

**HOW WILL YOU FINISH?
MOSES...Died In The Wilderness
Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy**

There are *few examples* in Scripture (OT) of people who have *finished well*...**Daniel, Joseph, and Joshua**. Unfortunately, there are *many more* who did *not finish well*, yet God still used them in a mighty way...**Moses and David** are examples.

Today, we're going to look at one of those men who *did not finish well*. **Moses'** life, according to the **Book of Acts, chapter 7**, may be divided into *three 40-year segments*. He spent his *first 40 years* in **Egypt...educated by the Egyptian schools**. He spent the *next 40 years* in the *desert...taught by God in solitude*. He spent his *final 40 years* with the **Hebrew people in the wilderness...taught by trials, discouragements, and tests**...while being *instructed by the Law*, which he received from God's own hand.

Dwight L. Moody put it this way...*Moses' spent his first 40 years thinking he was somebody...he spent his second 40 years learning he was a nobody...and he spent his final 40 years discovering what God can do with a nobody.*

I. MOSES' BEGINNINGS: (Exodus 2:1-10)

In human terms **Moses** takes center stage throughout *four of the first five books* of the **Bible**. He was a rather solitary leader...one *with* his people, yet *set apart*. Beginning with his *birth* and through his *childhood*...he was raised by *pharaoh's daughter* as if he were an **Egyptian prince**.

The historian **Josephus** tells us that because **Pharaoh** had *no sons* and therefore *no heir*, **Moses** was being *nurtured* for the *throne*. In **Acts 7:20-21**, the word *nurture* means *to rear, to educate, to train*. What happened according to the account in the **Book of Exodus** simply is astonishing and can only be attributed to the hand of a **sovereign God**.

"Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds." (**Acts 7:22**). The original text says, *"in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."* A *common phrase* of that day referred to a *brilliant person* as having *the wisdom of the Egyptians*.

Moses was reared in **Egypt** with a *silver spoon in his mouth* and attended the **Temple of the Sun**. **Archaeologists** and **historians** have helped us to know about this *period* by *unearthing* and bringing to our attention some *facts* concerning this *educational center*. The **Temple of the Sun** has been called by many, *"the Oxford of the ancient world."*

Moses would have learned the *language* of the **Egyptians** (**Hieroglyphics**) at the temple. He would have also studied the *sciences, medicine, astronomy, chemistry, theology, philosophy, law, and military strategy*. Several historians claim **Moses** was a *quick study*...another testimony of his *brilliance*. Because of his *aptitude*...it didn't take **Moses** long to grasp the *content of these heavy courses*. So, **Moses** became a *keen-thinking* man, educated in *"all the wisdom of the Egyptians."*

Remember again in **Acts 7:22**...the Bible emphasized that **Moses'** *diligent study* and *preparation* made him *"a man of power in words and deeds."* He earned the *respect* of the **Egyptians**...and with this he wielded both *power* and *influence*. By the time he reached **30**, *extrabiblical historians* tell us he had already *led the Egyptian army to victory* over the **Ethiopians** and *others*.

When the text calls **Moses** *"a man of power in words and deeds,"* it implies an ability to *sway the masses*. It means he not only *possessed intellect*, he *displayed charisma*. He was the *pride of Egypt*...yet he was also *vulnerable*.

II. MOSES' CALLING: (Exodus 3-4) Exodus 3:1-10

Spiritual leadership is God-appointed...not self-assumed. This is a *foreign concept* to the *secular world*. How you get *promoted* in the *world system* isn't how *God works* in the *spiritual world*. *Resumes* and *networking* aren't necessary...and they don't work.

“It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes.”

~Psalm 119:71

Every person that I know that *has or is being used of God* has *gone through* a period of *brokenness*. I can almost guarantee that the people who know what it is *to be broken and bruised*...and who have the *scars* to prove it... would say...

- *That they would have never chosen to go through what they have gone through.*
- *That they would never hope that others would have to go through what they went through.*
- *That they hope that they never have to go through it again.*
- ...But *that they wouldn't change what they learned by going through what they had been through.*

III. MOSES' MISSION: (The Book of Exodus)

God worked through **Moses** and established the foundation for *knowing God personally*, and *experiencing Him*. It begins by God telling **Moses** to *lead* the **Israelites** out of **Egypt**: The **Exodus**...

“Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for under compulsion he will let them go, and under compulsion he will drive them out of his land.’ God spoke further to Moses and said to him, ‘I

am the Lord; and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, Lord, I did not make Myself known to them. I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned. Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the Lord’.”

~Exodus 6:1-8

Just because God *speaks*...doesn't mean men *listen*.

“So Moses spoke thus to the sons of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses on account of their despondency and cruel bondage.”

~Exodus 6:9

Just because men *don't hear* God and *obey* God...it *doesn't change* God's *purposed plan*.

“Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Go, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the sons of Israel go out of his land.’ But Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, ‘Behold, the sons of Israel have not listened to me; how then will Pharaoh listen to me, for I am unskilled in speech?’”

~Exodus 6:10-12

Ten Plagues:

From the *beginning to the end*, Pharaoh's *heart* remained encased in a *hardened shell of indifference*. Eventually he would *relent*, but even then, his *calloused heart* would be revealed when he *sent his army* to bring Moses and Israel *back*. His *heart* remained *hardened* and his *will, stubborn* ...even to the end. Keep in mind, these *plagues* didn't have to happen...they are in response to *sin*...and *sin* called for *judgment*.

