

# **God's Superhero - Moses**

## **Man of Destiny**

### **Exodus 3:1**

#### **Introduction**

Moses was the great liberator of Israel. He led Israel from a tribal family to nationhood and solidly established the Jewish religion. He was the son of Amram and Yochebed of the tribe of Levi. He was born in Egypt during the time Pharaoh ordered that all newborn male Hebrew children should be cast into the Nile. Moses was rescued by the daughter of the Pharaoh and became her adopted son and was raised with all the splendor of the Egyptian court. As he grew up Moses became aware of his Hebrew origin, and felt a deep compassion for his enslaved brethren even though he lived a life of luxury. According to Exodus Chapter 2, Moses became enraged when he witnessed an Egyptian taskmaster brutally beating a Hebrew slave. Impulsively he killed the Egyptian. Fearing for his life he fled into the desert of Midian, becoming a shepherd for Jethro, a Midianite priest. Moses married Jethro's daughter Zipporah. One day while tending the flocks on Mt. Horeb he looked and saw a bush burning that was not consumed. Which brings us to our text today in Exodus Chapter 3 (Read).

At the burning bush God tells Moses that he has been chosen to lead Israel to the Promised Land. Rather reluctantly Moses returns to Egypt and persuades the children of Israel to start planning for their departure. Moses and Aaron go before the Pharaoh to inform him that the God of the Hebrews has demanded that he free His people. The Pharaoh however laughs at their request and refuse them. His decision, however, brings upon Egypt ten terrible plagues that conclude with the death of the firstborn sons of all of Egypt. Pharaoh finally concedes and grants the Jews permission to leave..

Moses now finds himself the leader of a large band of slaves escaping from Egyptian bondage to freedom. Because they are not yet ready to possess the Promised Land, God has Israel wander 40 years in the wilderness of the Sinai, learning how to overcome tremendous obstacles with His help.

Only a man with tremendous determination, patience, compassion, humility, and great faith could have unified this backbiting and stiff-necked people who were constantly challenging his wisdom and authority into an strong and revered nation. He was truly one of God's great superhero's and a man with a special destiny and purpose for his life. Moses was a man with a cause! He believed God had a special plan for Israel.

#### **I. Believe in the Cause**

Moses began his life in perilous times. He was born in a superpower nation, but was born a part of an oppressed race during a time when all male babies like Moses were under a royal death sentence. But, Moses had something special in his favor: he was the child of believing parents. Amram and Jochebed hid their son for three months. They did it not only because of the natural survival instinct; but because of their hope in God. Hebrews 11:23 describes the faith of Moses' parents: By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. When He got too big to conceal any longer his mother came up with a plan to put him in a floating basket and lay him in the reeds by the river's bank where the Pharaoh's daughter would come to bathe. She took care to put him in a waterproofed basket and strategically floated him in the river. Moses' parents trusted his welfare and future to God.

In God's providence, Pharaoh's daughter finds baby Moses, and then hires Moses' own mother to take care of him. Not only does Moses' mother get to still be with her child, now she gets paid for it. By becoming the adopted son of the Pharaoh's daughter, Moses became a part of the royal family. The Jewish historian Josephus says Moses was heir to the throne of Egypt.

We know he was raised with the science and learning of Egypt. Acts 7:22 says, Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds. Egypt was one of the most academic and scientific societies on the earth at that time. So its reasonable to think that Moses learned geography, history, grammar, writing, literature, philosophy, and music. Moses grew up with the finer things in life. As a member of the royal family anywhere he went it was in a princely chariot. If he floated on the Nile, it was in a magnificent yacht, with musical accompaniment – a far cry from that basket in the bulrushes.

But we also know that Moses' Hebrew mother had an influence on his life. He was no doubt raised with full understanding of the Hebrew heritage. He was groomed to become the next Pharaoh of Egypt, all the while he was aware of his true origins because of his mother. Moses came to believe in the cause of Israel. In fact, he became completely dedicated to that cause and began to pursue it as a calling!

## **II. Pursue the Call**

In Acts 7:23 says when Moses was forty years old he killed the Egyptian: Moses may have been right in preventing the beating of one of his brethren but he made the mistake so many people of position do. Thinking that they

are above God's law. Moses believed in God's cause, but that didn't exempt him from God's laws! A person called by God may have great talent and gifts but that does not give them license to do whatever they want. This premature attempt by Moses to fulfill his destiny his own way almost cost him his life. When Moses tried to make himself Israel's deliverer his own way it was a major setback.

Acts 7:23-25 shows us exactly where Moses' heart was: Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand. Moses saw himself as the key man - because of his accepted leadership among the Egyptians. The only problem was that the Hebrews didn't accept Moses leadership. Moses tried to do God's work man's way..

