

Moses (2)
Exodus 2:1-15

1 And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took *to wife* a daughter of Levi. **2** And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he *was a goodly child*, she hid him three months. **3** And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid *it* in the flags by the river's brink. **4** And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him. **5** And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. **6** And when she had opened *it*, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This *is one* of the Hebrews' children. **7** Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? **8** And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. **9** And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it. **10** And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water. **11** And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. **12** And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. **13** And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? **14** And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known. **15** Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

OUTLINE

(1) On the Ark (v1-8)

(2) In the Palace (v9-14)

(3) On the Run (v15)

Continued...

(2) In the Palace (v11-14)

The in-between story, the unsaid portion of Moses' life in the palace was recorded in **Acts 7:20-22** *In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months... And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.*

How could Moses remember his root as a child of the Hebrews when he was brought up in the palace of Egypt?

This was God's providence where his mother was given wages to raise him in the things of God from a young age before he entered the palace. His mother was able to teach him enough for him to not forsake his own people. We do not underestimate the power of prayer and instruction from a tender age to impact a person's life in adulthood.

8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.
9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it. 10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

Pharaoh's daughter gave Moses his name. He became her son and he was brought up in the royal house. Moses enjoyed the privileges and best education available in his time in Egypt. Yet, his heart was with God's people.

Acts 7:23 ...And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. And Moses was **learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.**

Stephen tells us that Moses was well-versed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and mighty in words and in deeds. He was one who did exploits for Pharaoh in Egypt. A mighty leader in Egypt. His education stood him in good stead to establish him as a notable man in Egyptian society.

The Old Testament says nothing about the education of Moses in Egypt. In Exodus 2:1, Pharaoh's daughter took young Moses as her son; in the next verse, he is already grown.

There are some statements and traditions in Judaism about Moses' education. Josephus simply says that Moses "was educated with great care." Philo has a lengthy description of the kind of education that Moses received. It is difficult to assess the historical accuracy of Philo's account, although one scholar suggests that he portrays Moses as the "genius, idealised man."¹

The Education of Moses in Egypt (According to Philo)

Therefore, the child being now thought worthy of a royal education and a royal attendance.... And immediately he had all kinds of masters, one after another, some coming of their own accord from the neighbouring countries and the different districts of Egypt, and some being even procured from Greece by the temptation of large presents. But in a short time, he surpassed all their knowledge, anticipating all their lessons by the excellent natural endowments of his own genius....

Accordingly he speedily learnt arithmetic, and geometry, and the whole science of rhythm and harmony and metre, and the whole of music, by means of the use of musical instruments, and by lectures on the different arts, and by explanations of each topic; and lessons on these subjects were given him by Egyptian philosophers, who also taught him the philosophy which is contained in symbols, which they exhibit in those sacred characters of hieroglyphics, as they are called, and also that philosophy which is conversant about that respect which they pay to animals which they invest with the honours due to God....

And all the other branches of the encyclical education he learnt from Greeks; and the philosophers from the adjacent countries taught him Assyrian literature and the knowledge of the heavenly bodies so much studied by the Chaldeans. And this knowledge he derived also from the Egyptians, who study mathematics above all things,

¹ Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, New Testament - Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary on the New Testament – John, Acts.

and he learnt with great accuracy the state of that art among both the Chaldaeans and Egyptians.²

11 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. **12** And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. **13** And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? **14** And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

The portion of emphasis in the text was not Moses' wisdom but his folly before God. All the wisdom that Egypt could offer him did not make him a spiritual man. He learned to wield the sword and he learned to shed blood.

This is hardly the credential of a man of God. Moses' worldly credential was of no use to him in the work of God's kingdom. Again, we also balance this with the fact that at a young age, his Hebrew mother nurtured him to recognize himself to be first a Hebrew.

Moses took matters into his own hands. Certainly, it was not a right thing for Moses to do. He murdered an Egyptian to protect one of his brethren. This seemed to be the skill he acquired in Egypt "worldly, carnal wisdom" really did not help his people.

