

# Moses: The Greatest Jew

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Preacher: Tom Holland

[ 0 : 00 ] If you ever had an opportunity to walk through the portion of Jerusalem where many of the Orthodox Jews reside,!

You'd be really in for an adventure. It is unlikely that the Orthodox would engage any of us in any lengthy discussion concerning their beliefs.

We would be considered unclean, and maybe some of us are, I don't know. Even being in close proximity to them would have the potential to make them unclean and thus defiled.

Extreme Orthodox Jews might even consider their non-Orthodox brothers as unclean. But it is nevertheless interesting when we think about it, because I'd like to go up to one of those extreme Orthodox guys and ask him a question, and that is, among the Jews of history, who was the greatest Jew?

And that answer would be quite interesting to us. Because they would pass over Adam.

[ 1 : 49 ] I would too. Pass over Noah. They'd even pass over Abraham and David.

And some of the guys that we would think of as great Jewish brothers. To the Orthodox, the greatest Jew is Moses.

Even to this day. It's Moses. Moses. Whom they refer to, and rightly so, as the Deliverer. He delivered them from the bondage of Egypt.

And the heroes of faith, which we've been studying in Hebrews chapter 11, we come this evening to a study, brief as it is, of Moses.

Starting in verse 23 of chapter 11, And by faith, Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

[ 3 : 08 ] By faith, when he had grown up, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

By faith, he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured of seeing him who is invisible.

By faith, he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood so that the destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them. By faith, the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.

I have kind of an interesting past. Being on the board of directors of Voice of the Martyrs, I've actually been to Egypt and I've been to the Red Sea.

[ 4 : 42 ] I've seen some of the things we're talking about this evening. But it stands to reason that even in our day, Moses is one of the most intriguing figures in the Old Testament.

He lived the first third of his life and I've been on the Nile River where, remember, they fashioned a little boat and put him in there as a baby and pitched him in there and they talk about the reeds and I've seen all that.

He lived the first third of his life in the luxury of the Egyptian pharaoh's palace. He lived the second third of his life in the Midian desert and he lived the final third of his life with the Hebrew children in the wilderness.

And the last third of his life was definitely one of faith. Now because Moses was a man of faith, it can be said that he made right decisions.

And lest we forget, his decisions impacted millions of people that made up an entire nation.

[ 5 : 55 ] The Hebrew people. How interesting, here we are, what, 4,000 years later and we're still talking the headlines about these people.

with only the exception of Jesus. Moses illustrates the power of right decision making. He will forever be known as the person who received the law of God and in fact he is so intertwined with the law that it is referred to as the law of Moses or the Mosaic law.

Although he lived under the law, he was a man of faith. God's ways have always been by faith. Many Jews and not a few Christians believe that their relationship comes from keeping the law. Nothing could be further from the truth. It's impossible. A relationship with the Lord has always been on the basis of faith.

If you go through and read those laws, you'll find out you can't keep them for five minutes or five seconds. God's ways have always been by faith.

[ 7 : 34 ] Now faith, if properly applied, accepts certain things and rejects certain things. And this is exactly how Moses lived his life.

We will see in our study the things that Moses' faith accepted and we're going to see some things that it rejected. For instance, faith accepts God's plans.

By faith, Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents because they saw that the child was beautiful.

You know, I've read that a million times and that's the first time I really saw that. And they were not afraid of the king's edict. The Hebrews, by obviously the sovereign hand of God, were undergoing a population explosion.

It was exploding so rapidly that it came to the attention of the pharaoh and he was very concerned.

[ 8 : 54 ] And undoubtedly, people were whispering in his ear, Egyptian leaders and probably his military leaders saying they're going to be able to raise an army bigger than ours.

So the pharaoh gave a decree that the male babies born to the Hebrews were to be drowned in the Nile River. The parents of Moses, Amram and Jochebed, wanted to protect their newborn son.

First, they hid him for three months and then they fashioned a watertight basket and placed him in the Nile and it was at a place, and they obviously knew this, where pharaoh's daughter would come out with a contingent of servant ladies and they would bathe.

And it was pharaoh's daughter daughter that found him floating there. She too thought he was beautiful and she wanted to take him and raise him as her own, which was interesting because she knew he was Jewish.

He had a Jewish blanket in there. She knew that he was Jewish. She was apparently childless, unmarried maybe, but she wanted to raise that baby.

[ 10 : 23 ] And you really see the exquisite sovereign hand of God in all this. You see it on every page of Scripture. Moses' older sister was Miriam.

