

The University of Moses—
Lessons in Personal Effectiveness
from One of History's Greatest
Leaders

Hebrews 11:24-29

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²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them. ²⁹ By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.

Today, we begin with an overview of three things that the Book of Hebrews says lay at the core of Moses's greatness.

- Among the great heroes of faith in the Old Testament, Moses towers over them all.
- He **prevailed against the most powerful king and empire** in the ancient world to deliver the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.
- He **received their divine constitution** directly from the hand of God on tablets of stone at Mount Sinai.
- He **oversaw the birth of a nation** and the institutions that would form its worship, government, and culture for more than a thousand years.
- For **forty years** he led the people of God in the crucial early days of their national life.
- He penned the **first five books of the Bible** and became so identified them that they came to be called “the *Law of Moses*.”
- As to his personal faith and character, no other human ever lived in such close proximity to God.



- What made Moses the man he was?
- What was the secret of his greatness, his success as a leader, his stature as the preeminent hero of faith of the Old Testament?
- For the next few weeks we will study the life and faith of Moses.
- We will go to school in the “University of Moses” to learn the principles of personal effectiveness that guided one of history’s greatest leaders.

1. Moses chose the imperishable.

Hebrews 11:24–29

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

Moses was born to Jewish parents.

When Pharaoh ordered the death of all Jewish baby boys, Moses' mother hid him for three months, then put him in a basket on the Nile.

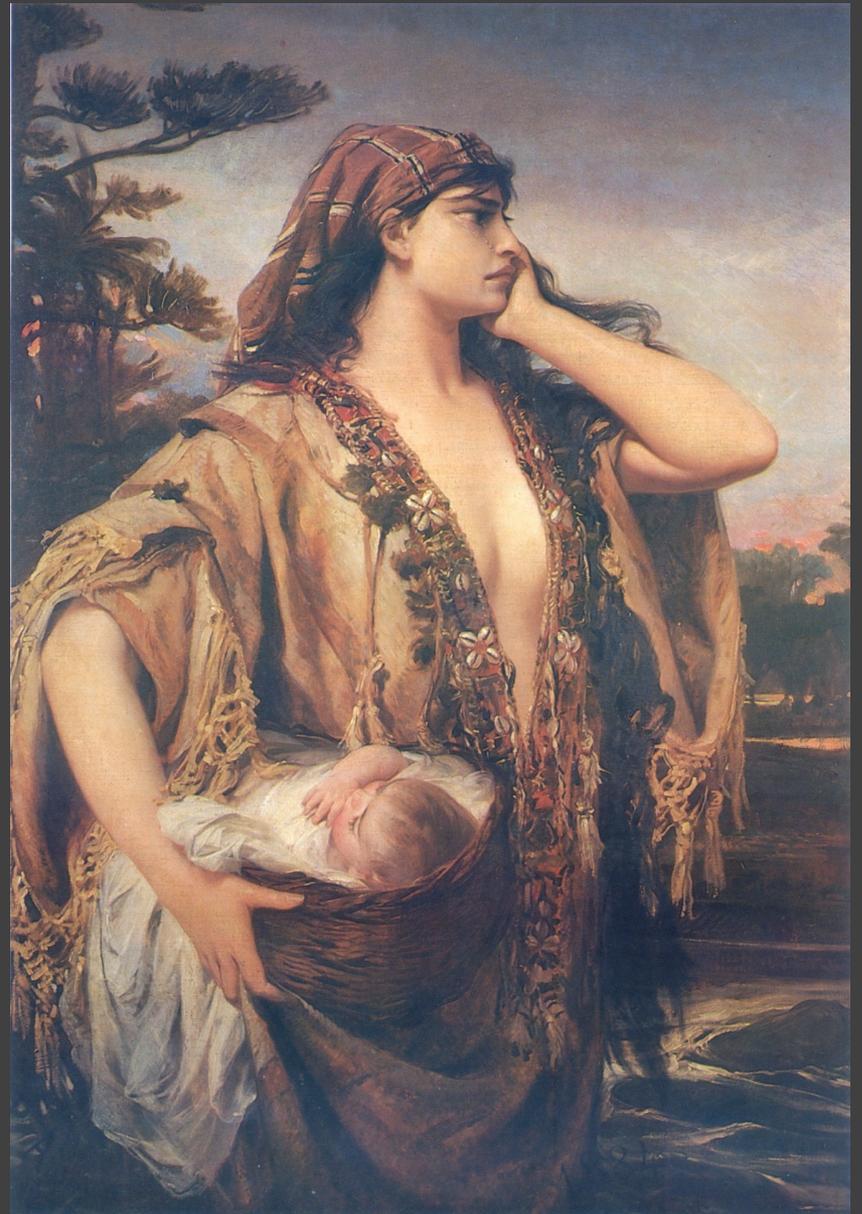
Pharaoh's daughter found him and took him to be her son.

