MOSES – A CHARACTER STUDY
Hebrews 11:23-29
INTRODUCTION
A. In our study of Moses we will include background information, historical setting, character traits, the role Moses played in God’s divine plan and lessons learned for our Christian journey today.
B. The influence of Moses lasted until the Law of Moses was nailed to the cross. Colossians 2:14.
C. In the KJV his name in the Hebrew (“drawn”) is used 766 times and in the Greek (“drawing out”) 80 times.
   1. He was a prophet.
   2. He was a lawgiver.
   3. He was the leader of the exodus.
   4. He is the author of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
DISCUSSION
I. FORTY YEARS IN EGYPT AS A PRINCE IN PHARAOH’S PALACE. EXODUS 2:1-14. Dates: 1571 BC to 1531 BC.
   A. His family.
      1. Jochebed was his mother.
      2. Miriam his older sister.
      3. Aaron his older brother.
   B. Reared in Pharaoh’s house.
   C. Lessons learned from the birth and early life of Moses.
      2. We cannot withstand the bondage of sin alone. Israel’s bondage and deliverance is typical of our bondage and deliverance.
         a. Israel was in Egyptian bondage. Exodus 1:7-14.
         b. They became helpless to deliver themselves and cried unto God. Exodus 2:23-25.
         c. The longer they stayed the worse it became. Exodus 5:6-9.
         d. Man was in bondage of sin when Christ came, helpless to deliver himself. Romans 3:23; 1 Corinthians 1:21. He was and still is helpless. Luke 15:11-16.
         e. God raised up Moses as their deliverer. Exodus 3:7, 8a, 10.
      3. God’s people will multiply even in the face of adversity when they are faithful to God. 2 Timothy 4:1-4
      5. The church must stand strong for the faith in the face of persecution. 2 Timothy 3:10-11.
      6. God will hear the prayer of the faithful and will deliver them from the bondage of sin through Jesus Christ our Lord. 2 Timothy 3:12. Remember Hebrews 11? Revelation 2:10.
II. FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS OF MIDIAN AS A SHEPHERD. EXODUS 2:15-3:1. Dates: 1531 BC to 1491 BC.
   A. Moses as a grown man chose to be a slave with his people instead of a prince in Pharaoh’s place. Cf. Hebrews 11:24-26.
B. Moses fled to Midian after killing an Egyptian for beating an Israelite. He dwells with Jethro, priest of Midian, and married his daughter, Zipporah.

C. At the end of the forty years in Midian the LORD appears to Moses.


A. The LORD tells Moses that he must deliver His people from their bondage and that Aaron would be his spokesman.

B. Moses asked Pharaoh to let Israel go, but Pharaoh refused. Exodus 5-6.

C. God sent ten plagues upon Egypt to persuade Pharaoh to let His people go. Exodus 7-12.

D. Israel left Egypt in the night of the last plague. Exodus 13-14.

E. Israel begins their journey toward Mount Sinai. Exodus 15-18.

   1. The people were prepared for the coming of God on Mount Sinai. Exodus 19.
   2. The Ten Commandments were given. Exodus 20.
   3. Various other laws and commandments were also given. Exodus 21-24

   2. The tabernacle was a tent of two rooms. Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.
   3. An outer court surrounded the tabernacle. In the court was the brazen altar where animal sacrifices were made. The laver where the priests washed before entering the Holy Place.
   4. The Holy Place contained 3 pieces of furniture. The golden candlesticks, table of showbread with 12 loaves of which only the priests were permitted to eat and the altar of incense.
   5. The Most Holy Place contained the Ark of the Covenant over which was the mercy and the cherubim.

