

MOSES

Moses was a special man of the Old Testament, from the Hebrew tribe of Levi, given a pivotal role in leading the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt to the land promised to Abraham and his seed. The story of Moses and his service for God spans the books of **Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers** and **Deuteronomy**. His is a testimony of overcoming initial doubts and a speech impediment to be used of God for mighty purposes.

His Beginnings (Exodus 2:1-10)

Moses' parents were Jochebed and Amram. When Moses was just an infant, his mother placed him in a basket on the Nile River to avoid being slain under the orders of Pharaoh who was concerned about an ever-increasing population of Israelite slaves. The basket floated down the Nile to a place where the daughter of the Pharaoh and her attendants were bathing. Realizing it was a Hebrew baby and feeling sorry for him, Pharaoh's daughter summoned for the baby's mother to be found. His biological mother secretly nursed him and, eventually, his rescuer, Pharaoh's daughter adopted and raised him to adulthood.

Flight From Egypt and Call to Leadership (Exodus 2:11-4:17)

When Moses became an adult, he observed the oppression of the Hebrew people in slavery and killed an Egyptian who was beating one of the Israelite slaves. When his crime was discovered, Moses fled Egypt to Midian, married, had a family, and became a shepherd. While tending sheep, God appeared to Moses in a burning bush on Mt. Horeb and told him to return to Egypt and bring the Israelites out of their bondage.

Moses was insecure, shared his concerns about not speaking eloquently, and further questioned his own abilities for such a divine calling. God reassured Moses that He would be with him and give him the right words to speak. Even with that assurance, God had to show miraculous signs to Moses and suggest that Aaron, his brother, be a spokesperson before he accepted the call. When he did, he and his family departed for Egypt.

Return to Egypt, Confronting Pharaoh and Release of the Israelites (Exodus 4:18-12:51)

As they neared Egypt, Moses was met by Aaron who had been prompted by God to go into the desert and meet Moses. When in Egypt, the brothers informed the elders and all the Israelites of God's plans to free them. They believed and bowed down in worship.

When Moses was 80 and Aaron was 83, they went to Pharaoh and declared that the Lord had said, 'Let My people go.' Pharaoh refused. Miraculous signs were given by God through Moses to convince Pharaoh, but his court magicians duplicated them. So, the Lord sent plagues on the land of Egypt to strongly persuade Pharaoh to release the Hebrew people – blood in the water, frogs, gnats, flies, plague on livestock, boils, hail, locusts, and darkness on the land. Though these plagues were grievous and each succeeding one worse than the ones before them, Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go. The last plague was death of all the firstborn sons of Egypt. Amidst the wailing of Egyptian families, Pharaoh finally relented and told Moses to take his people and leave.

Exodus, Roaming in the Wilderness, and Arrival at the Canaan

(Exodus 13:17 through Deuteronomy 34:10)

Recorded in the latter portion of **Exodus** and all of the books of **Leviticus**, **Numbers** and **Deuteronomy**, the escape from Egypt, life in the wilderness and eventual arrival of the Israelites at Canaan, the land promised Abraham many years before, took 40 years because of the stubbornness and rebellion of the Hebrew people. Here is a summary of the key events:

Crossing the Red Sea and drowning of the Egyptian army behind them
(Exodus 13:17-15:21).

God's provision of food and water, despite their complaining and Moses' distrust when instructed how to provide water **(Exodus 15:22-17:7).**

Moses ascends Mt. Sinai and returns with the Ten Commandments, many instructions for the life of the Hebrew nation in God's presence, and intricate details for the construction of a tabernacle that would house God's manifested presence in their midst during their journey through the wilderness. Upon his return, Moses found the people worshiping a golden calf idol **(Exodus 19:1-40:38).**

God gives further instructions and rules through Moses to the Israelites and for the service of the priestly family, the Levites **(Leviticus 1:1- 37:34).**

Preparations were made for entering the promised land through a census of the Hebrew tribes and the issuance of additional rules by God through Moses for Hebrew life. The Israelites arrive at the doorstep of the land of Canaan **(Numbers 1:1-9:23)**.

Spies were sent to explore the land of Canaan. Their report upon return was mixed. Though they indicated the land was flowing with 'milk and honey,' they said the people were large and powerful, and the cities were large and well-fortified. Only two of the spies, Caleb and Joshua trusted the Lord to conquer the land. The other spies lacked faith in God. Their bad report caused the people to be afraid and rebel. God declares to Moses that, because of their rebellion throughout the wilderness journey, only Caleb and Joshua would enter the promised land **(Numbers 13:1-14:45)**.

Joshua was appointed by God to succeed Moses **(Numbers 27:1-23)**.

Further instructions were given to Moses for the Israelite nation for their life upon entry to Canaan. Roaming continued in the wilderness and some of the Canaanite tribes carried out raids on the Israelites **(Numbers 28:1-Deuteronomy 31:29)**.

Moses summarizes and declares all that had happened to the Israelites since their freedom from slavery in Egypt (called the Song of Moses, **Deuteronomy 32:1-43**). Moses blesses the tribes of Israel **(Deuteronomy 33:1-29)**.

Moses is led to the pinnacle of Mt. Nebo in Moab, overlooking the promised land, dies there at age 120, and is buried by God **(Deuteronomy 34:1-12)**.

When all but Caleb and Joshua remained of the Israelites who left Egypt or survived the wilderness trek, the Israelites entered Canaan, without Moses, led by Joshua.

No other Old Testament figure has a longer or more compelling story. Moses was a Hebrew raised among royalty, he was a murderer, he doubted but ultimately trusted God, he drew close to God and became an exemplary leader despite his initial shortcomings.

This is an introduction on the subject of **Moses**. Here are some other resources you may wish to explore:

[Who was Moses in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[Moses in the Bible - His Story and Significance \(christianity.com\)](#)

[Who was Moses in the Bible? \(compellingtruth.org\)](#)

[Moses: The Old Testament's Greatest Prophet | OverviewBible](#)

[Moses in the Bible - His Story, Facts, and Importance \(crosswalk.com\)](#)