

# **WEEK 7**

## **Moses & the Preparation**

This week we will look at the beginning of the life of Moses and his journey of faith. How did God prepare Moses for his purpose in life? How long did the process take? I find myself at times becoming impatient with God's schedule, like an impatient traveler wanting to avoid delays, detours, and layovers. Yet He always makes it clear to me that I need to wait on Him and not move ahead. When I have stepped forward in my own strength, I have always failed miserably.

As you look at Moses' early years, make note of how God prepared him for what lay ahead. Notice how negative situations were used for good in God's plan. When you become discouraged by your own difficult circumstances, be encouraged as you study the life of Moses and his journey of faith, knowing that God can use even your difficulties and failures as He does His work in and through you.

### ***DAY 1: THE BACKGROUND***

As we begin to study the life of Moses, it is important that we look at the situation that preceded his birth. What was going on before Moses was even born? What was the situation into which Moses arrived? Today we will look at the background of the Israelites and their circumstances under the king of Egypt.

### **LOOKING TO GOD'S WORD**

#### **Exodus 1:1-22**

1. Describe the situation of the sons of Israel in Egypt according to verse 7.
  
2. What were the fears of the new king concerning the sons of Israel (vv. 8-10)?
  
3. Describe the relationship between the sons of Israel and the Egyptians (vv. 11-14).
  
4. Why did the midwives disobey Pharaoh (vv. 15-21)? Can you think of another way (or ways) that the midwives could have handled this without being dishonest with Pharaoh and still please God?

### **LOOKING DEEPER**

The midwives disobeyed the king's orders. In this story, the narrator seems to see them as completely positive – the women are described twice as fearing God, and God clearly rewards them for what they did. As you look at other examples in Scripture where someone lied or disobeyed his or her authority and yet pleased God in doing so, why were those situations “permissible” and pleasing to God?

**Joshua 2:1-21; Hebrews 11:31**

**Daniel 6:1-23**

In the book of Acts, Stephen gave a speech in which he reviewed the history of the nation of Israel. Review the history of that time in Acts 7:11-19. Are there any new insights that you gain from this passage?

## **LOOKING UPWARD**

5. The midwives feared God, meaning that they had a reverential awe for God, not that they were scared of Him. Proverbs 1:7 says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. What are some ways in which the fear of God can/should affect you in making decisions and in how you interact with others?

6. How do you react to people who make your life difficult, such as verbally abusing you, betraying you, “draining” you emotionally, or trying to take advantage of you?

## **LOOKING REFLECTIVELY**

God is more powerful than any evil intent of others against us.

If there are people in your life presently who are difficult for you, ask God to give you the grace to endure and the ability to trust Him one day at a time. Pray for that person or persons.

### ***DAY 2: HIS EARLY YEARS (AGES 0-40)***

God knew the path of our lives before we were ever born, and He sovereignty has had His hand on us from the very beginning. Today, we will look at the early years of the life of Moses. As you read, make note of the ways God directed Moses' path through the people God placed in his life. Our early years are never wasted. They are part of the process God uses to prepare us for following Him throughout our lives.

## **LOOKING TO GOD'S WORD**

**Exodus 2:1-10**

7. How do you see God's hand on Moses?

- a. Through his parents
  
- b. Through his sister
  
- c. Through the family who adopted him

8. Who actually named him Moses?

## LOOKING DEEPER

What additional insights do you see in these passages?

**Acts 7:20-21**

**Hebrews 11:23**

How is Moses described in Acts 7:20, Hebrews 11:23, and Exodus 2:2?

## LOOKING UPWARD

9. How has God used both your good and bad experiences within your family in a positive way in your life?

10. Read and summarize Romans 8:28 in your own words. How was this verse true in the life of Moses? How have you seen it to be true in your own life?

11. What was David saying in Psalm 139:16? How does this verse encourage you concerning God's involvement in your life?

## LOOKING REFLECTIVELY

**God has His hand on you from the very beginning of your life. He makes no mistakes.**

*I grew up in a small town of 1000 people where everyone knew everyone. One day when I was a young girl, I stole a toy from a department store there. I can't even remember why I stole it, but, nevertheless, I did. When I told my mom later, she didn't punish me, other than to say, "Don't do it again."*

*Shortly after, I was at the same department store shopping for a coloring book and colors. I realized that I didn't have enough money for both, and I had to make a decision. Then, I remembered that my mom "let me get away" with stealing the last time, so why not just steal again? I bought the coloring book, and then walked back into the store, slipped the box of colors into my sack, and quickly walked back out. All the way home (which was only a block), I was chuckling to myself about how easy this was. I had no idea what was about to happen. When I got home, I told my mom (laughingly) what I had done, expecting the same response that she gave the last time. However, I was so wrong. This time, she had a different response, and I wasn't prepared for it. If she had only disciplined me at home, I could have stood that. But, my mom drove me back to the store, made me give the colors back to the cashier (who was a good friend of my mom's), tell her what I had done, and ask forgiveness. That was the most painful punishment my mom could have given me. At the time, I didn't understand how a loving mother could do that to her child. But I look back at that day as a turning point in my life. From that day on, I have never had the desire to steal anything. My mom's discipline made a lasting impact in my life. She has told me many times that it hurt her much more than it hurt me. I am*

*grateful that she loved me enough to discipline me in such a way that I would not repeat the act of stealing ever again.*

**Take some time today to thank God for the family He has placed you in, even though you may not understand why. God has a bigger purpose than we can sometimes see.**

### ***DAY 3: A MAJOR TURNING POINT***

Today we will look at a turning point in the life of Moses. Up to this point, his life seemed to be going very smoothly, with few problems. He had no idea that morning when he woke up how drastically his life would change because of one action. Do you ever look back at major turning points in your life? Something you did or a decision you made that changed your life for good or for bad? Even though you may blow it or make a mistake, God can still use your failures and even your sins for His purpose. Ask God to prepare your heart today as you go to His Word.

