

Studies in Exodus

TOPIC: The Early Years of Moses

SCRIPTURE: Exodus 2

MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 2:24

Lesson 2

Exodus 2

INTRODUCTION: In this chapter we are introduced to one of the great heroes of the faith - a man by the name of **Moses**. From Adam to Christ, there is none greater than Moses. He is one of the few characters in the Bible whose whole life is recorded for us from which we can learn. All of God's early dealings with Israel in Egypt were transacted through Moses. He was a prophet, priest and king, and as such is a wonderful picture of Christ. This chapter tells us of THE EARLY YEARS OF MOSES.

- NOTE: Notice these strange opposites in the life of Moses:
- 1) he was the child of a slave, yet the son of a queen
 - 2) he was born in a hut, yet lived in a palace
 - 3) he inherited poverty, yet enjoyed unlimited wealth
 - 4) he was the leader of armies, yet was the keeper of flocks
 - 5) he was the mightiest of warriors, yet the meekest of men
 - 6) he was educated in the court, yet lived in the desert
 - 7) he had the wisdom of Egypt, yet the faith of the living God
 - 8) he was fitted for the city, yet wandered in the wilderness
 - 9) he was tempted with the pleasures of sin, yet endured the hardships of virtue
 - 10) he was slow in speech, yet talked with God
 - 11) he had the rod of a shepherd, yet the power of the King of kings
 - 12) he was a fugitive from Pharaoh, yet an ambassador from God
 - 13) he died alone on Mount Pisgah, yet appeared with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration
 - 14) no man assisted at his funeral, yet God buried him

I THE FIRST FORTY YEARS OF MOSES' LIFE v 1-14

- A. The birth of Moses v 1-2
Moses' mother and father were both Hebrews of the tribe of Levi. Moses' father's name was Amram ("*high people*"), and his mother's name was Jochebed ("*Jehovah her glory*")

(Exodus 6:20) Pharaoh, king of Egypt, had given orders to all "his" people to kill every son born of the Hebrew slaves. (Exodus 1:22) But, Moses' parents hid him for three months and had faith that God would take care of their baby. (Hebrews 11:23; Acts 7:17-20)

NOTE: Moses' parents disobeyed man's law in order to obey God's law: The Word of God requires every Christian to obey the laws of the land in which he lives, no matter how wise and just, or foolish and unjust those laws may be. (Romans 13:1-7) Yet, our obedience to human government is plainly qualified also in the Bible. The Christian is to obey man's laws as long as they do not contradict God's laws. When man's laws contradict God's laws, then we must obey God's law which is the higher law. (Daniel 6:7-11; Acts 5:28-29)

- B. Moses was placed in an ark and set in the flags by the river bank v 3-4
Moses was a normal healthy baby and for the first three months he basically slept, like most babies. But, the day came when, like most babies, he could really scream at the top of his voice. His parents could not safely hide him any longer. (Faith never tempts God) So, Jochebed did a sensible thing. She made a little chest (ark) out of the reeds that grew along the river bank, and made the little ark waterproof, and hid little Moses in it among the flags that grew along the bank. She even set Moses' big sister, Miriam, in a place to watch over little Moses to see what might happen to him.
BULRUSHES AND FLAGS - *"reedy plants that grow along rivers and swampy places"*
SLIME AND PITCH (bitumen) - *"a waterproof tar substance; asphalt"*
- C. Pharaoh's daughter found Moses in the flags v 5-10
This "*Pharaoh's daughter*" mentioned here was probably the famous "*Queen Hatshepsut.*" She was the daughter of Pharaoh Thotmes I. She married her own half-brother, Thotmes II, but had no children of her own. At the death of Thotmes II, since there were no sons to inherit the throne of Egypt, Queen Hatshepsut herself became "*Regent*" or acting ruler of Egypt. In the meantime, another half brother named Thotmes III was crowned King of Egypt, however, Queen Hatshepsut still actually

ruled the kingdom for the first 20 years of Thotmes III's reign. This was probably the Pharaoh's daughter who found Moses in the reeds of the Nile River and adopted him as her own son. (Acts 7:21)

MOSES - "*drawer out; deliverer*"

NOTE: Moses' mother received the reward of her great faith in God beyond all her expectations. Not only did God spare the life of her son, Moses, but also she was allowed to nurse her own son, and even got PAID for it. (Ephesians 3:20)

- D. Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God v 11-14 The first forty years of Moses' life were spent in the courts of Pharaoh. He was raised like an Egyptian and even looked like an Egyptian. (Exodus 2:19) He was educated in the great "*Temple of the Sun*" which was the greatest university of its day. He, no doubt, was very learned in astronomy, mathematics, and chemistry for which the Egyptians were famous. (Acts 7:22) But, Moses never forgot that he was one of the Hebrews. One day while defending a Hebrew slave, he was forced to kill an Egyptian soldier. When Pharaoh heard what Moses had done, he tried to catch Moses to kill him. Queen Hatshepsut had died about nine years earlier and was not there to protect Moses, so he fled for his life into the wilderness of the land of Midian. (Acts 7:23-29; Hebrews 11:24-27)

NOTE: Moses got in too big a hurry to see the children of Israel delivered from Egyptian bondage: God's time had not yet come to deliver Israel from Egypt. Another forty years of bondage lay ahead of Israel, but Moses was impatient and acted in the energy of the flesh, and killed the Egyptian. God could have allowed Moses to be the next Pharaoh of Egypt, and had released Israel in that way. But, Moses was running ahead of the Lord's plan. Thus, for the next forty years he would live on the backside of the desert. (Proverbs 25:8; Isaiah 40:31)

II THE SECOND FORTY YEARS OF MOSES' LIFE v 15-25

- A. Moses defended the seven daughters of Reuel at the well v 15-20
REUEL - "*friend of God's* " (also called Jethro - "*excellence*"

Exodus 3:1)

He was one of the princes or priests of the land of Midian. As Moses fled from Pharaoh, he came to a well in the desert land of Midian, across the Red Sea from Egypt. As he sat at the well area, he saw the men shepherds' mistreatment of seven women shepherds concerning the use of the well. Moses defended these ladies and they commended Moses' bravery to their father, who asked Moses to come have supper with them.

(Genesis 29:1-11)

- B. Moses watched his father-in-law's sheep for forty years v 21-22
ZIPPORAH - "*sparrow*" GERSHOM - "*a stranger; expelled*"
Moses married one of Jethro's daughters by whom he had two sons - Gershom and Eliezer (Exodus 18:3-4)
- C. God heard the cry of the children of Israel in Egyptian bondage v 23-25
Queen Hatshepsut apparently died when Moses was about 31 years of age and Pharaoh Thotmes III reigned another 30 years after her death. The year was about 1450 B.C. when a new Pharaoh named Amenhotep II came to the throne of Egypt. The children of Israel began to cry out to God because of their bondage, and God heard their cries and remembered His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God now prepares to deliver Israel from out of Egypt after 430 years. (Exodus 12:4; Galatians 3:16-17; Genesis 15:13)

TEACHERS' TIP: THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A STATUE ERECTED TO SOMEONE WHO LEFT WELL ENOUGH ALONE.

NEXT MEMORY VERSE: Exodus 3:14