

Moses



Moses' Birth

- ❑ Read Hebrews 11:23. Read Exodus 1:6-2:10.

Moses' Transition ¹

- ❑ Moses was raised as a grandson of Pharaoh (king of Egypt). "Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (*Acts 7:22*). He had a royal position and a privileged status.
- ❑ Read Exodus 2:11-15a. Read Hebrews 11:24-26.²
 1. In siding with the Israelite slave against the Egyptian slave driver, Moses endangered his position and status as a member of Pharaoh's royal court.³ He sided with the oppressed, despised Israelites (Hebrews).⁴ Why did Moses do this?⁵ What price did he pay?

Moses' Doubt & Resistance

- ❑ After 40 years in Midian, Moses is called by God to deliver (set free) the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt (*Exodus 3:1-10*). However, Moses responds with doubt and resistance.
 - ⊗ Moses doubts his qualifications. "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" (*3:11, NIV*)
 - God says, "I will be with you." (*3:12*). In other words, "You're not doing it, I am."
 - ⊗ Moses doubts his reception by the Israelites (*3:13-14*).
 - God tells Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers (the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) ... has sent me to you'" (*3:15, 16*). "The elders of Israel will listen to you" (*3:18, NIV*).
 - ⊗ Moses still doubts his reception. "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you'?" (*4:1, NIV*).
 - God gives Moses miraculous signs he can perform among the Israelites (*4:29-31*) and Egyptians.
 - ⊗ Moses doubts his ability. "O Lord, I have never been eloquent ... I am slow of speech and tongue" (*4:10*)
 - God says, "Who gave man his mouth? ... Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say." (*4:11-12, NIV*)
 - ⊗ Moses refuses God's call. "O Lord, please send someone else to do it." (*4:13*)
 - The LORD's anger burns against Moses, but God assigns Aaron (Moses' brother) to speak for Moses (*4:14-16*). Aaron would be "Moses' mouth."
- ❑ Finally, Moses accepts God's call (*4:18-20*).



¹ "Moses' transition" refers to his change in position and status. Moses sacrificed his royal position and privileged status to identify with the despised, lowly, and suffering Israelites (who were his own people).

² Hebrews 11:26: "He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ ..." We would not expect Moses to know about Jesus Christ, but he did look forward to the fulfillment of God's promise, and God's promise was fulfilled in Christ.

³ Pharaoh was likely aware (or becoming aware) of Moses' Hebrew birth. This event would expose Moses' loyalty.

⁴ Moses was willing to humble himself to identify with the lowly. The ultimate expression of this attitude is found in Christ, who "being in very nature God ... made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness ... he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross" (*Philippians 2:6-8*).

⁵ Stephen said, "Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not" (*Acts 7:25*).

2. Why was Moses so reluctant to accept God's call? What do you think influenced his feelings? In what ways did Moses misunderstand his assignment?

Moses' Intercession

- ❑ God used Moses to deliver the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt, consistent with His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (*Genesis 15:13-14; 46:3-4*). Through a series of miracles, Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt (*Exodus 7:14-15:21*).
- ❑ Despite their great deliverance, the Israelites repeatedly grumbled against Moses and questioned his leadership (*Exodus 2:14; 5:20-21; 14:11-2; 15:24; 16:2-3; 17:2-3; 32:1; Numbers 12:1-2; 14:1-4; 16:1-3; 20:2-5*).
- ❑ While Moses is on Mount Sinai, receiving the Law, the Israelites turn away from God to worship a man-made idol and indulge in sinful activity (*Exodus 32:1-8*). Despite all God has done, they rebel against Him and reject His plan. Their sin is great, and deserving of God's anger. Read Exodus 32:9-14.⁶



Discussion Questions

3. Consider Moses' prayer in Exodus 32:11-13. On what basis (that is, for what reasons) does Moses request that God not destroy the Israelites? What is Moses' motivation for making his request?
4. What can we learn from Moses' heart and prayer that may apply to our prayers?
5. Consider Moses' reluctance to accept God's call ("Moses' Doubt & Resistance"). God calls people to follow Christ, and to serve Him in various ways. Yet people are reluctant or resistant. What lessons from Moses' story can apply to our lives today?
6. Like Moses, we may take a stand that endangers our position and favor in the eyes of the world. Identifying with Christ and God's people may result in loss of worldly position, prestige and privilege. Is this identification with Christ worth it? Explain.

Reflection/Application

- If you are not a Christian, what are your reasons?⁷ Does this lesson address any of them?
- Are you willing to take a stand with God and His people, regardless of the cost? What is truly valuable to you? Read Philippians 3:1-11.
- Is there something that you feel that God wants you to do, but you are reluctant or resistant because you feel unqualified, unappreciated, or unable? Reflect on Exodus 3:10-4:17.
- Consider your prayer life. Is it mostly self-concerned? How much of your praying concerns God's reputation, purposes and glory? Is your praying based on God's word and promises?

⁶ Exodus 32:14: "Then the LORD relented ..." Does God change his mind? Many would say "no" based on passages such as Numbers 23:19, 1 Samuel 15:29, and Psalm 110:4. God "does not change" (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17). However, other passages seem to indicate that God can and does change his mind (Jeremiah 18:7-10; Amos 7:1-6; Jonah 3:10-4:2). The sense in which God "changes his mind" (or seems to change his mind) is disputed among theologians. (This subject is beyond the scope of this lesson.) However, it must be emphasized that God knows all things, including future decisions and actions, and remains completely sovereign (in control) over his creation.

⁷ You may find it hard to believe in God or accept the Bible as God's word. However, if you are open to these ideas, there may be other obstacles, like fear of the cost of following Christ, or surrendering control of your life to him.