

THE STAFF IN YOUR HAND

Exodus 9:22-25 and Numbers 20:1-12

What can we do with what God bestows?

I. A STAFF OF SERVICE

A. EVENTS DESCRIBED

1. Moses' staff and the plague of hail - Exodus 9:22-25
2. Moses' staff and the plague of locusts - Exodus 10:12-15
3. Moses' staff and the parting of the Red Sea - Exodus 14:10-27
4. Moses' staff and water from a rock - Exodus 17:1-6

B. A COMMON THREAD

1. God instructed Moses how to use his staff
2. Moses followed God's instructions

C. SOME OBSERVATIONS

1. The staff in Moses' hand, when yielded to God, accomplished God's work
2. There is more than one way that God can use the same item
3. A small item can be used to accomplish great things
4. The use of what one has in their hand can benefit many

II. A STAFF OF SIN - Numbers 20:2-12

A. THE SITUATION

1. Desperate people (2-5)
2. Intercession before God (6)
3. Instructions from God (7-8)
4. Response from Moses (9-11)
5. Outcome for those involved (11b-12)
 - a. Water for the people (11b)
 - b. Judgment for the leaders (12)

Over please >
2.

B. THE SINS

1. Disobedience (10a)
2. Discontentment (10b)
3. Disgust (11)
4. Disbelief (12a)
5. Disrespect (12b)
6. Disregard > Not thinking that detailed instructions were that important

C. SOME OBSERVATIONS

1. Whatever is used for service can also be used for sin
 - The staff wasn't the problem ... it was the staff holder
2. Faithfulness does not guarantee faultlessness!
 - a. For Moses: He was older, wiser, and yet succumbed to the sinful use of his staff
 - b. For Others: People sometimes stumble as they near the finish line
 - Examples: David in II Sam. 24; Solomon in I Kings 11:4-8; King Uzziah in II Chronicles 26; and Demas in II Timothy 4:10
 - c. For Us: Past performance does not guarantee future outcomes
 - We need to pray ... "God help me finish well!"
3. We don't get to choose the consequences for our disobedience
 - Moses' momentary failure had monumental effects

CONCLUSION:

Consider these distinctions

1. With regard to God's instructions
 - When Moses heeded God's instructions, his staff was an extension of God
 - But when Moses refused God's instructions, his staff was an extension of himself
2. With regard to usefulness
 - When yielded to God, the staff was an object of service
 - When used for himself, the staff was an object of sin

Consider this question

- **Is what you have in your hand being used for serving or sinning?**

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