

Journey Into Intimacy With God

LESSON 1 . . . Drawing Closer to God (Exodus 1:1-2:25)

NOTES

We are beginning a study of one of the most important characters in the Bible—Moses. God used Moses to perform more miracles than anyone else, except Jesus. God also inspired Moses to write the first five books of the Bible. When Jesus was transfigured, only two Old Testament saints—Moses and Elijah—came from heaven to talk with Him (Mt 17:2-3). Moses had the most intimate relationship with God of anyone in the Old Testament. Moses' obituary verifies his greatness. It is found in Deuteronomy 34:10. Write it below:

Have you ever thought you would like to have a relationship with God like those of the great saints in the Bible, such as Moses? The truth is you can. One of the most amazing truths in the Bible is God wants to have an intimate relationship with you (Jas. 4:8a). God has given us the Bible so we may know how to *draw near* to Him and have an intimate relationship with Him. **Drawing closer to God** requires **three** actions . . .

Realize God's plan for your life (1:1-2:10).

We are not here by accident; we are here because God has a divine plan for us even before we are born (Psa. 139:16). For example, God tells Jeremiah He had a plan for him before He formed him in his mother's womb and before he was born (Jer. 1:4-5b). What was God's plan (1:5c)?

Seeing God's plan for Moses' life requires going back in time about 600 years to the time of Abraham, the father of the Hebrew race. God promises Abraham that through his descendants all nations on earth will be blessed with knowledge of Jehovah God (Gen. 22:18). However, what prophecy does God give Abraham about his descendants (Genesis 15:13b-c?)

Egyptian slavery was always a part of God's plan for Moses and his people. Jacob, a descendant of Abraham, had twelve sons—one of whom was

Joseph. Because of his brothers' jealousy, Joseph was sold into slavery and taken to Egypt. After much adversity there, Joseph becomes prime minister of Egypt. As a result, he brings his family from the Promised Land to Egypt to save them from starvation during a prolonged famine. What happens after Joseph dies (Exodus 1:7)?

When a new pharaoh comes into power, he fears the Hebrews because of their great numbers. He thinks they might join an attacking army and leave the country. Wanting to keep his cheap, slave labor force, he works the Hebrews *ruthlessly*, forcing them to make bricks and work in the fields. In an effort to stop their numerical growth, he also orders the midwives to kill all male Hebrew babies at birth (1:10-16).

Because the midwives fear God, they refuse to obey the pharaoh's order. Then, Pharaoh orders all his people to throw every newborn Hebrew boy into the Nile River (1:17-22).

The Hebrews know God's promise that through Abraham's seed all nations would be blessed. They wonder if God has forgotten His promise. During these terrible times a Levite named Amram (Am'-ram) marries a Levite woman named Jochebed (Jock'-uh-bed). They have two sons and name them "Aaron" and "Moses" (Ex 6:20).

So Moses won't be killed, his mother hides him for three months. When she can no longer hide him, she coats a basket with tar and pitch, making it into a small boat, or ark. She places Moses in it and puts it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile River where she knows the Pharaoh's daughter comes to bathe. Moses' sister, Miriam stays close to see what will happen (2:1-4).



When Pharaoh's daughter sees the crying baby, her heart is touched. She says, "*This is one of the Hebrews' children*" (2:6). Then, Miriam comes near and asks what question (2:7b)?

When the princess agrees, Miriam gets Moses' mother to nurse him. As Moses grows, he becomes like a son to the princess. She names him "*Moses*," which means, "*I drew him out of the water*" (2:10). As a result of coming to live in Pharaoh's palace, Moses is educated *in all the wisdom of the Egyptians* (Acts 7:22).

Moses studies government, science, mathematics, law, military tactics, etc. By God’s divine plan, the Egyptians train the man who will one day confront them. God has a plan for each of our lives. It includes our parents, our childhood experiences—good and bad, our talents, our training, etc. How does Ephesians 2:10 describe this truth?



The word translated *beforehand*, or “ordained,” means “planned in advance.” To draw closer to God, **realize God’s plan for your life** and . . .

Recognize God’s place for your failures (2:11-15).

Have you ever made a serious mistake and wondered if God could ever use you again? If this is your situation, or if it ever is, you can relate to Moses. At age forty, he sees an Egyptian beating a Hebrew. In anger, Moses kills the Egyptian and hides his body in the sand. The next day Moses tries to break up a fight between two Hebrew men. One of the men asks Moses who appointed him to be their prince and judge. Then, the man says to Moses, “*Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?*” (2:11-14).

Moses is now afraid, thinking everyone knows he killed an Egyptian. Pharaoh hears about what Moses did and tries to kill him. However, Moses flees to Midian in the Arabian Desert to live (2:15). Moses’ failures reveal that even God’s greatest servants can sometimes fail miserably. God uses our failures to make us teachable and draw us closer to Himself. How does Psalm 119:71 express this fact?

God uses our failures to strip us of our pride and make us sensitive and receptive to His Word.

To draw closer to God,” **realize God’s plan for your life, recognize God’s place for your failures,** and . . .

Reflect on God’s purpose for your “deserts” (2:16-25).

It is in the “deserts” of life, not the “palaces,” that we are drawn closer to God. Even though Moses is among the most advanced and educated people in the world, he has much to learn before God can use him. He must learn this truth: If you are not humble, you will stumble. God tells us a *haughty spirit goes before a fall* (Prov. 16:18).

In the Midian desert, while Moses is sitting at a well, the daughters of the priest of Midian come to water their father's flock. Some other shepherds come and chase them away. Moses jumps up, rescues the women from the shepherds, and draws water for their flocks. The women return to their father, Reuel [Ru'-el], who is also called Jethro (3:1). He finds out what Moses has done and invites him for supper. As a result, Moses gets to know and marries one of the daughters, Zipporah [Zuh-por'-uh] (2:16-21).

Moses and Zipporah have a son whom Moses names "Gershom" (2:22), which means "alien" or "stranger here." It seems Moses has resigned himself to living the rest of his life in obscurity as the most highly-educated shepherd in history. He must learn what truth from the lips of our Lord in Mark 9:35c?

During forty years of tending sheep, God teaches Moses to be a humble, patient servant. The Lord knows that in the future Moses will often have to listen to complaints, murmurings, and slanderous accusations against himself and against God. God also must teach him to deal with his temper or there will be bodies buried in the sand all over the desert.

While Moses is in the desert of Midian, the Israelites in Egypt continue to groan under the burden of slavery. Their cries for help rise up to God and He takes notice (2:23-25). Moses probably hears all of this from the traveling caravans, but he no longer arrogantly thinks he can deliver the Israelites. He is content to raise his family in the desert, living as an obscure shepherd.

The long-term "deserts" of life are where we come closest to God. God kept Moses in the desert for forty years. Sometimes we must stay in our "deserts" for a long time before we can have a "journey into intimacy with God." That's why God gives what command in Psalm 27:14?

This verse tells us exactly what to do when we are in a spiritual desert. The Hebrew word translated *wait* (QĀWĀ, kaw-vah') means to wait patiently and expectantly.

To draw closer to God, **realize God's plan for your life, recognize God's place for your failures, and reflect on God's purpose for your "deserts."**

