

# **MOSES' THREE LESSONS**

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## **MOSES' THREE LESSONS**

### **CHAPTER ONE "I AM" IS WITH YOU**

Do you feel like a failure? I've got good news for you. God doesn't see you as a failure. God sees your potential greatness. In a way, a failure is just a great person who got off to a bad start. But God wants to bring out the seed of greatness in you. God didn't create you or me to fail; He created us to succeed. In the Bible, we see a great man who started off as a failure, but God made him successful. His name was Moses.

In the Book of Exodus (read Chapter 2), we see the story of Moses. We see a Hebrew baby boy being born at a time when the Israelites were in slavery to Egypt. The Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, was killing all the newborn Hebrew males. But we also see the hand of God on this baby Moses' life; we see God protecting him. Instead of turning him over to be killed, Moses' mother put him in a basket in the bulrushes on the banks of the Nile River.

Well, the daughter of Pharaoh found the baby and fell in love with him and brought him to be raised in the royal palace. Unknowingly, she

hires Moses' mother to nurse and care for him. Moses' mother raises him and teaches him his Hebrew heritage even as he grows up in Pharaoh's court.

Moses, as he matures, sees and hates the oppression of his people, the sons of Israel. One day, he sees an Egyptian and an Israelite fighting. Moses kills the Egyptian and buries the body, but his act is not appreciated. He then fears for his own life and flees to the desert. Then he becomes a shepherd on the backside of the desert for 40 years. Moses got into a negative cycle, living like a failure.

In the meantime, the oppression in Egypt increases. The people cry out for help and God hears their cries. God's time had come to deliver His people and God's time to use Moses and make him a success had come.

So, the first lesson that Moses was about to learn is that Almighty God has a plan and a purpose for *every* person ever born. No human life is an "accident" or "mistake." Every person born is born through God's life-giving power, and that person has a God-given destiny. No life is ever meant by God to be wasted. Furthermore, there will be a special moment in time when Almighty God confronts each human being and calls them to accept His destiny for them. Sometimes, as in the case of Moses, it will take years of preparation, years of developing a person's character so they are fit for that destiny. But make no mistake about it, Almighty God *will* confront each person in an unusual way that they will understand and offer them the opportunity to walk in his destiny for them.

One day, as Moses is tending sheep, he notices a strange sight. (Read Exodus, Chapter 3.) He sees a burning shrub, but although it burns, it is not consumed. So, he draws close to this burning bush. As Moses gets closer, the bush speaks to him and calls his name: "Moses, Moses." Moses responds, "Here I am." Then the bush tells him to take off his shoes because he's standing on holy ground and announces, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (Exodus 3:6) Moses becomes fearful and turns his eyes away. The voice continues, "I have heard the cries of my people. Pharaoh is mistreating them. My time has come to deliver them and set them free, so I'm sending you, Moses, to lead them out of captivity."

Suddenly, Moses becomes fearful. Usually, God's destiny for us is bigger than ourselves. If we've been living in defeat, we often want to run from God's plan for us. Moses protests, "God, you don't understand. He's Pharaoh and I'm only Moses." But God answers, "No, Moses, you don't understand. I'm God, and he's only Pharaoh." God is giving Moses a lesson in New Math:  $GOD + 1 = \text{the majority}$ . No problem is too big for God. The

word “impossible” is not in God’s dictionary. If God calls you to a destiny, God guarantees a successful outcome.

Then Moses asks God’s name. In effect, Moses is saying, “If I’m going down to Pharaoh, who shall I say sent me? What authority am I representing?” God says, “Tell them I AM sent you.” (Exodus 3:14) “Your people know Me as the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But My name is ‘I AM’ – I AM full, complete, all-powerful in Myself. I AM eternal, uncreated and have life in Myself. I AM dependent on no one and nothing and I AM the One Who causes everything that is to be.”

Then Moses asks, “Suppose they don’t believe me?” Isn’t it strange how we try every possible way to not be successful and not take the step of faith even when God has promised His help? It’s more like Moses trying to give God a job interview than vice-versa! But God promises Moses that he’ll be backed up with God’s miracle-working power when necessary. He tells Moses to throw down his staff – and when he does, it turns into a serpent! Then when Moses picks it up, it turns back into a stick. Then God tells Moses to put his hand to his chest. When he removes it, it’s white with the disease of leprosy. Then he puts it back to his chest and it returns to normal. Then God assures Moses, when all is said and done, Egypt will know that “I AM” is with him.

