sermon series: What to do when you don't know What to do... and today, we're reflecting on the times or seasons in our life when we need to figure out how to listen to the voices around us. To help us learn more about how God invites us to listen, we heard the story of Moses and the Burning Bush. Before we dig into the passage for today, let me tell you a little bit about Moses:

Moses and his leadership of the Exodus, is *the* defining story for the Jewish people and he sets the backdrop for everything that happens in the New Testament. Moses was born during a time when the Israelites were enslaved. The leaders of the time worried that the Hebrew people, the Israelites, would grow too numerous and powerful and begin a rebellion. Fearing an uprising, Pharaoh gave an order that every Hebrew boy be thrown into the Nile river.

For three months, Moses's mother hid him. And then when it was too difficult to do any longer, she placed her precious boy into a basket and hid the basket among the reeds along the side of the water. When Pharaoh's daughter came down to the water, she saw the basket and heard the cries of Moses.

Filled with compassion, Pharaoh's daughter took the baby and adopted him as her own. She named him Moses, saying "I drew him out of the water". But his name, Moses, is also a form of an Egyptian word, *Mose*, which is a prefix often connected to a name — think of it like creating Johnson, to indicate one who is John's son. But here, Moses has no prefix. He is a son without a father.

Even so, Moses is raised with a great amount of privilege and opportunity. He received the best education, lived in a palace, and was a prince. A Hebrew boy, raised as an Egyptian prince.

Then one day, he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew slave. And Moses was enraged. He, too, heard the cries of the people and wanted justice. Exodus 2 tells us, that Moses was so angry at the treatment of the Hebrew people, that he killed that Egyptian soldier and hid him in the sand. Very little stays a secret with Pharaoh, and once he hears of this — he puts forth an order to have Moses killed.

Moses is longing for justice for the Hebrew people, *his people*, even though he is disconnected from them. And it's easy to imagine how hard Moses worked to make sense of his identity —reconciling how he was raised as an Egyptian, but born a Hebrew. Where is his place in the world?

Pharaoh has no question about Moses, Egyptian or Hebrew, he is a threat. And so Moses leaves and transforms from a prince to a fugitive and exile. He settles in the land of Midian, which is a desert and very different from the land of the Nile where he'd long called home. But Moses builds a life here. He marries and becomes a shepherd. Spending his days moving his flocks to find water and vegetation in a land that was severely dry.

For this next time in his life, Moses found himself in a sort of wilderness. Everything he had once known about life and the world had changed. He was no longer at the center of power and society, but lived now among the sheep. A boy without a father. A cast aside prince, with nothing to his name.

I wonder what questions Moses asked as he stared into the skies at night? What voices and answers did he seek? It's easy to imagine the voices in his own head would clammer loudly.

I tried to do what's right, and now what? Left by my birth mother, ran away from the mother who raised me, an order on my life by Pharaoh. Should I have kept my mouth shut and head down? What will become of me now?

We all have seasons in wilderness, when everything we thought we knew about our lives changed at once. A parent dies. A job is lost. A recession hits. A relationship is broken. In some degree or another, I imagine we all know what it is to feel alone and lost, unsure of what is next.

And if it is hard to hear God speak, amid the noise of a busy life - or home filled with little boys. It can be just as hard to hear God speak, amid the deafening silence of our sorrows and grief.

Now, God did not force Moses into this place, but God was already at work in Moses life, preparing him to lead the people Israel out of Egypt. God does not abandon us in seasons of wandering, but rather, God is at work: like seeds nestled deep within the ground, or a hibernating animal in a long winter, or an expectant parent who holds new life within. God is always at work, always speaking.

But sometimes, we just can't hear or see it yet.

Around 40 years pass in Moses life between leaving Pharaoh and making his home in Midian, and he is now around 80 years old. We have just a few verses that tell us about this time in Moses life. Exodus 2:23-25 tells us:

“A long time passed, and the Egyptian King died. The Israelites ...cried out and their cry to be rescued rose up to God. God **heard their cry of grief, and God **remembered** God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God looked at the Israelites and understood.”**

God heard their cry and God remembered.