Egyptian beating a Hebrew (v11). Beating slaves was certainly not uncommon or illegal in the ancient world. Was this a fatal beating? The Hebrew word for "beating" here is the same as the one for "killed" in v12. The word can have either connotation, depending on the context. Even killing a slave was not a serious crime. When a person caused the death of another's slave—in this case, the taskmaster may have killed one of Pharaoh's slaves—the perpetrator typically only had to pay a fine to compensate the victim's owner for loss of labour. Here the taskmaster would have had Pharaoh's authority to beat the slave and may not, therefore, have been culpable of any wrongdoing. Thus, Moses' reaction is severe—especially if the slave did not die—but, the text implies, understandable in light of his relation to the one beaten.³

We will notice the change after God called him and he returned to Egypt upon God's instruction after spending 40 years in the wilderness tending sheep. He would now listen to God's instruction for action. This is a vast difference. He learned to yield himself to the spirit of God, the voice of God, the ways of God.

James 3:13 *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. 14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*

² Ibid.

³ Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary - Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary of the Old Testament – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

*Wednesday Bible Study – Call Unto Me
Beginnings of the Hebrew Nation – The Exodus
22 February 2017*

James presents for us the challenge to godliness (v13), what it is not? (v14-16) and what it is? (17-18).

God reaching out to fallen men is the blessed story of redemption that all must hear. God reached out to fallen men by sending His Son Jesus Christ, the exact representation of God (Heb.1:3) to show men the way back to Him. The story of fallen men has always been one of sin, sorrow and death. What a miserable prospect! But that is the plight of fallen men. He is cast into this mold that he could not free himself from. If this indeed is the end of men, we are all men most miserable!

There is a higher life in the spiritual realm that God has enabled us to live. This comes with the new birth. God makes us anew. He gives to us a new heart. This misery is replaced by happiness. True peace and joy fill such a heart.

The good work that He has begun in each heart, He will perfect it. God enables the believer to imbibe His wisdom that brings about that transformation. From salvation, then sanctification and finally glorification.

We are on that journey to heaven and God molds us to conform to His image more and more as we yield ourselves to Him through His Word. James is addressing the believers in the local church. He is showing how to bring about the needful change. He paints for us the picture of godliness, washed clean of the taint of sin that turns sorrow to joy.

The Bible describes Moses as the meekest man on earth.

Now the man [A Spirit-Filled Man (ish)] Moses was very meek [A Meek Man (ānāw)], above all the men [Carnal Men (adam)] which were upon the face of the earth. (Numbers 12:3)

The meek man is first of all a born again Christian, having the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The character trait of meekness is one that can be cultivated. It is a fruit of the Holy Spirit as we put away sin. James issues the challenge to His people to cultivate their souls that it may conform to Christ's image.

A Spirit-Filled Man (ish)

This word for Man first used in as the husband of the woman in Genesis 2:23 *“And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”* But the emphasis of this word is used in Psalm 1 is **the blessed man who flourish in the meditation of God's Word**. This is the description for **a godly and righteous man, a Spirit-filled man, Moses was such a man.**

He was called of God at the burning bush. Exodus 3:2 tells us, *“And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.”* Out of the bush God spoke to Him, “Moses, Moses”. The basic truth about God is that God is a consuming fire, no one can come before God except he be a holy man, And God said, *“Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”* (Exodus 3:5)

For *“who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor*

sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.” (Psalm 24:3-5)

A Meek Man (*ānāw*)

When Moses was 40 years old, he murdered an Egyptian and hid him in the sand. God did not need this kind of help. In fact, God does not need any of our help to further His program. God is the sovereign LORD of His own program. Jesus said, “*Without me, ye can do nothing!*” Moses acted according to what a carnal man will do, doubtless he was a child of God but he was working according to the flesh. Moses spent 40 years in the wilderness to obtain PhD in humility. [Whitcomb]

