



"What Do You Have There in Your Hand?"

At one time the biblical Moses was a shepherd, and so it was not surprising that he carried the tools of his trade including a shepherd's staff. When he was drawn to examine a miraculous non-consuming fiery bush and there heard the voice of God calling him to go on a mission to Egypt, Moses felt like someone between a rock and a hard place. Choosing whether to leave the comforts of sheep herding in Midian for the stresses of Egypt seemed like a "no-brainer," and Moses, who was not eager for such a move, voiced rational objections to the plan.

God's response to Moses' reluctance was to ask a simple question, "What do you have there in your hand?" "A shepherd's staff," Moses replied (Exod. 4:2, NLT). In the subsequent exchange, God demonstrated that a stick in the hand, which is divinely empowered, could accomplish wonders! Three lessons from this story impress me. First, God used a staff, the tool of Moses' trade, to accomplish his purpose. Second, objects that seemingly have singularity of function, when divinely empowered, can be multifunctional. Thirdly, God enables and empowers those whom he calls to perform a mission.

Miraculous burning bushes complete with audible emanating voices may not be our experience. Yet as persons transformed by our encounters with Christ and scientists who have invested years in training, research, teaching and practice, we may empathize with the Midian shepherd's experience of the collision of two seemingly disparate worlds. However, in that intersection, we can also hear God's voice, if we listen. The God of Moses is our God. The God, who used a shepherd's staff to demonstrate his power and glory millennia ago, will also use what is in our hand—scientific knowledge, skills, and technology—if we respond to his call.

In the lead article, Ken Touryan, past president of the ASA, challenges us to expand our vision and serve God by using our gifts and experiences as scientists to bring healing to the hurting needs in our world. In responding to that challenge, our mission becomes empowered by the Divine and effective in its implementation.

Next in the Articles and Communications sections, six papers creatively demonstrate connections between Christian faith and insights in philosophy, mathematics, natural science, and paleontology. Another author provides a personal perspective on Adam in the News & Views section. Twenty-six book reviews arranged in eight categories will help you find the best reading selections by contemporary authors. Seven letters by readers reflect and respond to prior published materials. Finally, two poets share their creativity in the Art Eyes Science section. The editor continues to encourage and solicit contributions especially for the Art and Early Career sections of the journal.

Perhaps you have had a "burning bush" experience, where God's call broke into your world. How did you respond? What was the outcome? In a future issue of the journal, I would like to feature a series of "burning bush" personal testimonials that describe how one's scientific tools are used for the cause of Christ. Keep your descriptions short (less than 1000 words) and submit them as email attachments (millerrj@rica.net) with "burning bush" in the subject line. Those submitted before September 1, 2004 will be considered for possible publication in the December 2004 issue.

Shalom,
Roman J. Miller, Editor

*Perhaps you
have had a
"burning
bush"
experience,
where
God's call
broke into
your world.
How did
you
respond?
What was
the outcome?*