All this time, the Israelites were living under Egyptian law, mistreated, and oppressed. Babies had been born and grown, men and women lived and died. Dreams came, and went... and still they cried with hope and grief.

And God remembered God's covenant with Abraham. A promise to protect and care for every generation. And though God had never abandoned them, now was the time to act. Now was the time to bring an end to their cries and oppression.

And so it is, through a burning bush, that God reveals themselves to Moses. While Moses was wandering and wondering, while he was filled with voices and questions in his mind. God appeared. But this story, is not only a story about Moses listening to the voice of God... it is also a story of God listening to the voice of God's people. It is a reminder that no matter where you are, whatever your situation or story, that God hears the cries of your heart.

Hear again the words God spoke to Moses through the burning bush:

"I've clearly seen my people oppressed in Egypt. I've heard their cry of injustice because of their slave master. I know about their pain. I've come down to rescue them from the Egyptians..."

I love this passage, because it tells us something really significant about the nature of God. God hears us. God sees and knows us. And God acts.

Three simple sentences, but they tell us so much about who God is. Especially for times in our lives where we feel as if we are floundering, where it seems that nothing makes much sense, or we just don't know what to do. This entire series is centered around "what to do when you don't know what to do."

And though the way isn't always clear for us, hear God makes clear what to expect from God. God hears. God sees. God acts.

While Moses had wondered about the path his life had taken, and where he would go from here. While there were generations of Israelites wondering if God had given up on them. Even when you wonder if God is silent, if there is a way to make "things" right, whatever that "thing" is...

But on this day, God makes clear that God does not forget.

God appears to Moses in a way that cannot be ignored, and promises to be Moses every step of the way.

One word about that burning bush... there were many people at that time who associated trees, in their strength and grandeur to be associated with deities. Many of us experience the presence and holiness of God standing in front of a large tree, too. It calls us upward, inspires us of something great. It provokes awe.

But God did not speak through a mighty Oak. God spoke through a burning bush. A small shrub, rarely even a centerpiece to any landscaping. Easily overlooked, and hardly provoking any sense of wonder or awe.

Here, God speaks. Set ablaze with fire, God will not be ignored. But neither will it be consumed.

Even in the bush itself, God is reminding us that God stands on the side of those overlooked and set aside. And God brings forth a leader, not wrapped in armor, but in that of an 80 year old Shepherd. God stands on the side of the oppressed, always. And is revealed to us in ways that remind us that God is powerful and present. Making known God's presence through ways and people that are ordinary and unexpected.

Jesus does this, too, its through simple elements of water and bread and wine, that Jesus shows us the presence and grace of God through our sacraments, baptism and communion. And here, to Moses, its with fire and a small, ordinary bush that God's great plan to redeem Israel is announced.

I believe that this is the way God continues to be among us. That still today, God hears the cries of God's people. God sees us, knows us, and will act with mercy and love. Whenever and wherever there are hurting and oppressed people in our world today, you can be sure that there, too, is God.

Scripture tells us that when God spoke to Moses that day, that the bush was not consumed. This bush was filled with the divinity of God, filled with flames, and was not destroyed. Neither will Moses and the Hebrew people be destroyed. Neither will you, when pain and grief consumes you. When you cry out to God from the wilderness of your life, God's presence will support you and you will not be destroyed or consumed.

And so, to Moses, God says: "I have come to rescue them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt." God makes it sound so simple. *I've made up my mind, it's time to go. Chop, chop, Moses. Get going.*

This too, is God's usual way of working in the world and responding to suffering and injustice:

God hears.

God sees.

God acts.

But God does not act by miraculously intervening, or sending an army of angels, or even removing our free will and simply enacting the way of God. Instead, God works through people. God hears, sees, and acts... and God expects people to do the same.

This was true for Moses, and it is true for you and me, too. Where we hear the cries of God's people, we are to listen. To see their whole selves. And to act, working to bring redemption and life.

