

Place: Lurgan Baptist 2:6:2013

## MOSES, THE SERVANT OF THE LORD

### 2. MOSES, THE SON OF DESTINY

Reading: Exodus 2:11-25 Hebrews 11:23-26

A fragment of a letter was left by a young man in New York whose life had been shattered and destroyed by some many sinister influences. It went like this, “*My parents,*” he wrote “*brought me up to believe in God and to believe that God didn’t matter.*” Moses could never have said that for here we are taken behind the scenes to see the godly environment in which Moses was reared. Moses ( Mosheh ) whose name means “*drawn or taken from the water,*” ( 2:10 ) didn’t become effective for the Lord until he was eighty years of age. His life of intimacy with God was not the growth of a day. It was a long process of going on “*to perfection.*” Indeed Moses never finished in the school of sanctification, nor has anyone else but his progress was astonishing. Now the life of Moses according to ( Acts Ch 7 Deut 34:7 ) was divided into three 40 year segments. He spent his first forty years in Egypt nursed by his mother and taught by the Egyptian schools. He spent his second forty years in the desert, nursed by solitude and taught by the Lord. He spent his final forty years with the Hebrew people in the wilderness, nursed by trials, disappointments and tests and taught by the law, which he received from God’s own hand.

Someone has said that Moses spent forty years in the Court of Pharaoh learning to *be something.* ( Acts 7:23 ) He spent forty years in the desert of Median learning to *be nothing.* then he spent the final forty years on the road to Canaan proving God to *be everything.* The first period of forty years produced self confidence, the second period of forty years produced self diffidence, and the third period produced self abandonment. Now you and I, though we never achieve the age of one hundred and twenty, we live in one of these stages at this very moment. We either think we are somebody, or we have advanced enough to realise we are nobody, or we have finally discovered what the Lord can do with a nobody. ***Now do you recall the background ?*** The children of Israel, have come down into the land of Egypt into a land of prosperity and plenty, but in the midst of their prosperity they now have become a people under bondage, they are under the sentence of death because Pharaoh has decreed that they boys that are born are to be thrown into the River Nile, they are a people in desperate need of a deliverer.

Of course that’s what Exodus is all about. It’s the book of redemption. Now how is God going to begin to deliver His people ? Well, according to this chapter God began by sending them a baby. Isn’t that an unusual thing ? Yet that’s exactly the story of redemption. That’s how has gone about to deliver you and me. You see, the story of redemption begins with a baby. Moses, was truly the son of destiny. Now let me life the lid on,

#### (1) THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF MOSES LIFE

Abraham Lincoln declared, “ *no man is poor who has had a godly mother.*” Someone else has said, “ *The instruction received at mother’s knee, together with the pious and sweet souvenirs of the fireside, are never effaced entirely from the soul.*” Much of Israel in the land of Egypt was given up to idolatry, but not all Jews had departed from the faith. ( Josh 24:15 Ez 20:7 ) There were still some who walked “ *by faith.*” Of Moses parents Amram and Jochebed ( 6:20 ) we read “ *by faith Moses when he was born was hid three months of his parents because they saw he was a proper child and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment.*” ( Heb 11:23 ) In that home Moses, learned two vitally important lessons. ***From his parents he learned Faith in God:*** I mean the holy environment and godly influences with which he was surrounded left an indelible impression on his developing character. From them also ***he imbibed a Fearless Courage:*** for their faith transcended the Kings wrath. The courage of the parents produced moral bravery in the son. For “ *he forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the King.*” So you can see that in these formative years of his life Moses was brought up,

### ***(a) IN A SPIRITUAL ENVIRONMENT:***

For we read in ( 2:9 ) “ *And the woman, ( his mother ) took the child and nursed it.*” You see, in that godly home,

#### **1. God’s Person was Respected:**

I have a feeling Jochebed taught him who God is. I have a feeling she said, “ *Now, Moses, God is the Creator, He*

*is the One who created you. And, Moses, God is the Redeemer. One of these days He’s going to lead us out of this land of bondage.*” You see, his parents, knew the promises of God. That God would deliver Israel and bring them back to the land of Canaan. ( Gen 17:8 26:3 35:12 46:4 48:21 ) Why, Joseph himself said, “ *God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land and unto the land which he swear to Abraham, to Isaac and Jacob .....*” ( 50:24-25 ) Do you see what Jochebed is doing ? For she has the prominence in ( Ch 2 ) Do you see what she is doing ? She is putting into the heart of the baby Moses these convictions, these deep convictions about who God is. Now I have no desire to stir up controversy. But can I ask you. *Have you thought long and prayed hard about turning over your pre-school child to someone else ?* Those precious years of opportunity with your little ones can never be retrieved. And do you see here how God exalts the role of the mother ? Sure, Amram, was involved but its Jochebed who plays the major role in saving and nurturing the child.