H. Leviticus was written during the encampment of Israel at Mount Sinai.
   2. Leviticus served as a manual for the priests and Levites.
      a. It gives detailed instruction concerning sacrifices, offerings, and the tabernacle worship.
      b. Leviticus shows the way that sinful men can approach a sinless God. It is by means of sacrifice. Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:22; 10:4. Blood was essential to atonement. Leviticus 17:11.
   3. There are two key words or thoughts in Leviticus. “Holiness” is found 88 times and “atonement” 45 times.
   4. The book is named for the Levites, the tribe from which the priest came.
   5. Five major divisions of the book.
      b. The priesthood by which man could approach God. Leviticus 8-10.
      c. The life of holiness which is essential to acceptance by God. Leviticus 11-22.
      d. The major feasts and holy days which reminded Israel of God’s blessings. Leviticus 23-24.
      e. The laws and commandments by which Israel maintained holiness before God. Leviticus 25-27.
   6. Five major offerings by which Israel maintained holiness before God. Leviticus 1:1-7:38.
      a. Burnt offerings which showed complete dedication to God. Leviticus 1:1-17.
b. Meal offerings which showed **gratitude** to God for His blessings. Leviticus 2:1-16.

c. Peace offerings which showed **communion** or fellowship with God. Leviticus 3:1-17.

d. Sin offerings which **atoned** for sins; these were types of Christ’s offering for us. Leviticus 4:1-35; 2 Corinthians 5:21.


I. Numbers was written during the wilderness wanderings, near the end of that time.

   1. Numbers can be divided in five sections.
      a. The preparation to begin the journey from Mount Sinai. Numbers 1:1-10:10. 603,550 20 year old males not including the Levites.
      b. The events of the journey from Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea. Numbers 10:11-14:45.
      c. The journey in the wilderness from Kadesh to the Plains of Moab. Numbers 15:1-21:35 took 37 or 38 years.

J. Deuteronomy was written at the end of the period of wilderness wanderings while Israel was encamped in the Plains of Moab shortly before they entered the Promised Land. Deuteronomy 1:5; Numbers 36:13.

   1. The purpose of Deuteronomy is to prepare Israel for entering into Canaan to be the chosen nation of God.
   2. Key teachings of Deuteronomy.
      a. The 10 Commandments.
      c. God’s law was not to be added to, or taken from. Deuteronomy 2:12:32.
      d. Christ was prophesied in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18, 19; Acts 3:22-23.
      e. Warnings were given about false prophets. Deuteronomy 18:20-23.
      f. Blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience are clearly set forth in Deuteronomy 28.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED.

   A. Type and Antitype Defined: “A type is some person, thing, or event in the Old Testament age which foreshadowed some person, thing, or event in the New Testament age. The antitype is that person, thing, or event in the New Testament age which was foreshadowed by the Old Testament type.” (William Smith, *Old Testament History*).

   B. Salvation In Type.

      1. Bondage In Egypt. Bondage In Sin.
      4. Acceptance Of Moses. Christ Accepted By Us.
      8. Physical Food Given. Spiritual Food Supplied.

C. Moses and Christ in Type.
1. **Exodus 2:2-10** – Moses preserved in childhood.  
   Matthew 2:14-15, Christ.
   Matthew 4:1, Christ.
   Matthew 14:20-21, Christ.
4. **Exodus 34:28** – Moses fasted forty days.  
   Matthew 4:1ff – Christ.
   Matthew 17:2, Christ.
   Mark 7:2, Christ.
7. **Numbers 12:1**, Moses discredited in the home.  
   John 7:5, Christ.
   John 17:9, Christ.
    Acts 1:3, Christ.

**D. John 3:14.** This passage sets forth the type and antitype in a clear and expository manner. The similarity between Moses lifting up the brazen serpent, and the Father lifting up Jesus on the cross is the ultimate of type and antitype relative to Moses and Christ to be found anywhere in the Word of God. The points of analogy between Christ and the brazen serpent.

1. That God provided the remedy. It was not in keeping with the wisdom of man, Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12; 1 Corinthians 1:19-20.
2. Each had only one remedy provided. Numbers 21:8-9; John 6; Acts 4:11-12. Therefore, man had no choice as to which remedy he could choose.
3. Each was designed to save – one from physical death, the other from spiritual death.
4. One would save life, the other would save the soul.
5. Neither remedy was forced upon them.
7. Each was within easy reach of all afflicted people.