Here at Messiah, we are blessed to have a congregation filled with followers of Jesus who act. We have many organization we partner with, because *you* have heard the cries of God's people and have been moved to respond.

This year, we have raised thousands of dollars, collected hundreds of pounds of food, medical equipment, even pillows... all as a response to those in need. We've sent people to Kenya, to Florida and South Dakota. We'll send Youth on mission trips this summer, all too ways that we respond to God saying to us, "No, go." We've acted in ways that alleviate the suffering of women and children abroad, and in our own neighborhood. We've looked for ways to end hunger, to support education, to provide safe places to lives, and to do our part to build a world where all people are safe, cherished, and loved.

Whether its acting in big ways like supporting Imara and Bloom, or each of our Second Mile offerings. Or smaller actions, like collecting socks and creating space for prayer vigils, and all the ways you work together to make Messiah a place that is safe and welcoming for all people.

You have heard the cries of God's people, and have acted in love. I'm proud to be your pastor and be in ministry with you. And I am proud to be a parent whose children are learning from you.

A few weeks ago, our family was out, and when we got to the place we were going, our oldest, Calvin, noticed someone ahead of us needing help with the door. He ran ahead, and held it open for them. When we passed, I told Calvin how proud I was of him for noticing and acting with kindness. He looked to me, and said simply, "We're church people, that's what we do."

Now, I know one reaction to this story is to say - wow, what good parents! And maybe that's true. But if he were acting in kindness because of our parenting, he would have said, "I'm a Nelson, that's what we do." But instead, he claimed you, his church. Because you have taught him what it means to be a people who see a need and act in kindness.

Our children are watching and listening, dear friends. They see your faith lived out in the way you act in the world, and treat one another. They see the way you listen to God and are moved to care for those who are in

need, who are oppressed, and who are hurting.

I know it isn't always easy. And we have conflicting voices in our minds that tell us, that maybe we should just wait. That maybe we aren't the right people to act, that maybe this isn't the right time to do what is right. You're not the only one to have doubts and questions when in the presence of God's voice.

When God appeared to Moses through the bush that day, very clearly laying out God's plan for Moses and the Israelites, Moses responded with all kinds of excuses. The ways Moses tries to bargain with God continue beyond what we read today and into the next chapter. Moses is clearly lacking the same certainty of God that he is the right person to go to Pharaoh. He had been cast out, a bounty on his head. He was not a good orator, and stumbled in his speech. He was not a powerful person, but a Shepherd. He was not young. And finally, when God dismissed all of these, Moses laid it out clearly, too, "Please God, send anybody else."

I kind of love this plea from Moses, because it feels so... human. Moses is one of the greatest prophets and leaders in all of scripture. Movies have been made about him. Books written about him. Books of scripture written *by* him. He is a pillar of faith for both Jews and Christians. And even Moses asks, "*pleeeeeease God. Anybody else!*"

Have you asked this of God before? I'm sure I have. There have been times God has called me to speak out in situations that made me nervous. I worried I would offend someone in power by standing up for someone without. I was afraid, that if I said YES to God, that I would fail. Or gosh, I'm just too busy and too tired. Who am I, that God might work in me?

But God would not be moved by the pleas of Moses. God had heard. God had seen. And God was ready to act. Everything in Moses life, from the way his mother courageously and lovingly set him in that basket. To the way that Pharaoh's daughter took him as her own, raising him as a Prince and teaching him all the customs and laws of Pharaoh's world. Even into the wilderness, when Moses lived as a shepherd. God made a way to use all of this, to form and prepare Moses for the biggest calling of his life.

And now, on this day, God expected Moses to act. And promised that he would not be alone. As the story continues, God never gives up on this promises. God makes a way for Moses to bring the Israelites out of slavery and into the land that God promised. And despite all his excuses, Moses agrees. And so begins, or continues, this great adventure of Moses life, where he will witness God at work in powerful ways.

And when you and I say yes to God, God will do great things thru you too. And you will experience a great adventure filled with opportunity to witness the power and goodness of God.