### **LOOKING TO GOD'S WORD**

#### **Acts 7:22-29**

12. How did Moses' Egyptian upbringing build leadership qualities into his life?
  
13. How old was Moses when "it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel"?
  
14. Did Moses already know God's purpose for him at this point? Why or why not?
  
15. Why was Moses not ready to be a leader yet?

### **LOOKING DEEPER**

#### **Exodus 2:11-14**

What are some indications in these verses that Moses knew his actions were wrong?

Does failure necessarily mean that we stepped out on our own strength? Explain your answer.

#### **Hebrews 11:24-26**

Identify some areas of strength in Moses' life from this passage.

### **LOOKING UPWARD**

16. Is there a past sin or failure in your life that you feel would hinder God from using you? What do you need to do to move forward?
  
17. Do you consider yourself a leader? If so, in what areas do you struggle as a leader? If not, what hinders you from being a leader?

18. How would you know if you were leading in your own strength instead of letting Him lead through you?

## **LOOKING REFLECTIVELY**

**There is no sin too great to render us unusable to God if we have a repentant heart.**

**We must be careful to let God lead through us instead of trying to lead on our own.**

Take some time to think back on major turning points in your life. How has God used them?

If something from your past is holding you back from following God or serving Him, give it to the Lord. Ask Him to help you let go and move forward in obedience.

## ***DAY 4: HIS DESERT EXPERIENCE***

At this point, Moses fled to Midian, where God further prepared him for his ultimate purpose. He had tried to deliver his people from slavery. However, he tried doing it on his own strength and in his own timing and he failed. Now he has purposely separated himself from the Hebrews and the Egyptians, but these would not be wasted years. God would continue to work in his life during this time to prepare him.

The land of Midian is an area east of the Gulf of Aqaba, on the Sinai Peninsula. It was inhabited by the nomadic sons of Abraham.<sup>1</sup>

## **LOOKING TO GOD'S WORD**

### **Exodus 2:15-22**

19. Why did Moses flee Egypt?
20. What character qualities do you see in Moses during this time in Midian?
21. What “events” happened in Moses’ life here? (See also Acts 7:29.)

## **LOOKING UPWARD**

22. If you were Moses, how would you be feeling about your life at this point?
23. Does God have to take us through a “desert” experience before He can use us? Explain your thoughts. How does God work in your life during a “desert” experience or after a failure?

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible, Expanded Edition* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 93.

## LOOKING DEEPER

### Psalm 51

David also “blew it” when He sinned in his relationship with Bathsheba. Describe David’s perspective and attitude after his sin.

Why would God delight more in the sacrifice of a broken spirit and contrite heart than in burnt offerings (vv. 16-17)?

## LOOKING REFLECTIVELY

**God has a reason for where He takes you. Look at your “desert” experiences as His time of preparing you and making you usable.**

Take some time today to thank God for those dry times in your spiritual life and for the “desert” experiences. Thank Him specifically for what you have learned from those times and for what He has done in your life through them.

If you feel that you are in the “desert” now, thank Him for what He is doing in your life during this time, even though you don’t understand.

**Being usable doesn’t mean being perfect.**

It is important to note that many of the characters in Hebrews 11 made mistakes in their lives and were not perfect, yet God used them. Take some time to thank Him that He doesn’t “disqualify” us from being usable because of mistakes we may have made along the way.

## *DAY 5: GOD’S RESPONSE*

Do you ever feel that God is just “out there” somewhere and isn’t really involved in your life? Do you ever wonder if He has forgotten you? The sons of Israel must have questioned what God was doing while they were suffering such harsh conditions under the Egyptians. Had He forgotten them? Today we will look at how God responded to the Israelites during this time of hardship and bondage. Be encouraged as you look at God’s response to their cries.

## LOOKING TO GOD’S WORD

### Exodus 2:23-25

24. What had happened in Egypt during these days?
  
25. How were the sons of Israel dealing with their bondage?
  
26. List the four verbs that describe God’s response to the cries of the Hebrews.

## LOOKING UPWARD

27. Is there an area in your life where it seems that God is silent?

28. How do you respond to God when it “feels” like He is not actively involved in your life or aware of what is going on?

29. Does our crying out to God move Him to “deliver” us from a tough situation? Explain your thoughts.

## **LOOKING DEEPER**

As you look at these psalms, how did David, in the midst of his troubles, describe and find comfort in God?

**Psalm 56:1-13**

**Psalm 59:1-17**

**Psalm 62:1-8**

## **LOOKING REFLECTIVELY**

**God is very much aware of what is going on in your life. He cares even when it seems He is silent.**

God had His hand on Moses from the time he was born. He orchestrated every detail of his life, in order to place him where He wanted him to be. He knew the purpose He had for Moses. He knew what would be required to prepare him and when Moses would be ready. Moses tried to get ahead of God and step out in his own strength, which led to failure. However, that did not prevent God from using Moses to carry out His purpose, but it took forty more years of preparation.

Are you willing to let God use you? Are you willing to go through the preparation process and wait on God’s timing? If you’ve made mistakes, don’t let those mistakes defeat you and discourage you. Learn from them and move forward under God’s leading. Walk in the power of the Spirit, not in the strength of your flesh. Wait for His timing. Let Him prepare you for the task(s) He has called you to do for His glory.

Take some time to journal and write down your thoughts concerning this week’s lesson. How is God working in your life through your present situation?