Moses still protests, asking “What will I say?” God tells him, “I’ll give you the words to say.” Moses states, “But I stutter!” At this point God’s anger starts burning and He says, “Your brother Aaron will be your spokesman. Now get down to Egypt and obey Me!”

Well, Moses realizes at this point that it’s time to obey! So by faith he goes down to Egypt and the rest, as they say, is history. (Read Exodus, Chapters 4 through 13.)

Pharaoh was stubborn. God worked many mighty miracles through Moses’ ministry and broke Pharaoh’s will, and the Hebrews were set free. The last great miracle was the night of Passover when the Angel of Death slew the firstborn of every household that did not have the blood of the Passover Lamb covering on its doorpost – a prophecy of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Passover Lamb, Who shed His blood to save us from eternal death (1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:4). The firstborn of all the Egyptians including Pharaoh’s household, died (Exodus 12:29-30). A broken-spirited Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and told them, “Take your people and get out of Egypt!” And two million people walked out of slavery and their oppressors even paid them to go (Exodus 12:33-36).

Are you like Moses? Do you feel like a failure in life? Well, the great “I AM” wants to make you a success. But like He did with Moses, He’s got

to get your attention. He may not come to you in a burning bush, but He'll come to you in a way you'll understand. Like Moses, you'll realize that God is calling you and that He has a plan for you. You'll realize that He's had His hand on your life ever since you were born and that He's been with you all along, even in those times when you thought you were a miserable, lonely failure. And like Moses, you'll realize this is your NOW moment.

So, Moses learned his first lesson:

“I AM” IS WITH YOU.

## **CHAPTER TWO THE WAY WHERE THERE IS NO WAY**

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where there seemed to be no good answer, no way out? Have you ever been in a situation that was beyond desperate, but actually looked hopeless? This is exactly the place where Moses found himself when he learned the second lesson that God taught him.

After God had used Moses to perform mighty miracles in Egypt, Moses led the children of Israel out of slavery. As Moses and the Israelites were approaching the Red Sea, Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, had a change of heart and decided he wanted to take the Israelites back into slavery. Suddenly, Moses and the Israelites found themselves in a situation where there seemed to be no way out. The Red Sea was in front of them, mountains and deserts on either side, and the Egyptian army coming up behind them! They were literally between a rock and a hard place! But God made a way where there seemed to be no way.

In Psalm 78, the Israelites were commanded to tell of this great miracle to all generations so that their children and all future generations would HAVE CONFIDENCE IN GOD AND TRUST IN HIS MIGHTY WORKS. We read:

*We will not conceal them from their children, But tell to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wondrous works that He has done...That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, That they may arise and tell them to their children, That they should put their confidence in God And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments.*

- Psalm 78:4,6-7

Today, I come telling YOU of the mighty works of God, so that YOU might have confidence in Him, so that YOU might trust Him. With God, all things are possible – and with God, nothing is impossible (Mark 10:27; Luke 1:27).

Do you face a desperate situation today? Is it beyond desperate – is it seemingly hopeless? The One, True Living God of this universe is the God Who can make a way where there seems to be no possible way out. He’s the God Who creates a new option when it looks like you’ve run out of options.

In Exodus, Chapter 14, we see that Moses, the leader called by God to lead the sons of Israel out of their slavery in Egypt, had performed mighty miracles through the power of God and Pharaoh had let the people go. But as Moses led the people to the Red Sea, Pharaoh had a change of heart and wanted to re-enslave the people.

*<sup>5</sup> When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his servants had a change of heart toward the people, and they said, “What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?”*

*<sup>6</sup> So he made his chariot ready and took his people with him;*

*<sup>7</sup> and he took six hundred select chariots, and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them.*

*<sup>8</sup> The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly.*

*<sup>9</sup> Then the Egyptians chased after them with all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and they overtook them camping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.*

*<sup>10</sup> As Pharaoh drew near, the sons of Israel looked, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they became very frightened; so the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD.*

*<sup>11</sup> Then they said to Moses, “Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt?”*

- Exodus 14:5-11

The situation looked hopeless. The people started turning on Moses, telling him, “There were plenty of graves in Egypt. Why did you bring us to the desert to die?”

But through his walk of faith with God, Moses had learned some things.

