

Exodus 4:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

Analysis

And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs (וְאַתְּ־תִקַּח הַמֶּטֶה הַזֶּה בְּיָדְךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּעֲשֶׂה־בּוֹ אֶת־הָאֵתוֹת)—**This rod** (הַמֶּטֶה הַזֶּה)—the shepherd's staff now becomes the **rod of God** (4:20), instrument of miracles. **Wherewith thou shalt do signs**—God empowers the ordinary tool. The rod will: turn to serpent and back (4:2-4), turn water to blood (4:9), bring plagues (7:17, 20), part the Red Sea (14:16), bring water from rock (17:5-6). The rod symbolizes God's authority exercised through human obedience. It's not magic (power in the object) but sign (power from God through obedient use). Moses must learn to wield God's authority humbly, recognizing the power source.

Historical Context

The rod became Moses' signature symbol, recognized throughout Israel's history (Psalm 23:4's "rod and staff"). While Egyptian magicians also used rods (7:11-12), Moses' rod demonstrated superior divine power (7:12, rod swallowing theirs). The rod's transformation from shepherding tool to miracle-working instrument teaches that God consecrates ordinary implements for extraordinary purposes.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What 'rod in your hand'—ordinary skill, tool, or resource—might God want to consecrate for miraculous purposes?
2. How does the rod teach that spiritual authority operates through obedient use of God-given means, not inherent power in objects or individuals?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵת	הַמֶּטֶּה	הַזֶּה	תֶּקַח	בְּיָדְךָ	אֵשֶׁר
H853	this rod	H2088	And thou shalt take	in thine hand	H834
	H4294		H3947	H3027	
	תַּעֲשֶׂה	בְּיָדְךָ	אֵת	הָאֵתֹת:	
	wherewith thou shalt do	H0	H853	signs	
	H6213			H226	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 4:2 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.

1 Corinthians 1:27 (Parallel theme): But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;