How is God calling us, you and me, today to respond to the cries of people in our community? How is God inviting us to see and name places of harm, to be unafraid in our pursuit of God's justice in our world?

Maybe it is in partnership of one of the organizations we work with already. And maybe, its by stirring you to run ahead and hold open a door. Or maybe, God is calling you to someplace new? This morning, we will welcome five new members to Messiah, five people saying yes to serving and living among God's people here. In any number of ways, I know that God is encouraging you to listen, to have faith... and to trust, that God believes in you. You too, are a "church people" after all, "it's what we do." Even when it is hard or scary, and we might wish that God would use *anybody else*. God chooses you. Again and again.

I give thanks every day, for the ways that God chooses you, and this church. And for the ways that you listen. You are a people who are brave and faithful, who seek God's wisdom and guidance in your life.

And I know it isn't always easy. I know there have been seasons and years where it's hard making space to listen to God, and finding the right way to act in response. There will be times in our future, where listening to

God and acting in the ways God calls will not be easy, too. But I believe in God, I believe in you, and trust that God will see us all through.

May we, like Moses, hear the cries of God's people, say yes to God's invitations, and go out to change and transform our world. Let us pray:

God of Abraham and Moses, God who hears and sees, Almighty God who acts. May you continue to work in the lives of your people, revealing to us the people and places to which you are calling. Make us to listen, to say yes, and to follow you with courage and faithfulness. May your world know your love, your healing, and your redemption now and always, Amen.

Grow, Pray, Study for the Week of April 30, 2023

Weekly Prayer

From all our lives' pathways, you have called us to this place, O Lord. Be with us as we listen for your word and seek your ways. Guide our steps and guard our lives that we may serve you more effectively in this broken world. Amen.

Monday, May 1

Scripture: Exodus 3: 1-6

Moses was taking care of the flock for his father-in-law Jethro, Midian's priest. He led his flock out to the edge of the desert, and he came to God's mountain called Horeb. The LORD's messenger appeared to him in a flame of fire in the middle of a bush. Moses saw that the bush was in flames, but it didn't burn up. Then Moses said to himself, Let me check out this amazing sight and find out why the bush isn't burning up. When the LORD saw that he was coming to look, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" Moses said, "I'm here." Then the LORD said, "Don't come any closer! Take off your sandals, because you are standing on holy ground." He continued, "I am the God of your father, Abraham's God, Isaac's God, and Jacob's God." Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.

Observation

God appears to Moses through a burning bush. And God's first words are those of invitation and comfort: "I am here." Then God tells Moses he is on holy ground: in the presence of the very same God who gave promises and life to Abraham. Moses listened, but also felt afraid. This is a common response in scripture – from the angels in the fields of Bethlehem, to the women at the tomb, and the disciples in the upper room. When we stand in the presence of God, it's common to feel a sense of awe, surprise, and even fear. Still, God comes in peace and with love.

Application

When have you felt in the presence of The Holy One? God instructs Moses to remove his shoes, as a sign of respect. How do you honor God's holiness in your life? Have you felt afraid of where God is guiding you? How did God bring you comfort and confidence in that time?

Prayer

Almighty God, just as you spoke to Moses, speak to me, today. Let me be open to your surprises and reveal to me the people and places you are calling me to. Bring peace and courage to my heart, Amen.

Tuesday, May 2

Scripture: Exodus 3:7-12

Then the LORD said, "I've clearly seen my people oppressed in Egypt. I've heard their cry of injustice because of their slave masters. I know about their pain. I've come down to rescue them from the Egyptians in order to take them out of that land and bring them to a good and broad land, a land that's full of milk and honey, a place

where the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites all live. Now the Israelites' cries of injustice have reached me. I've seen just how much the Egyptians have oppressed them. So get going. I'm sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I to go to Pharaoh and to bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" God said, "I'll be with you. And this will show you that I'm the one who sent you. After you bring the people out of Egypt, you will come back here and worship God on this mountain."