First, he had learned that when God starts something, He always finishes it. Second, he learned that with God, no situation is ever hopeless or impossible, no matter how things may look. And third, he had learned that when God is directly challenged – He never loses a battle!

So, instead of getting fearful and doubting God, or getting angry at the people, Moses *encouraged* the people. Then God, in turn, encouraged Moses:

<sup>13</sup> *But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever.*

<sup>14</sup> *"The LORD will fight for you while you keep silent."*

<sup>15</sup> *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward.*

<sup>16</sup> *"As for you, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land.*

<sup>17</sup> *"As for Me, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen.*

- Exodus 14:13-17

You see, God is the God Who is always there for us. He's there for you, He's there for me. It's sad that we go through life ignoring the One Who created us and gives us life and sustains that life. We go through life ignoring Him until we get into a desperate situation. The remarkable thing about this God Who is Love is that He's there for us in those times. He's there for us at all times – and the impossible is not impossible for Him.

God told Moses, "Lift up your hand and stretch out the staff that I gave you." And Moses obeyed God. As Moses obeyed, suddenly a strong east wind began to blow and the waters of the Red Sea divided – and suddenly there was a way where there had been no way before. In verse 22 the sons of Israel crossed over the Red Sea on dry land. Well, the Egyptian army tried to follow them when the Israelites had safely reached the other side and the Egyptian army was on the strip of dry land, God told Moses:

<sup>26</sup> *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots*

*and their horsemen."*

*<sup>27</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.*

*<sup>28</sup> The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, even Pharaoh's entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained.*

*<sup>29</sup> But the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.*

*<sup>30</sup> Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.*

- Exodus 14:26-30

What beautiful words, "Thus the LORD saved Israel that day..."

My friend, at times life can get very desperate. If you've lived on this earth any amount of time, you've probably already faced desperate situations. I've been there too more than once. And as a pastor, I've been there with other people. As a pastor, I've learned that life can be desperate at times. But I've learned too, that with God, no situation is ever an impossible situation.

It's desperate when the doctor tells you that you're terminally ill and no medication is working. But it's never hopeless – God can make a *new* way.

It's desperate when you have a family to support and you suddenly get laid off at work. But it's never hopeless – God can make a *new* way.

It's desperate when your child or loved one is destroying themselves through an addiction or bondage to a substance. But it's never hopeless – God can make a *new* way.

It's desperate when it looks like you've been a failure, you're lonely, nothing has ever gone right in your life and it hardly seems worth going on. But it's never hopeless – God can make a *new* way.

God is the God Who is there for us:

- He's there when our back is to the wall.
- He's there when you feel like the roof is caving in.
- He's there when everybody else has let you down.
- He's there when you don't know where to turn.

As it says in Psalm 78, I tell you this so that you might have confidence in God and trust in His mighty works.

And what it takes is you, simply, from your heart, turning to Him –

because no matter what you're facing, He can make a way where there seems to be no possible way. "Out of the blue," God can bring an answer to your problem in a way that's never been done before. In fact, when we do serious business with God from our hearts, more often than not, He solves our desperate situation in a new, even spectacular way that only He could have thought of.

So, Moses learned his second lesson:

**GOD CAN MAKE A WAY WHERE THERE SEEMS TO BE NO POSSIBLE WAY!**

### **CHAPTER THREE CHOOSE LIFE**

Moses, the anointed man of God, learned a third important lesson. He had learned that Almighty God, the great "I AM" was with him and had been with him from the very moment of his birth. That great "I AM" was personally concerned about Moses and had a plan for Moses, even at those times when he felt like a failure. And this great "I AM" also has a plan for you, for me, and for each and every person on this earth and at some moment in time, this God crosses our path and confronts us with His purpose for our lives.

Secondly, Moses had learned that if we are doing our level-headed best to obey God and walk in His plan for us, then no problem that we ever encounter is too big for God to solve. No situation is ever impossible. He learned that God can make a way even where there seems to be no possible way.

Moses had also learned a third lesson, and toward the end of his life he shared that lesson with the sons of Israel. We see this late in the book of Deuteronomy. Moses had discovered that when God confronts us and offers His destiny for us to us – we have to make a choice! At that important moment God offers us life and success. We can choose life – or we can reject God's plan and go our own willful way which will lead to defeat, failure and ultimately death.