His sister Miriam volunteered to get a "Hebrew woman" to nurse Moses. Pharaoh's daughter agrees and Miriam goes to get their mother.



We don't know how long Moses stayed with his mother, perhaps until he was four or five.

But it was long enough for him to learn something of his God, the history of his people, and their perils and hardships in Egypt.

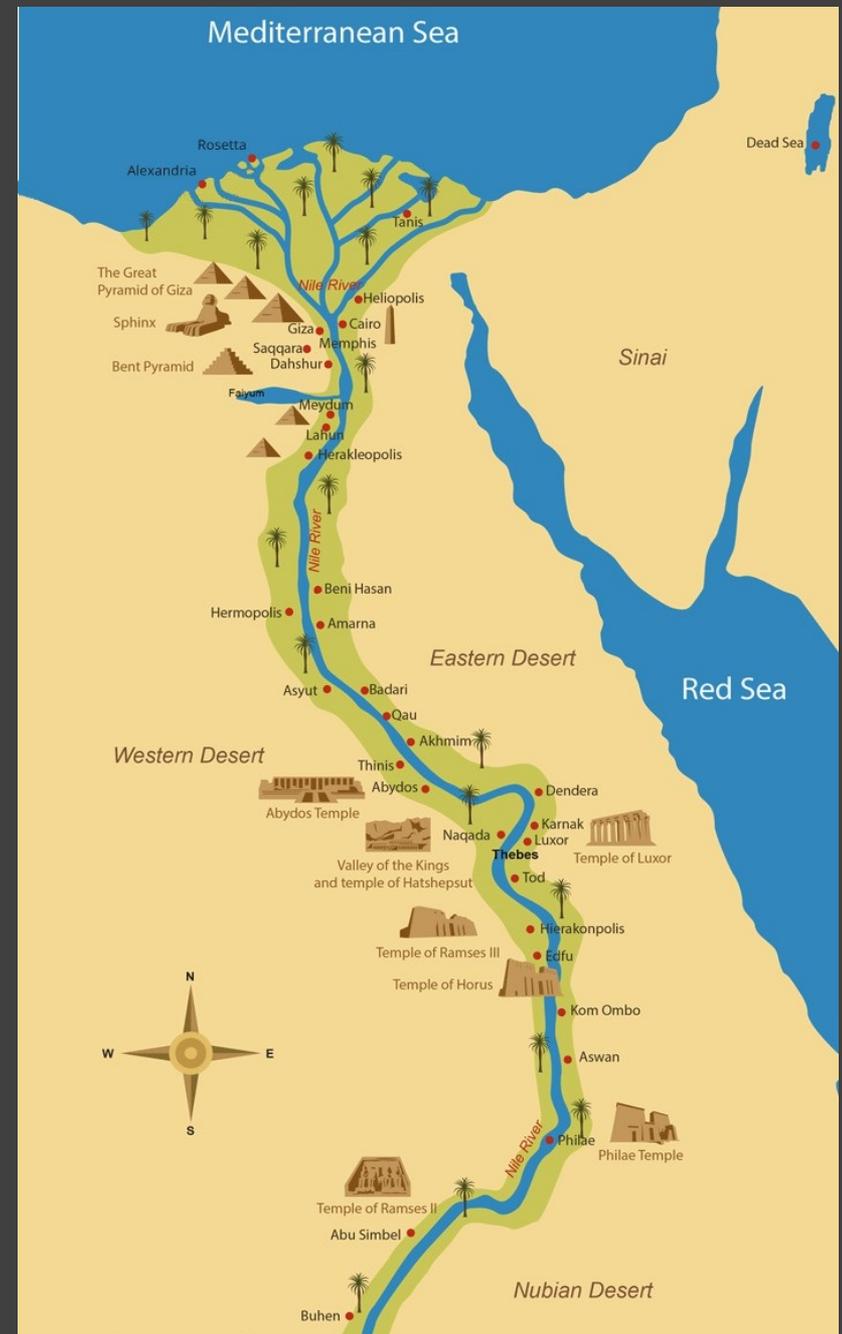


When the time arrived for Pharaoh's daughter to claim for her own the child whom she had rescued, he had now grown so beautiful that, Josephus tells us, passersby stood still to look at him, and laborers left work to steal a glance.



In those days Egypt was a magnificent land.

The atmosphere was rainless; the Nile brought from afar the rich soil that bore corn enough to feed the world. The banks of the river were