

## Moses - 3 - God's Deliverer

The next phase of Moses' life is recorded in Exodus 4-15. His first forty years were spent as an Egyptian who was a son of Pharaoh's daughter and became mighty in word and deed. That portion ended when he decided to help Israel in their deliverance from Egypt. The next period is also a forty year period was spent as a shepherd and husband. Not much is told of this period of his life, but it came to an end at the burning bush when God called him to be His deliverer of Israel.

Now Moses is in Egypt and begins the task given to him by God.

### Moses Begins his work

When Moses arrived in Egypt, his initial encounter with Israel was very encouraging. They believed the signs God had given and bowed in worship to God.

*Then **Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders** of the children of Israel. 30 And Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses. Then **he did the signs in the sight of the people**. 31 So **the people believed**; and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel and that He had looked on their affliction, then **they bowed their heads and worshiped**. Ex. 4:29-31*

The first encounter with Pharaoh did not go well at all. Not only did Pharaoh not comply with God's command, but he turned on Israel in fury and made their lives much more difficult.

*Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.'" 2 And Pharaoh said, "**Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.**" Ex. 5:1-2*

*So **the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters** of the people and their officers, saying, 7 "You shall **no longer give the people straw to make brick** as before. **Let them go and gather straw** for themselves. 8 And **you shall lay on them the quota of bricks which they made before**. You shall **not reduce it**. For **they are idle**; therefore they cry out, saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' 9 **Let more work be laid on the men**, that they may labor in it, and **let them not regard false words.**" Ex. 5:6-9*

*But he said, "**You are idle! Idle!** Therefore you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.' 18 Therefore go now and work; for **no straw shall be given you**, yet **you shall deliver the quota of bricks**." 19 And the officers of the children of Israel saw that they were in trouble after it was said, "You shall not reduce any bricks from your daily quota." 20 Then, as they came out from Pharaoh, **they met Moses and Aaron** who stood there to meet them. 21 And they said to them, "**Let the Lord look on you and judge**, because **you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh** and in the sight of his servants, to **put a sword in their hand to kill us.**" Ex. 5:17-21*

### God's Purpose was more than just Delivering Israel from Egypt

Once again, if Moses thought he would get quick results, his hopes were dashed. He had to learn that God's ways are not man's ways and God's purposes can take more than one goal. In this case, not only did God want to deliver Israel, but he also wanted to make His power known and punish Egypt for their idolatry and wickedness against Israel.

*So **Moses returned to the Lord** and said, "**Lord, why have You brought trouble on this people? Why is it You have sent me?**" 23 For **since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all.**" 1 Then the Lord said to Moses, "**Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh**. For with a strong hand **he will let them go**, and with a strong hand **he will drive them out of his land.**" Ex. 5:22-6:1*

*And **I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel** whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and **I have remembered My covenant**. 6 Therefore say to the children of Israel: '**I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments**. 7 I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. Ex. 6:5-8*

It was for this purpose that God had chosen this man to be Pharaoh. He knew this Pharaoh would resist and fight to the end. This would make it much more difficult for Moses and for Israel, in the short term, but the long term goals were all met. God revealed to Pharaoh that He could have simply destroyed them all in a pestilence, but God had different plans.

*Now **if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence**, then you would have **been cut off from the earth**. 16 But indeed **for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth**. 17 As yet you exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go. Ex. 9:15-18*

1. Moses learned patience and endurance.
2. Israel had the opportunity to develop their faith and also gain endurance.
3. Pharaoh learned by bitter experience the utter folly of resisting or fighting against God.
4. Egypt learned their gods were truly powerless against the one true and living God.
5. God's power was shown and His name declared in all the earth.

## **Paul Explained God's Purpose**

In the midst of an explanation of God's eternal purpose in bringing salvation to man and the dismal failure of Israel itself to avail itself of the amazing opportunity God had given to them, Paul turned to this moment in time. Just as in the time of Christ, so here, there were two individuals for God to work with. There were those who by their conduct and choice had made themselves into vessels of wrath. They had chosen to rebel against God and had hardened their hearts to the degree where there was nothing further God could do with them. They were beyond help. This was so of Moses for not even the Ten plagues could help these vessels of wrath. In the same way it was true in the time of Jesus for not even the Son of God Himself, with His miracles, fulfillment of prophesy, and powerful teaching could help those in Israel who had hardened their hearts. The both illustrate each other so it makes it easier to see when they are compared.

