

# POWER

"... the gospel ... is the power of God unto salvation ..." (Romans 1:16)

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE OF MOSES: FROM THE PALACE OF PHARAOH TO THE PINNACLE OF NEBO

by Wade L. Webster

**T**he one hundred and twenty years of Moses' life are generally divided into three periods of forty years each. The first forty years were spent in Egypt, the second forty years were spent in Midian, and the final forty years were spent in the wilderness. As we summarize his life, we will use this standard approach. However, we will also add a final period to our study.

### The Palace of Pharaoh - God Preserves Moses

The first forty years of Moses' life were spent in Egypt. He was born in the worst of times. A paranoid and pitiless Pharaoh was on the throne. Fearing a revolt, Pharaoh made the children of Israel serve with rigor (Exod. 1:8-14). No doubt, the children of Israel had little energy to stand, much less to fight. Yet, Pharaoh still feared them.

From rigor, Pharaoh progressed to murder. He commanded death for every boy born to the Hebrews (Exod. 1:15-16). Thankfully, the midwives that he charged with carrying out the atrocious act were pro-life (Exod. 1:17-21). They feared God more than they feared Pharaoh. However, Pharaoh was not to be deterred. He sent out a decree to all in his kingdom to do what the midwives had not done. Every Hebrew boy was to be thrown into the river (Exod. 1:22). Is it any wonder that the first plague brought upon Egypt was for the river to become blood (Exod. 7:14-25)? God hates the shedding of innocent blood (Prov. 6:16-19).

Amram and Jochebed, Moses' mother and father, were unwilling for their beautiful baby boy to suffer the end that thousands of others must have met. Like the midwives, Moses' parents feared God more than Pharaoh (Heb. 11:23). They hid their baby for three long months. No doubt, they wanted to hide him forever.

However, something happened. Perhaps someone heard him crying or caught a glimpse of him one day. In response to the crisis, the faith of Moses' parents kicked into overdrive. With faith in God and love for their child, Amram and Jochebed quickly

prepared a waterproof ark of bulrushes and laid it in the flags by the river's brink (Exod. 2:3). They saved their son's life, by being willing to give it (Mat. 16:25).

Of course, Moses had never been safer than he was at that moment. He was in the providential hands of God. Things would work together for good (Rom. 8:28). Even Pharaoh could not pluck him out of God's hands (John 10:28-29).

No doubt, Moses' parents carefully selected the spot where the ark was placed. The inspired text reveals that the ark was placed in the still waters that the psalmist would later sing about in the most beloved psalm of all (Psa. 23:2). As pictured in that psalm, Moses' parents were walking through the valley of the shadow of death. However, they had no reason to fear evil. The rod and the staff of their Shepherd were there to comfort them (Psa. 23:4). It would keep their baby from harm. Having done all that they could do, Moses' parents waited patiently for the providence of God to work. Of course, the providence of God would not disappoint. Just like Noah's ark, the little ark of bulrushes would bear Moses safely above the waters that destroyed others (Gen. 7:17-23; 1 Pet. 3:20). God had plans for Moses. He was come to the kingdom for just such a time as this (Est. 4:14).

From a safe distance, Miriam, Moses' sister, watched as the providence of God unfolded (Exod. 2:4). She watched as Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe and caught sight of the basket (Exod. 2:5). She watched as the princess' maidens fetched the basket and handed it to the princess (Exod. 2:5). She watched as the princess opened the basket and beheld Moses' face for the first time. She listened as her brother cried and watched as compassion spread across the princess' face (Exod. 2:6). The moment was right. She approached the princess and suggested that she go and call a Hebrew nurse for the baby (Exod. 2:7). Of course, she knew just who to call.

By evening, Moses was back in the arms of his mother (Exod. 2:9-10). Jochebed even

got paid for her services. Of course, no pay was necessary. She would have done it for free.

Although we don't know exactly how long Jochebed had with her son, she must have treasured every day. We know that she redeemed the time (Eph. 5:16). After all, when he was come to years, he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt" (Heb. 11:25-26). Amram and Jochebed trained up their child in the way that he should go, and he did not depart from it (Prov. 22:6).

Interestingly, Pharaoh's daughter called the baby Moses saying, "Because I drew him out of the water" (Exod. 2:10). Although her hand physically drew the baby from the water, another hand was at work. The hand of God was moving in the glove of history. God was working behind the scenes to preserve the life of this child.

If the story ended with the preservation of a baby in a basket, it would be amazing. However, it is even more amazing than that. The story moves from a baby in a basket to a nation in bondage. When the children of Israel sighed and cried by "reason of the bondage" that they suffered in Egypt, God "heard their groaning" and "remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob" (Exod. 2:23-24). He "looked" upon them, and had "respect unto them" (Exod. 2:25). Most amazing of all, He would use the one drawn out of the water years before to deliver them.