He had an older brother. Do you remember his name? Aaron. Miriam was nearby and she's watching and she sees the Egyptian lady in Pharaoh's house draw Moses out of the water and so she goes to her and says, I saw where you found a baby in the basket and he had a Jewish blanket. Would you like me to find a Jewish woman to nurse the baby? And she thought, that's a good idea. Yeah.

So, Miriam went and found her mother, which is also Moses' mother, and said, the Egyptians want you to nurse this baby and they're going to pay you to do it.

Is that not God's sovereignty? And in this story we see the faith of Moses' parents and that's going to be passed on to him later in life.

[ 12 : 03 ] The Scriptures tell us that they were not afraid of the king's edict. Now, Pharaoh is in his land. He can do anything with the Jews he wants to. But they weren't afraid of that.

They knew they had a God that was more powerful than Pharaoh. They willingly ignored the pressures of the world. And those pressures were you have to conform to the orders of the day.

It is clear from Scripture that Moses had a special love and attention from our Father in Heaven.

Undoubtedly, he was supernaturally protected and supernaturally delivered to Pharaoh's daughter. The parents of Moses were willing to forfeit their own lives to protect the child. somehow they knew that God was raising up Moses for a very special task that God was going to give him.

They didn't have a full understanding of that, but they knew that they trusted in the wisdom of the Lord. And by the way, that's another description of faith.

[ 13 : 26 ] They had faith. They had faith. If you want to see an example of faith, think how difficult it must have been for the mother of Moses to place him in the basket and put him in the crocodile-infested waters of the Nile River.

Now, I was on the Nile. I didn't see any crocodiles, but I wasn't dangling my feet in there either. But again, that took faith.

This river in those days was full of crocodiles. They also had faith that somehow Moses would one day come to know the traditions of his people, that being the Jews, and not be seduced by the occultist beliefs of the Egyptian pagans.

This was accomplished when Jochebed was able to raise her son on behalf of the daughter of Pharaoh. Pharaoh. There is no doubt that she instilled in him the basic beliefs of the Jewish people, and especially the fundamental belief that one day a deliverer was going to come for them and rescue them from Egyptian bondage.

Now, the mother of Moses had no idea that was going to be Moses. She just had faith that one day God's going to provide a deliverer.

[15:15] And if that sounds familiar to brothers in Christ, that's because that is a type of Christ. Moses was a type of Christ, a deliverer. Christ is our deliverer. The parents of Moses were content to allow God to control the circumstances by which their son would be raised.

They were obedient to those plans and walked in faith to see them fulfilled. Even as a baby, Moses was exposed to great faith.

Another point we will make this evening is that faith rejects the world's prestige. verse 24. By faith, Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Egypt, you have to put it in context, Egypt represented the most advanced society on earth during Moses' first 40 years of life.

life. He was a prince of Egypt and as such enjoyed the finer things that came with that life. He was highly educated.

[16:45] He acquired skills that were not available even to the typical Egyptian. Dr. Luke spoke of him in the book of Acts, Acts 7.22.

He said this, and Moses was educated on all the learning of the Egyptians and he was a man of power and words and deeds. And they were smart people.

They understood mathematics. I mean, look at the pyramids, which I've been to. Amazing. Massive. Huge. They're aligned with stars.

They knew astronomy. He was trained in various languages, including Hebrew, learned from his mother. He could enjoy everything Egypt had to offer.

And that was a lot. In spite of all this, he retained the knowledge of his Hebrew roots and understood the promise of God that one day he would deliver his people from the bondage of Egypt.

[18:02] He just did not believe that he was that man. There would have been no reason to say, by the way, you're the man. Jochebed didn't know that. Amram didn't know that.

Moses didn't know that at that time. Now, as was the custom, when Moses turned 40 years of age, he had to decide between becoming a full-fledged Egyptian or clinging to his Hebrew roots.

And the scriptures record his choice telling us that he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. And Moses, from the evidence, never wavered from his devotion to the Lord.

Lord, he was in a high position of power to help his people. God had placed him there by sovereign decree. From the world's standards, Moses had achieved fame and fortune, but Moses was looking to the reward, which is a reference to things to come.

We saw the same thing in his fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. What the world counts as great and what God counts as great are two different things.

[19:32] Two different things. God bestows honor on those that the world rejects as unworthy. A great example of this occurred during the incarnation.

Jesus told of one coming that would be greater than all of the combined pharaohs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David, and so forth. His name was John the Baptist. He was the forerunner announcing the arrival of the Messiah.

God's He was filled with the Spirit of God while he was in his mother's womb. Remember Elizabeth told Mary, when we heard your voice, the baby inside me leapt with joy at the sound of the mother of our Lord.

God. And of course, John the Baptist lived a life of denial and a life of obedience. Now, I doubt if any of us in this room have ever heard the name Baron Justinian von Welts.

