

Exodus 7:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

Analysis

And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, This verse introduces the confrontation that begins the plague cycle. The formula **the LORD spake** (וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה, vayomer Yahweh) emphasizes divine initiative and authority. Moses and Aaron don't act independently but as Yahweh's appointed representatives executing His commands. The inclusion of both names underscores their partnership: Moses as prophet-leader and Aaron as spokesman-priest (4:14-16; 7:1-2).

The simple word **saying** (לֹאמֶר, lemor) introduces divine instruction that Moses must faithfully transmit. Throughout Exodus, this pattern repeats: God speaks, Moses and Aaron obey, and through their obedience God's purposes advance. This models proper leadership—human leaders serve as mediators of divine will, not originators of their own agendas. The church continues this pattern: leaders must speak God's Word faithfully, not human wisdom (1 Peter 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:2).

The verse's placement is strategic—immediately after God declares His purpose to make Himself known through judgment (7:5), He provides Moses and Aaron specific instructions for the confrontation's beginning. God doesn't merely announce purposes but equips His servants with detailed guidance. This demonstrates divine patience and thoroughness: before the first plague, God rehearses the sign that will authenticate Moses' authority. The serpent miracle serves as credential establishing that Moses truly speaks for Yahweh.

Historical Context

Divine speech formulas pervade ancient Near Eastern literature, particularly royal inscriptions and religious texts. Kings claimed divine authorization for their actions through oracles and prophetic messages. However, biblical revelation differs in crucial ways: Yahweh speaks directly and clearly, without ambiguous omens requiring interpretation by diviners. Moses receives explicit instructions, not cryptic visions requiring decoding.

The partnership of Moses and Aaron reflects ancient leadership structures where multiple leaders shared authority. Aaron's role as spokesman addressed Moses' initial objection about eloquence (4:10-16). This accommodation demonstrates God's gracious adaptation to human weakness while maintaining His sovereign purposes. Later biblical history shows God working through leadership teams: David and Nathan, Ezra and Nehemiah, Paul and Barnabas, demonstrating that collaborative leadership can magnify God's glory.

This verse inaugurates the confrontation that would liberate Israel and reveal Yahweh's supremacy. The pattern established here—God speaks, servants obey, power is demonstrated—repeats throughout redemptive history, culminating in Christ's perfect obedience to the Father (John 5:19; Hebrews 5:8-9) and the apostles' Spirit-empowered ministry (Acts 4:29-31).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Moses and Aaron's dependence on God's instruction challenge modern leadership's emphasis on innovation and self-direction?
2. What does the inclusion of both Moses and Aaron teach about collaborative ministry and shared leadership?

Interlinear Text

לֹאמֶר: אֶתְּרָא | לֹאמֶר:

saying **And the LORD** **unto Moses** **and unto Aaron** **saying**

H559

H3068

H413

H4872

H413

H175

H559

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