covered with cities, villages, stately temples, and all the evidences of an advanced civilization; while mighty pyramids and colossal figures towered to a hundred feet in height.



Seven
million people
throve on this
verdant,
green ribbon
along the Nile.

And Moses
was a prince
among them.



As Pharaoh's adopted grandson, Moses was brought up in the palace.

He rode into the streets in a princely chariot, amid the cries of "Bow the knee."



He traveled up and down the Nile on a luxurious royal barge.

If he wished for anything, all the wealth and treasures of Egypt put it within his reach.

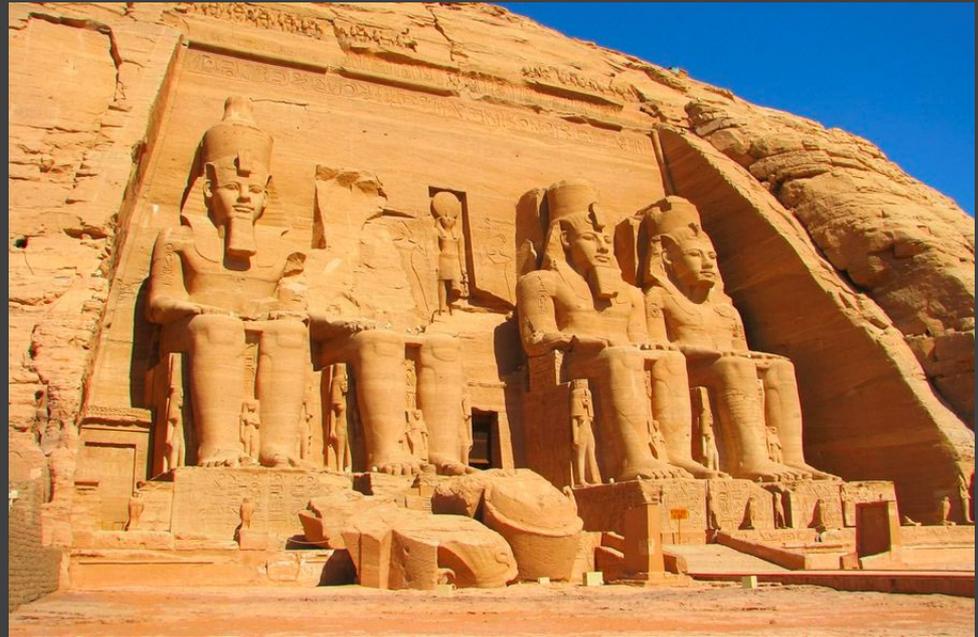


When old enough he was probably sent to be **educated** in the college, which had grown up around the Temple of the Sun, and has been called "the Oxford of Ancient Egypt."