Do you remember Susanna Wesley ? Well, she had nineteen children. Can you imagine nineteen running around the home ? Actually, some died in infancy. But the 15<sup>th</sup> child born into that home was a man named John. John Wesley. The youngest boy, Charles, ultimately penned over eight thousand hymns. At the height of his career Charles declared that he owed much to the faith and example of his godly mother. You see, no-one can take the place of the mother in the home.

#### **2. God’s Purpose was Recognized:**

Do you see what ( 3:2 ) says ? “ *She saw him that he was a goodly child.* ” Goodly can mean “ *beautiful.* ” Stephen states that when Moses was born he was “ *exceeding fair.* ” The Greek text states literally that he was “ *fair to God.* ” Yes, he was obviously a cute little baby, but there was more than human looks that made Moses special. There was the touch of God upon him. It’s telling us that God revealed to them that He had a special plan for Moses. My .... who knows what God’s purpose is that for that son or daughter of yours ? You may be rearing a C.H. Spurgeon, a Mary Slessor, a William Carey, or a David Livingstone. You see, in this home, 1, 2,

### **3. God’s Providence was Realized:**

For there, are divine fingerprints all over this story. I can see the providence of God in the current of the river at that particular time. I can see His providence in the fact that the princess of the Pharaoh came down at that particular moment. I can see the providence of God in that she glanced just exactly when she did so she saw that little ark floating over there on the edge of the Nile. I have a feeling the Lord reached down and pinched Moses, and made him cry. My .... God knows what He is doing. My .... there are no chance happenings in a world that is presided by the living God. And about that time Miriam comes up and she says, “ *Would you like for me to get somebody to nurse this baby for you ?* ” She said, “ *Well sure.* ” And she goes and she gets .... you know who she got. She goes and she gets Jochebed, Moses’ own mother. She said, “ *take this child and nurse it for me and I will give thee thy wages.* ” ( 2:9 ) And mother, I want to tell

you something, you take good care of those boys and girls and God says, “ *I’ll give thee thy wages.* ” One of these days God will pay you, for being a sweet Christian mother, in the life of that little boy and girl. You’ll be glad you prayed over those little boys and girls, you’ll be glad you read the Word of God to those little boys and girls and one day they will rise up and call you blessed. ( Prov 31: 28 ) They will thank you for being the kind of godly mother you were. (a)

### ***(b) IN A PALATIAL ENVIRONMENT:***

Look if you will at ( 2:10 ) The historian Josephus tells us that because the Pharaoh had no son and heir, Moses was being nurtured for the throne. Be that as it may, Moses moved from a humble little shack in the ghetto of Goshen where his mum and dad lived, to the palace of Pharaoh. Moses, now living in the palace, found himself in an altogether different culture, he found himself in a **materialistic world.** Everything Egypt had to offer royalty was at the disposal of the young man Moses. He was living in an atmosphere of unbelievable prosperity and plenty and royalty. *He probably belonged to the Nile Country Club, and drove a Crocodile Mercedes.* But you know, it’s not as easy to live for the Lord in that atmosphere, did you know that ? It’s not as easy to live for Christ in a materialistic society. There is more to life than the accumulation of things. In fact the Lord Jesus says, it’s now what we have but what are that counts. *Can you imagine Moses out there on the Nile, on that golden barge and the temptations would come for Moses to relax his standards ?* And I can almost imagine he could here in his

ears his mother saying, “ *Don't forget who you are, Moses. And don't forget who God is, Moses. And remember, Moses, I'll be praying for you.* ” But he was also in a very **humanistic society**. Stephen gives us an insight into the education of Moses when he says, “ *Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and in deeds.* ” ( Acts 7:22 ) He probably attended the Temple of the Sun called by some “ *the Oxford of the ancient world.* ” By the time he reached thirty extra-biblical historians tell us, he had already led the Egyptian army to a smashing victory over the Ethiopians. Moreover, he had an ability to sway the masses. He not only possessed intellect he oozed charisma. Moses, primed for the throne. The pride of Egypt. Indeed Josephus tells us that Moses as a young man was so outstanding in his physical features that the Egyptians would often try to get a glimpse of him, just to see what he looked like. Yet in it all, God was preparing Moses for future service for Him. My .... is this what the Lord is doing with you ? Have the winds of trial and temptation been beating in upon you ? Has the Lord been putting you through the testing fires of college, university, business life that He might temper you ?