*What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! 15 For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." 16 So then **it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.** 17 **For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth."** 18 **Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.** 19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" 20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? 22 **What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,** 23 **and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,** 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? Rom 9:14-24*

The confrontation with Pharaoh was set up by God for a very specific purpose. Egypt was a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction. The use of Pharaoh was choosing a man who hated God's people and thus God himself. When Moses simple request so infuriated Pharaoh that he took away their straw, it became obvious that this confrontation was not going to be easily resolved.

When Pharaoh removed the straw and forced Israel to gather it themselves, it was a bitter blow. Far from success the first encounter seemed to end in worse than utter failure because things we made so much worse for them. Moses was deeply distressed, feeling that his words at the burning bush were being fulfilled. Yet God encouraged Moses that in the end Pharaoh would submit. God promised to deliver Israel from Egypt and lead them to the promised land. When Moses took these promises to Israel, they were too crushed by Pharaoh's tyranny to even listen.

*So Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel; but **they did not heed Moses, because of anguish of spirit and cruel bondage.** Ex. 6:9*

## **An Epic Battle between God and the Forces of Darkness**

Moses was caught between the extremes of a bitter battle between light and darkness and between good and evil. The darkness hates the light and absolutely refused to bend. God is going to force Pharaoh to comply, but he will do it slowly. At the beginning, it appeared that Pharaoh was stronger and would prevail. Then for a short time, it appeared that Pharaoh and God are equally matched. Then when God's power grew stronger, it was a sullen Pharaoh who would admit defeat, then regroup as soon as the threat was removed and continue to rebel.

This was to end just as the flood and Sodom and Gomorrah, but the plans and goals were different so the method was different. But Egypt's wickedness was great.

*According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances. 4 You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the Lord your God. Lev 18:3-5*

*(for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled), 28 lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. Lev 18:27-29*

As God prepared Moses to return a second time to Pharaoh, Moses again expressed his misgivings

about his abilities. He doesn't understand, as many after him, why this can't be quick and decisive. He takes it very personally as though if he were better it would be decided more quickly, but looking over his shoulders, we see more clearly that this had nothing to do with Moses abilities.

*And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 11 "Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the children of Israel go out of his land." 12 And Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, "**The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?**" Ex. 6:10-12*

God again patiently revealed to Moses how he would be successful(7:1-7). In the days that followed Moses gained the confidence that we see throughout his final 40 years as leader of Israel. When God defended Moses against the charges of Miriam and Aaron, his own assessment was clear:

*Then He said, "Hear now My words: **If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. 7 Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. 8 I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?**" Num. 12:6-8*

*Christ Jesus, 2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as **Moses also was faithful in all His house. . . . 5 And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, Heb. 3:1-2, 5***

Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth. Num. 12:3

## **The Battle Fought with the Ten Plagues**

1. Water into Blood	Ex 7:14-25	6. Boils	Ex 9:8-12
2. Frogs	Ex 8:1-15	7. Hail	Ex 9:13-35
3. Lice	Ex 8:16-19	8. Locusts	Ex 10:1-20
4. Flies	Ex 8:20-32	9. Darkness	Ex 10:21-29
5. Pestilence against livestock	Ex 9:1-7	10. Death of Firstborn	Ex 11:1-9; 12:1-29

It seems obvious with all that we have already seen that God started off with acts of power that could be duplicated. The magicians were able to turn staffs into serpents(Ex 4:11-13), and though Aaron's rod showed its greater power by eating theirs, Pharaoh was hardened. He was further hardened after the magicians were able to duplicate the water into blood(4:22) and the frogs(4:7). By the time they could not duplicate the lice, Pharaoh was fixed and would not change. The remaining plagues were used to destroy Egypt slowly.

Even after the hail, Pharaoh's servants saw that Egypt was already diminished and ruined.

*Then Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God. Do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed?" Ex 10:7*

It must have been a bitter experience for Egypt.