For years, God had been preparing Moses for this task. In fact, God saw to it that Moses received the best education that money could buy, only he didn't have to pay for it (Acts 7:22). Room and board were even free. Learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, Moses was well prepared to plead before Pharaoh for his people. Having seen them suffer affliction first

*Continued on page 2*

# AN OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE OF MOSES: FROM THE PALACE OF PHARAOH TO THE PINNACLE OF NEBO

*Continued from page 1*

hand, his heart was moved with their plight (Acts 7:25). When the time was right, God would call him to return and lead them out (Acts 7:30-36). For forty years God preserved Moses; now, he would use him to preserve his people.

## **The Pasture of Jethro - God Prepares Moses**

The second forty years of Moses' life were spent in the pasture of Jethro. When Moses saw an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren, he slew him and buried him in the sand (Exod. 2:11-12).

In a decisive moment, Moses made the choice to suffer affliction with the people of God (Heb. 11:24-25). From that moment on, Moses' life would change forever. Although Moses evidently planned to remain in Egypt with his brethren, that would not be possible. Although he buried the Egyptian that he killed in the sand, the deed was not hidden (Exod. 2:13-14). Pharaoh quickly learned of what Moses had been done and sought to kill him. To escape Pharaoh's wrath, Moses fled and dwelt in the land of Midian (Exod. 2:15).

In Midian, Moses met and married Zipporah, one of the seven daughters of a priest named Reuel or Jethro (Exod. 2:15-21). While there, Moses kept the flock of his father-in-law Jethro (Exod. 3:1).

On the backside of the desert, Moses learned some things that the universities of Egypt could not or would not teach him. As you may remember, the Egyptians were not fond of shepherds or sheep (Gen. 43:32; Gen. 46:34; Exod. 8:26). In the pastures of Jethro, Moses learned how to care for a flock, God's flock. Repeatedly, in the Old Testament, God's people are described as the sheep of His pasture (Psa. 74:1; Psa. 79:13; Psa. 95:7; Psa. 100:3; Jer. 23:1; Ezek. 34:31). In fact, the exodus is even portrayed as a shepherd leading a flock (Psa. 78:52; Isa. 63:11-12).

In caring for Jethro's flock, Moses learned the patience and compassion needed to care for God's flock (Psa. 119:176; Isa. 53:6; John 10:11-13; 1 Sam. 17:34-36; Isa. 40:11). Repeatedly, Moses was called upon to put what he had learned in Jethro's pasture into practice as he led God's flock (Num. 14:19; Exod. 32:10; Exod. 32: 32; Deut. 9:14). Although the Scriptures are relatively quiet about the years that Moses spent

keeping Jethro's sheep, it is clear that he learned much there.

## **The Pathway of Jericho - God Proves Moses**

The third period of Moses' life was spent on the pathway of Jericho. It seems clear from the beginning that Jericho was intended to be the point of entrance for the Promised Land (Num. 22:1; Num. 26:3; Num. 26:63; Num. 31:12; Num. 33:48; Num. 33:50; Num. 34:15; Num. 35:1; Num. 36:13; Deut. 32:49; Deut. 34:1; Deut. 34:3; Josh. 2:1; Josh. 4:13; Josh. 4:19; Josh. 5:10; Josh. 5:13; Josh. 24:11).

On the way to Jericho and the Promised Land, God proved His people to see if they would walk in His law (Deut. 8:2). He proved them with bitter water (Exod. 15:22-26; Psa. 81:7) and with sweet bread (Exod. 16:4-5; Deut. 8:16; cf. Deut. 13:3-11). Sadly, they failed many of the tests that He gave. Because of unbelief, the path became forty years longer than it had to be. In fact, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, the faithful spies, the Israelites twenty years and older never made it to the Promised Land (Num. 14:26-37; Num. 26:65; Num. 32:6-15).

As one of the people, Moses was also being proven on the way to Jericho. Overall, he did well. However, he failed one great test. Instead of speaking to the rock as commanded that it might give the children of Israel water, Moses smote it twice with his rod (Num. 20:7-11). Although the disobedience of Moses did not cost the people water, it did cost Moses plenty. Moses' offence might seem small to us, but it was big to God. Because Moses did not believe Him and sanctify Him in the sight of the people, he was barred from bringing the people into the Promised Land (Num. 20:12; Num. 27:14).

It is amazing to consider that this was the second time that Moses had been on the doorstep of Canaan. The first time, Moses was turned back by the unbelief and rebellion of the people (Num. 13-14; Heb. 3:19; Heb. 4:6). Moses watched each one of that generation, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, perish in the wilderness (Num. 14:2; Num. 14:28-30). Now, as he prepared to take the next generation into the land, Moses' own unbelief and rebellion got into the way (Num. 20:7-12). After coming so far, and enduring so much, Moses came up a little short of the finish line (Heb. 4:1).