Has God endowed you with a great intellect ? Have you placed it at His feet ? Now these were the formative years, when he was leaning to be something. But notice,

## **(2) THE DECISIVE YEARS OF MOSES LIFE**

Look if you will ( 2:11 ) Now this is one of those

places in the Bible where I believe we're helped if we'll read between the lines. You see, there was a decision which Moses made around this period of time which you and I need to understand. Look at ( Heb 11:24-27 ) were the elements of this momentous decision are brought us. Notice,

### **(a) WHAT MOSES TURNED FROM:**

#### **1. The World's PRESTIGE:**

For “ *Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,* ” ( Heb 11:24 ) He elected to go back to his own folk. Now Moses did not make this decision quickly or rashly. ( 11:26 ) uses the word “ *Esteeming, or Accounting.* ” Literally it means “ *to judge,* ” or “ *To consider,* ” You can almost see the mental process through which Moses was passing. The word means “ *balancing things,* ” in order to come to a decision of some sort, putting this by the side of that, weighing the evidence on both sides “ *Esteeming, Accounting,* ” My .... can you see Moses ?

He would look at the wealth of Egyptians and then the poverty of the Hebrews. He would look at the power of Egypt and then the weakness of Israel. He would look at the reality of Pharaoh and then the prophecy of the Messiah. ( Jn 8:56 ) And all the time he was judging, balancing, esteeming, and then came the time when he chooses consciously, personally, definitely. He came to the conclusion that it's better to be reproached and to consider that reproach riches than to have every treasure the world

has to offer. Now what about you ? Have you made a conscious decision to sever ties with all that the world is ( Egypt ) and worships ? A girl was sent to finishing school by her wealthy parents. There she learned science, art, dancing and other things. One night she went to a gospel meeting and at the close of the service she accepted Christ as her personal Saviour. She gave her life to Christ and decided to give herself to missionary service. She wrote to her father and told him of her decision. He was raging and contacted her immediately saying, “ *Get on the next train and come home.* ” When she returned home the father met with her and said, “ *I did not send you to school to get religion. That is alright for poor folks and half wits, but not for someone of your status. If by tomorrow morning you have not decided to give up this foolish notion of religion, you may pack your suitcase and leave home.* ” That night she went to her room with a heavy heart. This would mean would the loss of culture, money, prestige. On her knees she fought it out. The next morning she packed her suitcase. Before leaving she stepped over to the piano and started to play and sing these words,

*Jesus I my cross have taken  
All to leave and follow Thee  
Destitute, despised, forsaken  
Thou, from hence, my all must be  
Perish every fond ambition  
All I've sought and hoped and known  
Yet how rich is my condition  
God and Heaven are still my own*

She arose and with the tears streaming down her face, she turned toward the door. Before she could open it, her father stepped out from behind the curtain where he had been listening to her singing. With deep emotion he said, “ *Wait, I did not know that Jesus Christ meant as much to you as that. I did not know you were willing to give up father, mother, wealth, prestige just for Jesus. Forgive me. If such great love can take hold of your heart, there must be something in it. Sit down here and tell me how I can become a Christian.* ” My .... are you willing to turn your back on the world's prestige ?

## **2. The World's PLEASURES:**

*" Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, "*  
( 11:25 ) Moses could have lived in the palace, had all the goodies he wanted, had all the women he wanted, had all the money he wanted, had all the power he wanted and had all the authority he wanted. But Moses was beginning to understand that he was a son of destiny, who would lead his people out of bondage. ( Exod 3:10 ) So he turned his back on the world's pleasures. And my .... if ever you are going to be effective in the hands of God, you will have to refuse much in the line of fleshly pleasure.

## **3. The World's PROSPERITY:**

*" Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, "* ( 11:26 ) Now Egypt was an extremely wealthy nation. The discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen has produced some of the greatest treasures

ever discovered in ancient Egypt. Moses as a member of Pharaoh's court had all of the wealth this old world could offer. But he turned his back upon it because he had faith in God's greater eternal riches. ( Phil 4:19 ) I think of C.T. Studd who laboured for God on the Mission Field giving away a personal fortune in the late 1800's of £30,000. I think of Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones vacating a lucrative position in Harley Street London to become the minister of an insignificant church in South Wales. Moses relinquished a present good and a prospective better because he yearned for heaven's best. Is that your yearning and desire ? Do you long for God's best in your life ? Well, are you willing to count the cost, to pay the price and to follow the Lord ? (a)