So after 40 years of seemingly perfect preparation, Moses spends another 40 years of his life in seemingly meaningless waiting. Moses, fleeing for his life, probably felt that God's plan for his life was completely over. He probably believed that every chance he had to deliver his people was now over and there was nothing *he* could do. Moses flees southeast to Midian which is present-day Saudi Arabia.

The next 40 years of Moses life were not just a time of waiting but a time of working. He had probably never worked this hard in his life! God trained him, shaping him for his future calling by teaching how to tend sheep!

In all this time God never forgot about Israel in Egypt. God remembered Israel and their affliction. But God takes all the time he needs to prepare you for your calling before he allows you to pursue that call. The bible says God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God did not turn His attention to Israel because they were such good people, but because of the covenant He made with them. He gives His love and attention to us on the same basis - the covenant relationship we have with God through Jesus. Not because we deserve it!

Finally Moses is ready to pursue God's calling on his life, God's way! Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." For 40 years Moses has

lived as an obscure shepherd's life out in the desert of Midian. Moses leads the sheep to Mt. Horeb, also later called Mount Sinai. Horeb means "desert" or "desolation," and the name gives an idea of the terrain. He sees this bush burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. It drew him in for a closer examination.

From the burning bush, God calls to Moses. God didn't speak to Moses until He has Moses' attention. Maybe the reason we don't hear the call of God is because we don't give him our attention. God called to him from the midst of the bush: Moses didn't see anyone in the burning bush; yet God, in the presence of the Angel of the LORD (Exodus 3:2) was there, calling out to Moses from the midst of the burning bush. Moses, Moses! God's first words to Moses call him by name. Even though Moses was now an obscure, forgotten shepherd on the backside of the desert, God knew who he was, and Moses was important to God.

God tells Moses to do two things. First, He told Moses to keep a distance (Do not draw near this place). Second, to show a reverence for God's presence (Take your sandals off your feet). Moses was to show special honor to this place because of the immediate presence of God.

God is about to reveal to Moses a plan that will alter the course of not only His life but the lives of the many Israelites in Egyptian bondage.

### **III. Alter the Course**

Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

Obviously, God didn't just then decided to give Israel the land of Canaan - it was the land that He promised to the patriarchs some 400 years previous to this. The land of Canaan belonged to Israel since the day God promised it to Abraham. God was going to deliver Israel, but He still wanted to use Moses. God could do it all by Himself, but it is God's plan to work with and through people - we are workers together with Him (2 Corinthians 6:1).

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" So He said, "I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

40 years before, Moses thought he knew who he was: he was a prince of Egypt and a Hebrew, God's chosen instrument to deliver Israel. After forty years of chasing sheep around the desert, Moses didn't have the same self-sure confidence that he once had. God's reply is intended to take Moses' focus off of himself and on to where it *should be* - on God. He reminded Moses "I will certainly be with you.

Who am I? wasn't the right question; "Who is God?" was the proper question. God's identity was more important than who Moses was. When we know the God who is with us, we can step forth confidently to do His will. I will certainly be with you: After this, Moses had no right to protest further. From here his objections move from a godly lack of self-reliance to an ungodly lack of faith.

God tells Moses, "When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain": As Moses tended his flock in the wilderness, it probably seemed totally unlikely that he would lead all three million of his people to this same mountain - but God promised that this would be so, as a sign to you that I have sent you.

Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM ." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Moses realizes he needs credentials before the people of Israel. Before, he thought he had the credentials because he was a prince of Egypt. Forty years of tending sheep took away his sense of self-confidence. Now, when Moses comes to the elders of Israel its with a new message from God. It is reasonable to think they would ask, "What name did He reveal Himself to you? What new revelation from God do you have?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."

## **Conclusion**

Moses accepted God's challenge and plan and come to his greatest adventure in life. God was able to use everything that happened up to this point in his life to prepare him for this experience. His assignment was to lead the Israelites to freedom. To guard and guide them to the Land of Promise.

No more excuses. As long as Moses had life and breath within him, he was committed to fulfill God's mission for his life. And Moses became as God in

the eyes of the people. Will you allow God to shape and change you until when others look at you all they see is Christ? That was Moses testimony. And yet his mission was not yet complete. In Luke 9:28 it says Jesus took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And behold there talked with him two men which were Moses and Elias who appeared in glory and speak of his death which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." For Moses his mission continued even after he had left this world.

We too are in training for reigning. What we learn and accomplish in this life is only preparing us for the eternal life. God wasn't finished with Moses when he got the children of Israel to the threshold of the Promised Land. His earthly training and experience was only preparation for his eternal challenges. That's why we must not get too attached to this world. We may be in the world but we are not of the world. God has created us and placed us here on this earth to train and prepare us for an even greater eternal life. But the choice is ours.