Observation

The story of the Exodus is *the* critical story of God in the Old Testament. Here, in verse 7, we are reassured that though the Israelites have suffered greatly that God, *hears their cries*. "I know their pain," declares God. God also promises to make a way out of this suffering, and lead the people to new life.

Application

God continues to hear our cries and promise to bring new life to us all. Suffering is present in our world, due to sin. But suffering and death do not have the final word. God invites Moses to be part of this redemptive work. As Christians, we too, are invited to partner with God. Where do you hear the cries of God's people and see suffering in the world? How do you hear God inviting you to partner and bring an end to that suffering?

Prayer

God of creation, just as you heard the cries of your people Israel, continue to hear the longings of my heart today. Invite me, as you did to Moses, to be a messenger of peace to your world. Amen.

Wednesday, May 3

Scripture: Exodus 3:7-12

Then the LORD said, "I've clearly seen my people oppressed in Egypt. I've heard their cry of injustice because of their slave masters. I know about their pain. I've come down to rescue them from the Egyptians in order to take them out of that land and bring them to a good and broad land, a land that's full of milk and honey, a place where the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites all live. Now the Israelites' cries of injustice have reached me. I've seen just how much the Egyptians have oppressed them. So get going. I'm sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I to go to Pharaoh and to bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" God said, "I'll be with you. And this will show you that I'm the one who sent you. After you bring the people out of Egypt, you will come back here and worship God on this mountain."

Observation

At first, Moses seems curious, as we read in verse 3: "Then Moses said to himself, Let me check out this amazing sight and find out why the bush isn't burning up." Then, Moses is surprised that God is inviting *him* to talk to Pharaoh and help bring freedom to the Israelites. "Who am I to go to Pharaoh?" (v11) Still, God promises to be with Moses.

Application

Moses didn't feel strong enough, or important enough, to carry out God's astonishing call. How would he, as one man without an army, face off with Pharaoh? God promises to be with Moses and show the way through. What limits do you see on your ability to live for God? How (if at all) does it change your view of those limits if you believe God will be with you?

Prayer

Lord God, there was only one Moses. But there are many missions, large and small, needed to help your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Show me my mission(s), and guide and strengthen me for them. Amen.

Thursday, May 4

Scripture: Exodus 3:13-20

But Moses said to God, "If I now come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they are going to ask me, 'What's this God's name?' What am I supposed to say to them?" God said to Moses, "I Am Who I Am. So say to the Israelites, 'I Am has sent me to you.'" God continued, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your ancestors, Abraham's God, Isaac's God, and Jacob's God, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever; this is how all generations will remember me. "Go and get Israel's elders together and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me. The LORD said, "I've been paying close attention to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt. I've decided to take you away from the harassment in Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land full of milk and honey.'" They will accept what you say to them. Then you and Israel's elders will go to Egypt's king and say to him, 'The LORD, the Hebrews' God, has met with us. So now let us go on a three-day journey into the desert so that we can offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.' However, I know that Egypt's king won't let you go unless he's forced to do it. So I'll use my strength and hit Egypt with dramatic displays of my power. After that, he'll let you go.

Observation

Like most ancient peoples, the Egyptians believed in many gods, including the Pharaoh. Moses' initial question, "What's this God's name?" sounds a little like he is asking God to clarify "which God" is speaking to him. God identifies God's self saying, "I am who I am," but then continues to tell Moses that God is the God of the ancestors, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Application

I read a study once that said children should have 7 loving adults in their life to best help them grow in faith. Now, whether or not my memory is recalling that with perfect accuracy, I'm sure we can all testify that the people around, and before, us make a big impact in our lives and faith. Who are the people who led you in faith? Who are your ancestors who showed you Jesus? Say a prayer of thanks for them today! And consider, who are the people of the next generation that you are helping to shape and form? What is your prayer for future generations of believers? What kinds of "ancestor" might you be becoming?

Prayer

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God of my ancestors, you have been present and at work in my life for generations. Let the people of faith who have gone before me teach me about your ways, dear God. And may I, in my living and loving, set a path for future generations to follow. Amen.