There he learned to read and write the mysterious hieroglyph;

He was instructed in mathematics, astronomy, and chemistry, in all of which the Egyptians were adept.

In Acts 7:22, Stephen says: "**Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.**"



Moses also became *a statesman and a soldier*.



Josephus says that while Moses was still a young man, the Ethiopians invaded Egypt, routed the army, and threatened Memphis. When the Egyptian oracles were consulted, they recommended that Moses be given command of the royal troops. He defeated the Ethiopians, captured their principal city, and returned to Egypt laden with the spoils of victory.

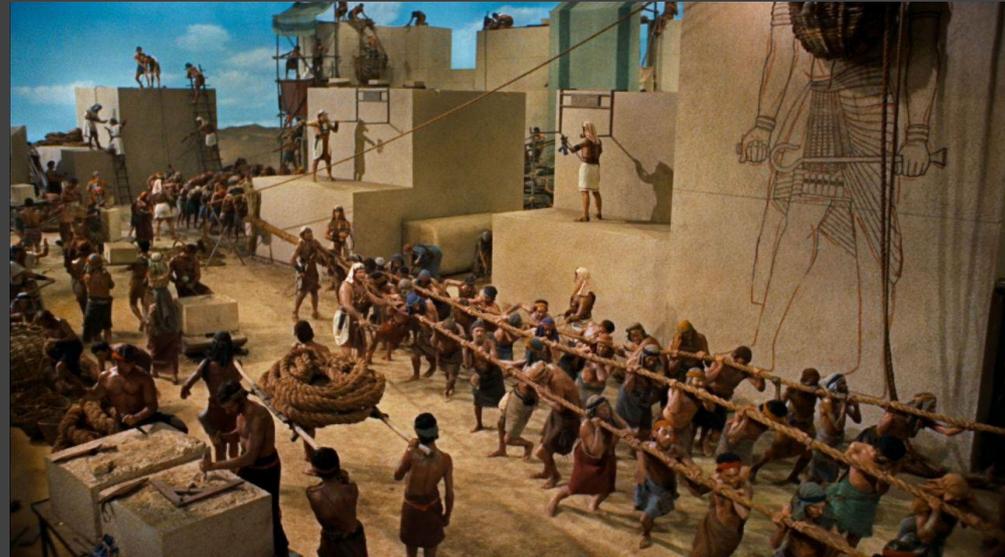
*For 40
years, the
cream of all
that Egypt
was was
poured into
the cup of
Moses.*



But beneath all of this, Moses could not forget that his parents were slaves; that the bondmen who were groaning in the brickfields under their Egyptian taskmasters were his brethren.

He never lost the thought of the one true God to whom his mother had taught him to pray.

And Moses realized that his destiny did not lie in the intoxicating cup of earthly success, but was in some way associated with the fulfillment of that promise that he had heard so often from his mother's lips.



One day Moses could no longer stand the oppression of his own people. He came to the aid of a Hebrew slave being beaten by an Egyptian and in the process killed him.

He was forced to flee from Egypt into the wilderness and that's where God met him in the burning bush.



- *Moses chose the imperishable when the fortunes of the Hebrews were at their lowest ebb.* His people were slaves.
- *Moses chose the imperishable when the pleasures of sin seemed most fascinating.* In the heyday of his strength, in the prime of his manhood, in a court where a prince could indulge whatever pleasure met his fancy, Moses chose to forego it all.
- That same choice is required of us. Often we must die to much that is pleasant and attractive, in order to rise to our true life with God.

2. Moses saw the invisible.

Hebrews 11:27

²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.

Moses discovered the awesome adventure of knowing the invisible God who speaks from the fire.

Exodus 3:2-6

There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. ³ So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.”

⁴ When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!”

And Moses said, “Here I am.”



⁵ “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶ Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” **At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.**

Exodus 19:16-20

On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. ¹⁷ Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, the whole mountain b trembled violently, ¹⁹ and the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Then Moses spoke **and the voice of God answered him.**



²⁰ The LORD descended to the top of Mount Sinai and **called Moses** to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up.