*21 The **fish that were in the river died**, the river stank, and the **Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. . . . 24 So all the Egyptians dug all around the river for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the river. 25 And seven days passed after the Lord had struck the river. Ex 7:21, 24-25***

*3 So the river shall **bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into your house, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the houses of your servants, on your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls. . . . 14 They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. Ex 8:3-4, 14-15***

*For Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth, and **it became lice on man and beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. Ex 8:17***

***Thick swarms of flies** came into the house of Pharaoh, into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt. **The land was corrupted because of the swarms of flies. Ex 8:24***

*So the Lord did this thing on the next day, and **all the livestock of Egypt died**; but of the livestock of the children of Israel, not one died Ex 9:6*

*And it will become fine dust in all the land of Egypt, and it will **cause boils that break out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.**" 10 Then they took ashes from the turnace and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses scattered them toward heaven. And they caused boils that break out in sores on man and beast. 11 And **the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils**, for the boils were on the magicians and on all the Egyptians. Ex 9:9-12*

*Therefore send now and gather your livestock and all that you have in the field, for **the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home; and they shall die.**" 20 He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses. 21 But **he who did not regard the word of the Lord left his servants and his livestock in the field. 24 So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25 And the hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field. Ex 9:19-21, 24-26***

Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow **I will bring locusts into your territory.** 5 And they shall **cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the earth;** and they shall eat the residue of what is left, which remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree which grows up for you out of the field. 6 They shall fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, 15 For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. So there remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout all the land of Egypt. Ex 10:4-6, 15

Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and **there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt** three days. 23 They **did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days.** But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. Ex 10:22-23

And it came to pass at midnight that the Lord struck **all the firstborn in the land of Egypt,** from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. 30 So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for **there was not a house where there was not one dead.** Ex 12:29-30

## **Purpose of the Ten Plagues**

### **1 To Deliver Israel from Bondage**

And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. 4 But Pharaoh will not heed you, so that I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My armies and My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. 5 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them." Ex 7:3-5

### **2. To Punish Egypt for Enslaving Israel**

Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Gen. 15:13-15

### **3. To Bring Judgment Ggaint the gods of Egypt**

For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. Ex 12:12-13

### **4. To Magnify God's Name in all the Earth.**

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me, 14 for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth. 15 Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth. 16 But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. 17 As yet you exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go. Ex 9:13-18

and said to the men: "I know that the Lord has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. 10 For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Josh 2:9-12

Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness. 1 Sam 4:8-9

The final plague marked the end of Israel's sojourn in Israel.

Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. 41 And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years — on that very same day — it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. 42 It is a night of solemn observance to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations. Ex 12:40-42

It also marked the time when God said He would punish Egypt and bless His people. After the death of all the firstborn such a dread fell on the Egyptians that they were no longer even interested in their possessions.

And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead." Ex 12:33

Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing. 36 And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the

*Egyptians. Ex 12:35-36*

God knew the heart of Israel and gave them the easy way as he led them in the wilderness.

Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, "Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt." 18 So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt. Ex 13:17-18

So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. 21 And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. 22 He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people. Ex 13:20-22

A second purpose for having Israel go the long way around is to give Pharaoh one final chance to punish Israel out of hatred and spite. In this way God hardened the heart of Pharaoh one final time.

Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea. 3 For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.' 4 Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord." And they did so. Ex 14:1-4

Pharaoh did exactly what God knew he would and still tried to take vengeance on them for what God had done to him.

*Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled, and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people; and they said, "Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" 6 So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. 7 Also, he took six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. 8 And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and the children of Israel went out with boldness. Ex 14:5-9*

Israel began its disrespectful attitude toward God while waiting before the Red Sea with Pharaoh's army surrounding them. Instead of faith and humility they express anger and impatience.

*Then they said to Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? 12 Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness." Ex 14:11-12*

God's words to Moses are difficult. Either God had already told him what to do and was simply demanding that He move forward with the plan, or perhaps God wanted to see Moses taking more initiative.

*15 And the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. 16 But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. Ex 14:15-16*

Since there is no respect of persons with God, and He never tempts anyone with evil, this final hardening is like the other times. It is the realization that Israel is escaping and there was still a chance to destroy them by following them into the sea.

*And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. 18 Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen." Ex 14:17-18*

God then delayed them long enough to allow Israel's escape.

*And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. 20 So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night. Ex 14:19-20*