Clearly, even leaders must take heed lest they fall (1 Cor. 10:12).

## **The Pinnacle of Nebo - God Pities Moses**

The final period of Moses' life falls outside of the one hundred and twenty years of his earthly sojourn. It began the day that he closed his eyes on Nebo and opened them in glory. Although God buried Moses on Nebo, his existence did not end there (Matt. 17:1-8). In fact, it really just began. It was there that Moses received the reward greater than the riches of Egypt (Heb. 11:26) and enjoyed a rest sweeter than that of Canaan (Heb. 4:9; Heb. 4:11; Rev. 14:13).

James declared, "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (Jas. 5:11). The end of Job's story teaches us that God is full of pity and mercy. When Job prayed for his friends, God "turned the captivity of Job" and "gave Job twice as much as he had before" (Job 42:10-12).

Just as surely as the end of Job's life teaches us that God is "very pitiful, and of tender mercy," Moses' life teaches the same. As already noted, presumptuously striking the rock cost Moses the opportunity to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land. Although God would not remove the prescribed punishment, He did allow Moses to see the Promised Land. He had mercy on Moses.

From the pinnacle of Nebo, Moses had a panoramic view of the Promised Land. He got to see the land that is repeatedly described in the Scriptures as flowing with milk and honey (Exod. 3:8; Exod. 3:17; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 33:3; Lev. 20:24; Num. 13:27; Num. 14:8; Num. 16:13-14; Deut. 6:3; Deut. 11:9; Deut. 26:9; Deut. 26:15; Deut. 27:3; Deut. 31:20; Josh. 5:6; Jer. 11:5; Jer. 32:22; Ezek. 20:6; Ezek. 20:15). Perhaps, from the pinnacle of Nebo, Moses recalled the words that God spoke to Him earlier on another mountain. As the Lord passed by Moses on Mt. Sinai, He declared:

The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands,

*Continued on page 4*



**18th Annual  
Power Lectures  
July 25-29, 2010**

***Moses: The meekest man  
in all the land***

**Sunday**

- 9:30 A.M. ***Eldad & Medad: The Spirit That Dwelleth In Us Lusteth To Envy***  
Robert Jefferies
- 10:30 A.M. ***Moses: A Great Prophet Who Personified A Greater***  
Keith Mosher, Sr.
- 6:00 P.M. ***When Society Wages War On Boys***  
Brad Harrub
- 7:00 P.M. ***The Legacy Of Amram & Jochebed: How To Raise Your Son To Be A Leader Among God's People***  
Glenn Colley

**Monday**

- 9:00 A.M. ***Weak Leaders: What Did This People Unto Thee?***  
Dave Leonard
- 10:00 A.M. ***Moses: Who Built According To The Pattern***  
Curtis Cates
- 11:00 A.M. ***And He Began To Make Excuse – Who Am I?***  
Gary Hampton
- 1:00 P.M. ***Korah, Dathan, & Abiram: Swallowing Up The Competition***  
Todd Clippard
- 2:00 P.M. ***Passing The Mantle: Making Sure The Work Doesn't Die With You***  
Bob Prichard
- 2:00 P.M. ***(Ladies Class) Helping Your Husband To Be A Leader Of God's People***  
Cindy Colley
- 7:00 P.M. ***Loving The People You Lead***  
Allen Webster
- 8:00 P.M. ***When The People Murnur***  
B.J. Clarke

**Tuesday**

- 9:00 A.M. ***When A Meek Man Gets Mad***  
Patrick Morrison
- 10:00 A.M. ***Learned In All The Wisdom Of The Egyptians: Keeping Your Faith While Receiving A Secular Education***  
Dan Cates
- 11:00 A.M. ***Keeping The Flock: What God Taught Moses On The Backside Of The Desert***  
James Segars
- 1:00 P.M. ***When Success Depends Upon You And Your Hands Are Heavy***  
Chuck Webster
- 2:00 P.M. ***Moses And The Magicians***  
Lee Davis
- 2:00 P.M. ***(Ladies Class) Moving From The Shadows To The Son & From The Imperfect To The Perfect***  
Teresa Hampton
- 7:00 P.M. ***Refusing To Compromise: There Shall Not An Hoof Be Left Behind***  
Greg Dismuke
- 8:00 P.M. ***By Faith Moses: The Highlights Of A Great Career (Heb. 11)***  
Eric Owens