It is used of persons who put themselves after others in importance; persons who are not proud, haughty, supercilious, self-assertive, low in rank or position. Moses in the Old Testament is the prototype of the humble man before God and other human beings (Num 12:3), but he was not poor or low in rank. [Complete Word Study Dictionary of the Old Testament]

He had to bear with the carnality of the Israelites throughout the 40 years of the wilderness wandering, listening to their perpetual murmuring and complaining and discontentment, Exodus 17:3 “*And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?*” Also, Numbers 14:29 “*Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me.*”

The word “meekness” in Galatians 5:23, is the word “πραότης”. The ending for the verb describes one who is the agent of being meek “πρᾶός” to describe our Lord Jesus, Matthew 11:29 “*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*” Meekness has the trait of gentleness which is one who does not count offences done on us, “thinketh no evil” (1 Corinthians 13:5). Our Lord exhibited this trait. His purpose was to fulfil the Father’s will, albeit, as a man, he endured much humiliation and suffering going to the cross to purchase our redemption. It enables us to respond patiently to the faults as well as the offences of others.⁴

This is the trait that enables the Christian to restore an erring brother mentioned as application in Galatians 6:1 “*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*” Literal Translation: Brethren, if also a man be overtaken in some trespass, you the spiritual ones restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness/humility/courtesy; looking at yourself, lest you also may be tempted.

(1) What to do? Restore - Means to “set right”. Help this person to be on the right path again. It is a command we do not have an option not to do it. We are to do so as long as the occasion arises each time.

(2) How? With Gentleness

(3) How not? In Self-Righteousness, think not ye stand lest ye fall.

Carnal Men (*adam*)

⁴ The Quest For Character, John MacArthur, 103.

This word “adam” is the earthly man, the man made from the dust of the ground and cursed to return to the dust of the ground as a result of the fall, describing the carnal man, the fallen with the nature of sin.

Those who do the works of the flesh shall not inherit the kingdom of God says the Apostle Paul, grave warning (Gal. 5:19-21).

- (1) Adultery - sexual sin in marriage
- (2) Fornication - any sexual sin
- (3) Uncleaness - immoral lust,
- (4) Lasciviousness – shameless lifestyle
- (5) Idolatry - worship of false gods (mammon-greed)
- (6) Witchcraft - sorcery (deceptions and secuctions of idolatry),
- (7) Hatred - enmity, hostility
- (8) Variance – contention
- (9) Emulations – an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy
- (10) Wrath – anger forthwith boiling up and soon subsiding again
- (11) Strife - intriguing for office, fractiousness (desire to put oneself forward)
- (12) Seditions – dissension, division
- (13) Heresies - dissensions arising from diversity of opinions and aims
- (14) Envyings – promoted by envy
- (15) Murders – killing
- (16) Drunkenness – intoxication, make drunk or become drunk
- (17) Revellings – feast and drinking parties till late night (half- drunk)

The flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. We are to put away the flesh that the fruit may grow.

(3) On the Run (v15)

15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

Moses had to run for his life. Pharaoh will send his special forces to capture him. He had to flee. This was a critical point in his life. He came to Median and rested by a well. A well is a social centre.

In leaving Egypt, he was fleeing for his life. He has to make the choice to either serve God or mammon? Albeit, his method was wrong, his motive was right.

Matthew 6:24 *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

“Mammon” is the Syrian god of riches or money. This term is usually used in a derogatory sense to describe property, wealth, earthly goods. It is used to personify the worship of a different kind of god. Different from the living and true God. It is “gold” and not “God.”

We see the example of the first-born son of Adam and Eve – Cain. The self-willed Cain built a city and glorified not God but his son Enoch. This is not the Enoch who walked with God in Genesis 5. (Genesis 4 describes the ungodly line through Cain whereas Genesis 5 describes the godly line through Seth.) There was rapid development of civilization, culture and affluence during the time of the ungodly Lamech (Gen 4:19-24).