Friday, May 5

Scripture: Exodus 4:1-9

Then Moses replied, "But what if they don't believe me or pay attention to me? They might say to me, 'The LORD didn't appear to you!'" The LORD said to him, "What's that in your hand?" Moses replied, "A shepherd's rod." The LORD said, "Throw it down on the ground." So Moses threw it on the ground, and it turned into a snake. Moses jumped back from it. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out and grab the snake by the tail." So Moses reached out and grabbed it, and it turned back into a rod in his hand. "Do this so that they will believe that the LORD, the God of their ancestors, Abraham's God, Isaac's God, and Jacob's God has in fact appeared to you." Again, the LORD said to Moses, "Put your hand inside your coat." So Moses put his hand inside his coat. When he took his hand out, his hand had a skin disease flaky like snow. Then God said, "Put your hand back inside your coat." So Moses put his hand back inside his coat. When he took it back out again, the skin of his hand had returned to normal. "If they won't believe you or pay attention to the first sign, they may believe the second sign. If they won't believe even these two signs or pay attention to you, then take some water from the Nile River and pour it out on dry ground. The water that you take from the Nile will turn into blood on the dry ground."

Observation

Moses, one of the greatest prophets and ancestors of faith, had questions and doubts when God called them. What if they don't believe me, he asked? God showed Moses one way that God would support Moses in this work. But it wasn't with a large army; rather God asked, "what is in your hand?" and using a tool and gift that Moses *already possessed*, God promised to be revealed.

Application

Just like Jesus used ordinary elements (water, bread, wine) to be revealed to us in the sacraments (baptism, communion), here God uses an ordinary shepherd's rod as a sign of God's greatness and presence. What ability, gift, or tool do you have that God might use to reveal the promises and goodness of God? This reading reminds me that it is okay to feel worry or doubt when God calls. But also, God doesn't give up! God will continue to nudge, invite, and call you – *and* will give you the tools and gifts needed.

Prayer

Dear God, I sometimes wish for some amazing sign of power, yet I shrug off a beautiful sunset or a stirring joyful bird's song as just business as usual. Open my heart to the signs of your power and love all around me. Amen.

Saturday, May 6

Scripture: Exodus 4:10-17

But Moses said to the LORD, "My Lord, I've never been able to speak well, not yesterday, not the day before, and certainly not now since you've been talking to your servant. I have a slow mouth and a thick tongue." Then the LORD said to him, "Who gives people the ability to speak? Who's responsible for making them unable to speak or hard of hearing, sighted or blind? Isn't it I, the LORD? Now go! I'll help you speak, and I'll teach you what you should say." But Moses said, "Please, my Lord, just send someone else." Then the LORD got angry at Moses and said, "What about your brother Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak very well. He's on his way out to meet you now, and he's looking forward to seeing you. Speak to him and tell him what he's supposed to say. I'll help both of you speak, and I'll teach both of you what to do. Aaron will speak for you to the people. He'll be a spokesperson for you, and you will be like God for him. Take this shepherd's rod with you too so that you can do the signs."

Observation

Just as yesterday, Moses continues to feel unsure. "I don't speak well" (v 10) could be the beginning of a long list of reasons why Moses thinks God should reconsider. But instead, God pushes back further, asking, *and who gives this ability?* God is reminding Moses, in a way that reminds me of Job's story, that God is the creator of the universe. God is strong enough, loving enough, *good* enough to keep God's word. And our *very human* worries and fears will not deter God from bringing about the Kingdom.

Application

Do you resonate with any of the fears Moses lists? Perhaps you can add a few of your own? One thing I notice is that even in his doubts, Moses never walked away. He continued to listen to God. How do you listen, even when afraid, to how God is speaking to you?

Prayer

Almighty God, I am listening. Even when I am afraid, worried, or unsure – I am open to your guidance and presence. Reveal yourself to me, through burning bushes, ancestors, and ordinary elements in my life. Give me courage to overcome my reluctance and follow you, knowing you are with me always. Amen.