**E. Characteristics of Moses.**

1. **A Man of Faith.** Hebrews 11:24, 27-28. His faith was an activating principle of life.
   a. He understood “faith apart from works is dead.” James 2:26. There is no greatness of achievement without greatness of faith.
   b. Christians must not only believe in God, but also trust in His promise to reward those who diligently seek God. Hebrews 11:6.
   c. As Christians we profess God as Father and Jesus as the Son of God and we must obey His word. These are a “package deal” and cannot be separated. John 12:48.
2. A Man of Meekness. Numbers 12:3-12. Meekness has to do with strength under control and refusal to press one’s felt “rights” to the limits. Meekness will cause one to suffer wrongs rather than create worse wrongs. Meekness is an inner spirit that produces gentleness in action and speech. The meek person is humble rather than self-glorifying. It requires great inner strength and self-control. A meek person is not self-assertive, proud, haughty, boastful, or vain. Matthew 5:5.
   a. Moses is not boasting in verse 3.
   b. The setting – Aaron and Miriam challenged his authority in a sordid display of arrogance and jealousy. Moses let the judgment of their behavior in the hands of God, Who responded suddenly and decisively – verses 4-12.
   c. Moses meekly accepted Aaron’s repentance and earnestly cried for the Lord to heal his leprous sister – verse 13.
   d. We see this trait in his intercession with God for the people in the matter of the golden calf – 32:10-14; 31-32.
   e. When confronted with Korah and his rebellion, Moses “fell upon his face” rather than seeking personal vengeance – Numbers 16:4, 15.

3. A Man of Prayer. As one reads Exodus – Deuteronomy they often see Moses in prayer. His access to God in prayer was much like the Savior’s in that God and he had a “face to face” and a “mouth to mouth” communication relationship. Exodus 33:11; Numbers 12:8; Deuteronomy 34:10.
   a. Moses often interceded for the people even when the people were not deserving of it and were opposing both God and him.
   b. As Christians we need to understand Matthew 6:8 that He knows our needs before we ask. We have not because we ask not – James 4:2. The Lord urges us to ask, seek, and knock – Matthew 7:7-11. Pray without ceasing – 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18. We need to take Paul’s injunction on prayer to heart.

   a. Without perseverance Moses would have early thrown up his hands in frustration and defeat in the face of apparent insurmountable obstacles and difficulties in his mission.
   b. He not only had to contend with a hard-hearted Pharaoh, but also with a stiff-necked mass of perhaps 2 million of his own people.
   c. As Christians we are to be good “starters” and good “finishers.” The test of faithfulness is not the pleasant and agreeable times and circumstances. But, when the wind is in one’s face, the road is rocky and steep, and the enemy is attacking, that faithfulness is tested. We must exercise patience (endurance, steadfastness). If not we too will fall away.

   a. Jethro – Exodus 18:13-18– warned Moses that he would soon “wear away” if he continued judging all the complaints of his people.
   b. Jethro counseled Moses to divide the labor by training and appointing judges to settle all but the most difficult cases – Exodus 18:19-22.
   c. By doing this Moses would not be overburdened and the people would be happier at getting their cases heard. Exodus 18:23.
   d. Rather than being resentful of this advice, Moses saw the wisdom and logic of it and gladly implemented it. Exodus 18:24-26.
   e. The church needs to heed to God’s plan for organization and work.

6. A Man Who Was Compassionate.
7. A Man Who Was Not Materialistic.
   c. As Christians we cannot be both spiritually-minded and materialistic. Listen to Jesus in Matthew 6:24. Listen to John in 1 John 2:15. Listen to Paul in 1 Timothy 6:9-10.

   a. Moses had great power opportunities. He probably could have ascended to the imperial throne had he remained in Egypt and “behaved himself.”
   b. When Jethro suggested he delegate some of his authority to various judges, Moses did not count his authority to be grasped. Exodus 18:17-26.
   c. When Aaron made the golden calf, God was ready to destroy the entire nation and make Moses the great nation He sought in rebellious Israel. Exodus 32:10. Moses begged God to reconsider and God did. Exodus 32:14.
   d. Moses never flaunted or abused his authority and power.
   e. As Christians we are to serve instead of trying to be masters who seek not to submit but to control. 3 John 9. See the warning given to elders in 1 Peter 5:3.

CONCLUSION
A. God delivered Israel from the Egyptian bondage and God delivers us from the bondage of sin through Jesus Christ.

B. Moses was Israel’s deliverer and lawgiver; Jesus Christ is ours. John 1:17. The waters of the Red Sea separated Israel from their bondage in Egypt; the waters of baptism separate us from our bondage to sin. Cf. 1 Corinthians 10:1-2.