**Wednesday**

- 9:00 A.M. ***Nephews & New Fire***  
Caleb Campbell
- 10:00 A.M. ***Here Am I: Answering The Call To Lead God's People***  
Bobby Liddell
- 11:00 A.M. ***And He Began To Make Excuse – But, Behold, They Will Not Believe Me***  
Kevin Beard
- 1:00 P.M. ***Face To Face, Friend To Friend***  
Mike Vestal
- 2:00 P.M. ***But We Are Moses' Disciples: The Foolishness Of Following Moses & His Law After The Coming Of Christ & His Law***  
Tim Burroughs
- 2:00 P.M. ***(Ladies Class) Teaching Your Children To Love One Another***  
Melony Webster
- 7:00 P.M. ***When A Nation Throws Away Its Future: Unwanted Babies And A Nation's Demise***  
Eric Lyons
- 8:00 P.M. ***Handling The Hard Causes***  
Tommy J. Hicks

**Thursday**

- 9:00 A.M. ***Then Sang Moses***  
Tom Wacaster
- 10:00 A.M. ***Standing On Holy Ground***  
Bobby O'dell
- 11:00 A.M. ***And He Began To Make Excuse – O My Lord, I Am Not Eloquent***  
Jason Hilburn
- 1:00 P.M. ***May It Be Said Of Me: The Servant Of The Lord***  
Larry Butler
- 2:00 P.M. ***May It Be Said Of Me: The Man Of God***  
Chris Butler
- 2:00 P.M. ***(Ladies Class) Redeeming The Time Because The Days Are Evil***  
April Meacham
- 7:00 P.M. ***What Moses Saw From Mount Nebo***  
Tom Holland
- 8:00 P.M. ***My Servant Moses Is Not So, Who Is Faithful In All Mine House***  
Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

**Southaven Church Of Christ**

1483 Brookhaven Drive  
Southaven, MS 38671  
(662) 393-2690

[www.southavencoc.org](http://www.southavencoc.org)

# POWER

June, 2010  
Volume Twenty, Number Six



Deuteronomy 5:32

Wade Webster, Editor

POWER is a monthly publication  
overseen by the elders of  
the Southaven church of Christ,  
Southaven, Mississippi.



SUBSCRIPTION TERMS (USA):

Free Upon Request

Donations toward offsetting the cost of  
publishing POWER are gladly accepted  
and much appreciated.



Phone (662) 393-2690

FAX (662) 342-7152

E-mail: [shavenpreacher@gmail.com](mailto:shavenpreacher@gmail.com)

VISIT OUR WEB SITE:

[www.southavencoc.org](http://www.southavencoc.org)



**SOUTHAVEN**  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

# POWER

P.O. Box 128  
SOUTHAVEN, MS 38671  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE OF MOSES: FROM THE PALACE OF PHARAOH TO THE PINNACLE OF NEBO

*Continued from page 2*

forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation (Exod. 34:6-7).

From the pinnacle of Nebo, Moses saw both the "goodness and severity of God" (Rom. 11:22). He saw a just God with a merciful heart. He saw a God who delights in mercy (Mic. 7:18), but Who will not tolerate sin (Nah. 1:3).

Moses knew that God had shown great mercy and forgiveness from the time that the children of Israel left Egypt (Num. 14:19). He knew that God could have rightfully consumed them many times (cf. Neh. 9:31; Psa. 78:38; Lam. 3:22). In fact, Moses witnessed the death of several who challenged God's authority: Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-2), and Korah and his cohorts (Num. 16). No doubt, Moses knew that he could have suffered the same sentence.

When David sinned by numbering the people, he faced one of three calamities: 3 years of famine, 3 months of destruction before his foes, or 3 days of the sword of the Lord (1 Chron. 21:1-12). David chose the later, explaining, "I am in a great strait: let me now fall into the hand of the Lord; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into

the hand of man" (1 Chron. 21:13). David threw Himself on the mercy of God. Moses would have been in full agreement with David's choice. Furthermore, Moses would have agreed with the sweet psalmist's repetition of God's mercy in the twenty-six verses of Psalm 136. He knew that God's mercy endures forever. It stayed with him to the very end. It followed him all the days of his life, and he dwelled in the house of the Lord forever (Psa. 23:6).

After Moses disappears from the Old Testament text upon Mt. Nebo, he reappears in the New Testament text upon another mountain. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses was privileged to talk with the prophet that God had promised to raise up like unto him, from among his brethren (Matt. 17:1-8; Deut. 18:15). Of course, that prophet was none other than Jesus Christ (Acts 3:20-22). With that appearance, Moses disappears again from the Biblical text. If Abraham was glad to see His day, imagine how glad Moses must have been to see His face (John 8:56).

In the course of this study, we have traced Moses' steps from the palace of Pharaoh to the pinnacle of Nebo. We have even examined the intervening years spent in the pasture of Jethro and the pathway of Jericho. Hopefully, we have divided Moses' life into manageable and meaningful pieces. It is my prayer that the chapters that follow this one will finish the house that we have labored to frame.

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U. S. Postage  
PAID  
Southaven, MS  
Permit No. 24