Deuteronomy 4:11-13

¹¹ And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom.

¹² Then **the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of words, but saw no form; there was only a voice.**



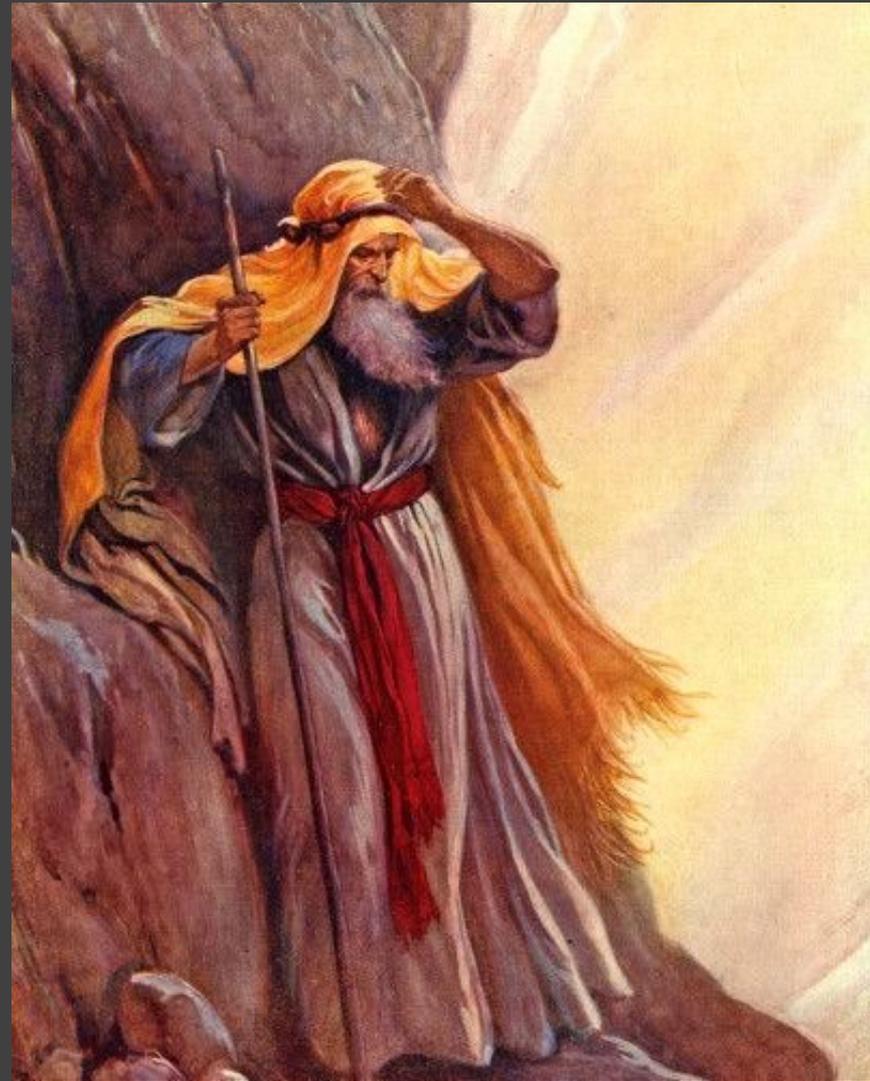
¹³ And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone.

Exodus 33:12–23.

¹² Moses said to the Lord, “See, you say to me, ‘Bring up this people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ ¹³ Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.” ¹⁴ And he said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” ¹⁵ And he said to him, “If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. ¹⁶ For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?”

¹⁷ And the Lord said to Moses, “This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.”

¹⁸ Moses said, “Please show me your glory.” ¹⁹ And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you and will **proclaim before you my name ‘The Lord.’** And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰ But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.” ²¹ And the Lord said, “Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, ²² and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³ Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen.”