Moses put it this way to the sons of Israel:

<sup>15</sup>*"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;*

<sup>16</sup>*in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His*

*judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.*

<sup>17</sup>*"But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them,*

<sup>18</sup>*I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it.*

<sup>19</sup>*"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants."*

- Deuteronomy 30: 15-19

Moses had well learned that although God is the One Who always takes the initiative in our relationship with Him, He *always demands* a response from us. He demands a "Yes" or a "No" from us when He offers His plan for us to us. Our response to Him is critical if we are to realize our true destiny on this earth. We are literally faced with choosing life or death. God Himself gives us the answer: "Choose life." (Verse 19)

Undoubtedly, Moses thought many times about his own situation, how he had fled from Egypt and had forsaken a position of power and riches to live day after day in what appeared to be a life of defeat. Every day he got up, minded the sheep, went home, ate, talked with his wife and relatives, went to sleep, got up, minded the sheep, went home, ate, talked with his wife and relatives, went to sleep, got up, minded the sheep, etc. etc. day after day. But one day, after he got up and minded the sheep, he noticed a bush that was burning but strangely, was not consumed. Moses thought to himself, "Before I go home, I think I'll check out this unusual happening." In the Book of Acts, the disciple Stephen put it this way:

*And when Moses saw it, he began to marvel at the sight; and as he approached to look more closely, there came the voice of the Lord.*

- Acts 7:31

As Moses had this life-changing encounter with God, he found himself in a position where he *had* to make a choice. He could choose to follow God and have life, or he could reject God's plan, walk away and end his life in defeat and death. Moses chose life.

Moses was passing on this experience to the sons of Israel. Almighty God

had revealed Himself as the God Who would enter into a covenant, or contract of blessing for those who would say “Yes” to His plan for them. God Himself would guarantee that *His plan* for each human being would come to pass and nothing would stop it if they would say “Yes” to His plan and trust Him by faith to bring it to pass. God had promised to guarantee His Covenant and that “all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you will obey the Lord your God.” (Deuteronomy 28:2)

Moses learned there was one very important thing each of us has to do: say “Yes” to God and to His plan for our lives.

My friend, nothing has changed – God has stated that He is the Faithful God that changes not (Malachi 3:6). He is still the God Who has a plan for YOU; He is still the God Who can make a way where there seems to be no way for YOU. He is still the God Who requires a free-will response of “Yes” from YOU.

This God has a very specific way for you to say “Yes” to Him. Moses said, “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen; you shall listen to Him.” (Deuteronomy 18:15) This prophet like Moses was Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who came to earth, lived a life of perfect obedience to God the Father, was crucified on a cross to pay the price of eternal justice for every sin and mistake we’d ever make, and purchased new life and eternal life for us, and then rose from the dead. God has declared that our faith in this Jesus and our acceptance of what He did on the cross as payment for our sins is our way of saying “Yes” to God and choosing life and entering into His plan for us.

The Word of God tells us to repent, or turn away from our old life of sin and living apart from God, and put our old life at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ and accept the new life that He offers us. The Word of God states, “That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.” (Romans 10:9-10)

Right now YOU stand in the same position as Moses when he stood before the burning bush. If you have never made a commitment to God, He is offering, even challenging you to say “Yes” to Him by accepting His Son Jesus as your Savior. After you say “Yes,” He will start to reveal a very special, individual plan He has just for you and as you say “Yes” to that plan, you will find this Almighty God being the same powerful God to you that He was to Moses.

Will you pray with me now?

“Dear God, You Are the great ‘I AM,’ and I see You entering my life and challenging me to say ‘Yes’ to You. Lord God, I do say ‘Yes’ to you today. God, I turn from my old life of sin, defeat, and self-centeredness. I turn to You and the plan You have for me. I accept what Your Son Jesus did for me on the cross and I ask Jesus to come live in my heart. I believe Jesus is the Son of God and I believe He rose from the dead. And God, with Your help and power, I’ll live the rest of my life for You, to fulfill Your plan for me. Thank you for this precious gift. Amen.”

If you prayed that prayer and meant it, the god of Moses, the great “I AM” is now able, because of your “Yes,” to establish His Covenant – contract of blessing – in your life. And the rest of your life will be an adventure of learning that the God of Moses is your God too; and what He did for Moses, He’ll do for you.

Take care and God bless you.

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