- **Plague of Blood...the Nile River turned to blood (Exodus 7:14-24).**
- **Plague of Frogs...frogs over ran the country side (Exodus 7:25-8:15).**
- **Plague of Gnats...both people and animals were infested with gnats (Exodus 8:16-19).**
- **Plague of Flies...swarms of flies and insects covered the land (Exodus 8:20-32).**
- **Plague of Cattle...disease killed the live-stock of Egypt (Exodus 9:1-7).**
- **Plague of Boils/Sores...boils and sores infected both man and animal (Exodus 9:8-12).**
- **Plague of Hail...destruction of crops and cattle by hail (Exodus 9:13-35).**
- **Plague of Locusts...swarms of locusts covered the land destroying the crops (Exodus 10:1-20).**
- **Plague of Darkness...thick darkness covered Egypt for three days (Exodus 10:21-29).**
- **Plague of the Firstborn...the Egyptian firstborn...both of the people and their animals were destroyed by God's death angel (Exodus 11:1-12:36).**

The Passover instituted...Exodus 12. It needs to be noted that the *Hebrew calendar* was *changed* with this event (**vs. 2**). The same occurred when *Jesus died on the cross*. It *divided time*...it *split time*...**B.C.** and **A.D.**

- **Preparation for the Passover...(vs. 3-6)**

Remember, the *Hebrews* had *never done* anything like this before. They had *never roasted a lamb* in this particular way. They had *never gathered its blood in a pan* for a special purpose. They had *never smeared it on the door-posts* of their homes. They had *never heard of such a thing as an "exodus."* To accomplish this, it took *faith*... and *faith* demands *obedience*. I believe that our greatest struggle isn't in the realm of *understanding the will of God*...it's in the realm of *obeying the God whose will it is*.

- The *specifics* of the Passover...(vs. 7-11)
- The *presence* at the Passover...(vs. 11-13)
- The *permanence* of the Passover...(vs. 14, 24)
- The *instructions* for the Passover...(vs. 15-20)
- The *Passover instituted*...(vs. 21-23)
- The *memorial* of the Passover...(vs. 24-27)

The drying up of the Red Sea...Exodus 14.

Receiving the Ten Commandments...Exodus 20.

The Tabernacle was established. The *institution* of the Tabernacle (**Exodus 25**)...the Tabernacle *constructed* (**Exodus 35**)...the Tabernacle *erected* (**Exodus 40**).

Moses' Prayer: (Exodus 33)

"Then Moses said to the Lord, 'See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people!'" But You Yourself have not let me know whom You will send with me. Moreover, You have said, "I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight." Now therefore, I pray

You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people.’ And He said, ‘My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.’ Then he said to Him, ‘If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here. For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?’ The Lord said to Moses, ‘I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name.’ Then Moses said, ‘I pray You, show me Your glory!’ And He said, ‘I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.’ But He said, ‘You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!’ Then the Lord said, ‘Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen’.”

~Exodus 33:12-23

The way to God was established through offerings, feast, and sacrifices...Leviticus.

IV. MOSES’ DISOBEDIENCE: (Numbers 20:1-12, 24)

Moses listened to man and not God...

The 12 spies...Numbers 13:25-14:11, 22-23, 30

Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to the rock as God had instructed him to do...Numbers 20:1-12, 24.

Moses’ appeal...

“I also pleaded with the Lord at that time, saying... ‘Let me, I pray, cross over and see the fair land that is beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon.’ But the Lord was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me; and the Lord said to me, ‘Enough! Speak to Me no more of this matter. Go up to the top of Pisgah and lift up your eyes to the west and north and south and east, and see it with your eyes, for you shall not cross over this Jordan. But charge Joshua and encourage him and strengthen him, for he shall go across at the head of this people, and he will give them as an inheritance the land which you will see’.”

~Deuteronomy 3:23, 25-28

Neither Moses nor Aaron were allowed to enter Canaan ...the Promise Land. Aaron’s death...Numbers 33:37-39.

V. MOSES’ CONCLUSION: (Deuteronomy 31-34)

“So Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. And he said to them, ‘I am a hundred and twenty years old today; I am no longer able to come and go, and the Lord has said to me, “You shall not cross this Jordan.” It is the Lord your God who will cross ahead of you; He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua is the one who will cross ahead of you, just as the Lord has spoken...Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.’ Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, ‘Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the

land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance. The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.’...Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Behold, the time for you to die is near; call Joshua, and present yourselves at the tent of meeting, that I may commission him.’ So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the tent of meeting.”

~Deuteronomy 31: 1-3, 6-8, 14

The *death of Moses*...

“Now Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, and all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, and the Negev and the plain in the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. Then the Lord said to him, “This is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants’; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there.” So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows his burial place to this day. Although Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor his vigor abated. So the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses came to an end.”

~Deuteronomy 34:1-8

Moses *died to young*...and was *buried* in the *wrong place* because of his *disobedience*. Actually, he was *buried by God*, so it wasn't in the *wrong place*, but it wasn't *Canaan*.

A *final word*...

“Since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, for all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh, all his servants, and all his land, and for all the mighty power and for all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.”

~Deuteronomy 34:10-12

LESSONS WE CAN LEARN:

- The God we worship and serve is PERFECT in every aspect of His being...yet He realizes that we ARE NOT. Our *disobedience* doesn't *negate* God's *purposed plan*. It doesn't stop God from *fulfilling* His *plan*. It only *robs* us of our *joy* in being part of the *fulfillment of God at work through us*.
- HIDING our mistakes doesn't ERASE the wrong...it only post-pones its DISCOVERY.
Exodus 2:12...Moses *hid the body of the slain Egyptian*.
II Samuel 11-12...David *trying to hide his adultery*.
- God's PURPOSE and PROMISES are always met. *Suffering* and *hard times* don't erase God's *promises*.
- God is always PRESENT. *Difficult situations, trying circumstances, harsh treatment* doesn't *escape* God's *notice*.