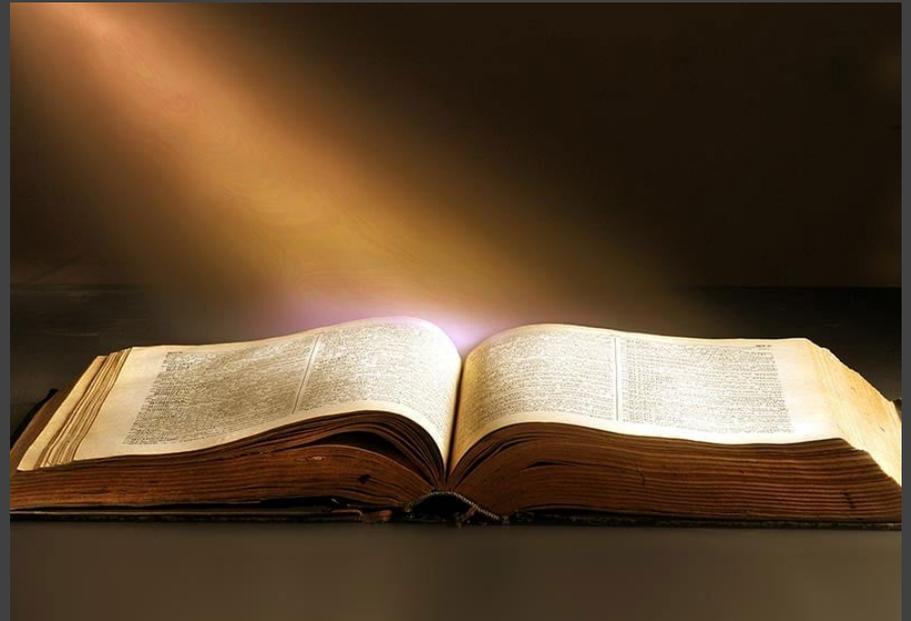
The Lord is not a God who is **seen**, but a God who is **heard**. He **spoke** to Moses and he **wrote** the Ten Commandments with his own finger.



The idols that men create are seen but they **do not speak**. In contrast, God speaks, but he is not seen.



Every believer
can still hear the
voice of God
anytime he opens
his Bible.



3. Moses did the impossible.

Hebrews 11:28–29

²⁸ By faith he **kept the Passover** and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.

²⁹ By faith the people **crossed the Red Sea as on dry land**, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.

Because Moses yielded himself to God, God did things with and through him that were humanly impossible.



- The ten plagues that forced Pharaoh to free the Israelite slaves.
- The parting of Red Sea.
- The miraculous provision of food in the wilderness and water from a rock.
- The defeat of the nations that opposed Israel and the destruction of Moses' enemies by fire that fell from heaven.
- The fulfillment of the ancient promise that God would give his people a land that flowed with milk and honey.

When Abraham and Sarah wondered how God could give them a son in their old age, God said:

“Is anything too hard for the Lord?”

—Genesis 18:14



And Mary said to the angel,
“How will this be, since I am a
virgin?”

³⁵ And the angel answered
her, “The Holy Spirit will come
upon you, and the power of the
Most High will overshadow you;
therefore the child to be born
will be called holy—the Son of
God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative
Elizabeth in her old age has also
conceived a son, and this is the
sixth month with her who was
called barren. ³⁷ **For nothing will
be impossible with God.** ³⁸ And
Mary said, “Behold, I am the
servant of the Lord; let it be to
me according to your word.” And
the angel departed from her.

—Luke 1:34–38.



When Jesus said that it was difficult for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God, his disciples asked, “Then who can be saved?” And Jesus answered, “**What is impossible with man is possible with God.**”

—Luke 18:27



Conclusion

- The Bible records the life of Moses so that we may learn from the example of his faith and character.
- Moses believed God's promise to Abraham, that from his descendants God would raise up a great nation that would after four hundred years of bondage would come into their own land that would exceed the glories of Egypt.
- Moses loved God and, above all else, he wanted to know him and serve him.

Be like Moses and set your heart on God.

Choose the imperishable, see the invisible,
and trust God to do the impossible in your life.