

# Moses

## **Moses' faith**

The Book of Hebrews was addressed to those who knew Moses' story well. So the faith of his parents is mentioned first (Heb. 11:23) just like in Exodus chapter two. The providence of God was at work in various ways in protecting Moses, and there is a clear parallel between how God protected baby Moses in Exodus chapter two and how God protected the infant King of the Jews in Matthew chapter two. It is also good to note that when Moses became an adult he chose to suffer with God's people (11:24-26). Thus Hebrew readers were encouraged to choose Christ even though it would involve suffering for them as well.

## **Moses' rejection**

When an Old Testament character is spoken of at length in the New Testament, some key aspect of his or her life is usually the focus. So Stephen spoke about the rejection of Moses (Ex. 2:11-15, Acts 7:23-29, 35) as a parallel to the national rejection of Jesus as the Messiah (Acts 7:51-52). In line with this, Stephen cited Moses on the Messiah being a Prophet like himself (Deut. 18:15, Acts 7:37).

## **Moses' mighty words**

Somewhat surprisingly, the first great prophet in Israel apparently was not a good speaker (Ex. 4:10, 6:30). Some explain the apparent contradiction with Stephen's high praise in Acts 7:22 by noting that Moses seemed to become a better speaker over time. This is undoubtedly true to some extent, but the "mighty in words" phrase in Acts 7:22 may have referred to Moses' written words in the first five books of the Bible and Psalm 90. Stephen pointing out that Moses was well educated (7:22) lends support to this interpretation.

## **Moses' humility & anger**

During his 40 years in Midian, Moses was changed, so that the self-confidence that he had showed in killing an Egyptian in Exodus 2:12 became for the most part a thing of the past. Sadly, near the end of his ministry in Numbers 20:7-12, however, it reappeared when Moses struck the rock twice rather than simply speaking to it as the Lord had commanded. Moses' angry words at the time (20:10) displayed confidence in himself rather than trust in the Lord. Throughout his ministry, Moses was often right to show anger such as when Aaron made the golden calf (Ex. 32:19), but he was thinking about himself rather than the Lord in Numbers 20:10. (Also see Psalm 106:32-33.)

## **Moses' gospel**

The bronze serpent in Numbers 21:9 points to the cross (John 3:14) and the message was "Look and live." rather than "Labor and live." The Passover also, of course, points to the Lamb of God. Moreover, the entire sacrificial system established when the tabernacle was built pointed to salvation through the death of the Substitute. Nevertheless, there is probably no Old Testament person more misunderstood than Moses. Though he was, of course, closely linked to the law, he did NOT teach salvation through law keeping. So the first thing that many should do regarding Moses is to reevaluate what they have wrongly assumed to be the core message in his mighty words and deeds.

## **Moses' supporting role**

Although Moses is often mentioned in the New Testament, his actual final appearance in the Bible is on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mat. 16:28-17:9, Mark 9:1-9, Luke 9:27-36, 2 Pet. 1:17-18) where he played a supporting role. Along with Elijah, Moses helped demonstrate that the God of glory who appeared in the Old Testament (Ex. 33:18-23, 1 Kings 19:11-13) has manifested himself and his glory more personally as the Lord Jesus in the New Testament.

## **Moses' Greater "Successor"**

The similarities between the Red Sea crossing in Exodus chapter 14 and the crossing of the Jordan in Joshua chapter three help show that Joshua was Moses' successor as Israel's leader, but there is more to it. The Father's words from heaven on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9:35) and verses like John 1:17-18 show that the Lord Jesus was and is Moses' Greater Successor as well as the eternal and glorious Creator of all things (John 1:1-3). It is no accident that Joshua and Jesus are the same name in Hebrew.