***(b) WHAT HE TURNED TO:***

Believing that God would use him to lead Israel ( Acts 7:25 ) Moses acted in the energy of the flesh, smote an Egyptian ( 2:12 ) and prematurely attempted to lead his own people to unity and fellowship. ( 2:13 ) Now nowhere do you read where God said to Moses “ *Move into this situation and make it right.* ” My .... Moses made that decision on his own. Moses looked this way and he looked that way. *Isn't that interesting ?* He didn't look up did he ? He looked in both directions horizontally, but left the vertical completely out of it. He was energized by the flesh, not the Lord. My .... do you realise that God's timing is of crucial importance ? You see, you and I can become so dedicated to the will of God, that we might unintentionally take matters into our own hands and leave the Lord completely out of the picture. Have you been

there ? Have you ever done that ? Have you ever made a mistake so serious that the world seemed to turn against you ? Moses did. In fact, if he hadn't run for his life, he'd have lost it. But God didn't turn against him, not forget him. The Lord still had a job for him to do, in spite of his mistake but not just yet. You see, sometimes we get ahead of God, and sometimes we try to work in the energy of the flesh, and sometimes we use wrong methods, and sometimes we take things into our own hands and we try to do what only God only can do in and through us. So God takes us aside to train us more. You see, this is the third aspect in Moses life. (1) (2)

**(3) THE SECLUSIVE YEARS OF MOSES LIFE**

Look if you will at ( 2:15 ) If you look at a map you'll discover that Midian was on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Akabah, near Elat. I stood looking over at Midian one day, and it certainly is desert. You see, Moses has come from the palace to the wilderness. The Bible says “ *But Moses .... dwelt in the land of Midian and he sat down by a well.* ” ( 2:15 ) My .... can you see him ? Can you hear him ? “ *Life is over. God can never, never use me again. I am finished.* ” He's in isolation. But do you see what God did for him ? God set him down by **a well**. God's got something in mind in those isolation experiences. Then he meets the family of Reuel ( Jethro ) The Bible says “ *Moses was content to dwell with the man, and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.* ” ( 2:21 ) That's **his wife** now. Now do you see what's happening ? He's in isolation, he's over there in a desert, he's got **a well, he's got a wife, and he's got a work.** ( 3:1 ) He's a shepherd

now. Now why has God put him in seclusion ? Well, there is,

**(a) THE TEACHING ELEMENT:**

You see, if you're going to be a leader the Lord says, *"first of all I've got to give you some family training. I've got to teach you to be a leader in a family circle."* Then God says, *"I've got to teach you how to do a little job. I have got to see to see if you'll be faithful with a few sheep. How can I trust you with my people until I know you'll be faithful with a few sheep."* You see, faithfulness in little things is God's appointed way to bigger things. ( Matt 25:23 ) I mean can you see Moses ? His marriage, his memories, the monotony of it all, and I can almost imagine on many a day old Moses would look up toward heaven and say, *"Hey, Lord. Do you remember me ? Lord, I thought you had big plans for me. Hey, Lord, I'm still here, Lord."* Do you recall what we said about Moses ? The first forty years in Egypt thinking he was somebody, the next forty years in the desert learning he was nobody. You see, time is no object with a God who demands quality at all costs.

Do you know what ? Very often when God is going to use somebody He will give them the experience of isolation, He will give them a course in the seminary of solitude. He did for Elijah, He put him out there, He did for John the Baptist out there in the wilderness, He did for Paul. Paul spent three years of solitude in the Arabian deserts. ( Gal 1:18-19 ) And you know what somebody said ? That Paul went into Arabia with Moses and the

prophets under his arms and he came back with Romans and Galatians and Ephesians and Philippians in his heart. You see, God always uses the solitude, the isolation experience. My .... are you wondering if the Lord knows where you are ? Are you wondering what the Lord has in store for your life ? My .... just be faithful, you just trust God and learn the lessons of isolation, and in God's time He'll do something. For there is not only here (a) but,

**(b) THE TIMING ELEMENT:**

Do you see ( 2:23 ) ? Now God is ready, He's got His people ready, and He's just about got his man ready. I wonder, has the Lord, been using those days of isolation in your life to get you ready ? Maybe like Moses, you feel, you are in some obscure out of the way place. Some job or ministry that is monotonous. My .... trust God, for when He refines you, He will use you. He never puts us in the blast furnace of the desert to ruin us, He does it to refine us. Do you know the lines ?

**When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie  
My grace all sufficient, shall be thy supply  
The flames shall not hurt thee, I only design  
Thy dross to consume, thy gold to refine**