Mike may have, I don't know. He was born into a ruling family with titles and estates and great wealth. When he became a believer, he denounced that life, he renounced it, and he became a missionary to Dutch Guyana.

[ 21 : 02 ] Today, his earthly remains lie in a simple, lonely grave forgotten by the world. When he was ready to enter the service of the Lord of a missionary, he said this, what is it to me to bear the title well-born?

And he had been. I'm born again in Christ. Why would I be called well-born? Except for that. What is it to me to have the title Lord when I desire to be a servant of Christ? What is it to me to be called your grace when I have God's grace? All these vanities I will do away with and all else I will lay at the feet of my dear Lord Jesus.

Very profound. Moses was the same type of guy. He cared nothing for his Egyptian heritage. He didn't care that it gave him great advantage over just about everybody in the country. His eyes were on something far greater. He chose to be faithful to God rather than enjoy the temporary pleasures of this world.

[ 22 : 29 ] How could he do that? Because faith rejects the world's pleasures. In the 25th verse of Hebrews 11, choosing rather to endure ill treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin.

Since the fall in the Garden of Eden, sin has been fun to members of the human race and it feeds the darker side of our emotions. But sin is always based upon evil and that fun is always temporary and fleeting.

It may even at the right time sound fun, but it will fade into darkness. Because of his position in the house of Pharaoh, Moses had available to him any sin that he wanted to commit.

But Moses knew that God was calling him to a far different life than the passing pleasures of royalty. Because of this call, Moses was willing to endure the same ill treatment that his kindred were enduring rather than receive the pleasures afforded him by the Egyptian authorities.

He had no interest in enjoying the passing pleasures of sin. Now, God had called Moses into a life of holiness. He called him to a life of separation and obedience.

[ 24 : 13 ] It is the same life to which he is called every genuine follower of his in Christ. Like Moses, we fail often, but God picks his children up, dusts them off, sends them down the road of righteousness.

God wants his children to live such a life because it brings him glory and is for our own good. He knows that. Satan would choose for us a life of sin that brings him honor and is harmful to us. Faith also rejects the world's penalty. Considering the reproach of Christ's greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for Moses was looking to the reward.

Moses had access to the greatest wealth in the world at that time. We know of the vast wealth of Egyptian royalty from the excavations of the tomb of King Tutankhamen.

I've been at the Egyptian museum where they have Tutankhamen. He's a mummy now. But his vast wealth is spread out and you can go up.

[ 25 : 37 ] You can't handle it. You can't even take a picture of it. I tried. I got in trouble. And Tutankhamen lived only about a hundred years after Moses.

The scriptures tell us that Moses considered. That means he gave it careful thought. Weighing the pros and cons of the life he had chosen. But he realized that God had a lot more to offer than did Pharaoh.

If only we would see the passing pleasures of this life as just that. And choose the eternal things of the Lord instead.

Moses knew that a deliverer was coming for the Hebrew people. He knew the deliverer and the one he was looking for would be the Messiah of God.

Messiah is a Hebrew word. The Greek word is Christ. It means chosen by God. He's the deliverer.

[ 26 : 44 ] The anointed one. So we learn of Christ as much richer than the passing wealth of Egypt. Moses was willing to bear reproach for the sake of Christ although he would not appear in the incarnation for another 1500 years.

We should be willing to gladly bear the same reproach. So faith rejects the world's pleasures. By faith he left Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king, but he endured as seeing him who is unseen. Twice Moses was under extreme wrath of Pharaoh. I know this because I've watched the Ten Commandments, Cecil B. DeMille, but the first time he fled Egypt because he'd murdered an

Egyptian.

The second time he fled Egypt with millions of Hebrew people, both times he infuriated the Egyptian leadership.

Now Moses had every reason to fear Pharaoh. He had all the power. He was considered divine. They thought he was a god.

[ 28 : 05 ] But Moses had a greater fear and trust in the eternal god who raised up Pharaohs and then sent them crashing down. We tend to fear the temporal and ignore the eternal.

But we should harness our fears, focus on the God who has all things under his sovereign control. Faith also accepts God's provision.

Verse 28, By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood so that he who destroyed the firstborn might not touch him.

true faith accepts God's provisions and his plan for our lives. In our day, we accept God's gracious provision of salvation in his son.

We come to him by faith though the world believes that works are a much better method to earn favor with God. But God's ways are not our ways.

[ 29 : 14 ] only by faith can we please him. And then faith accepts God's promise. Verse 29, By faith they pass through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land.

And the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned. Very interesting passage of scripture. scripture. As believers, we, like Moses, accept God's promise for our lives by faith.

When Moses reached the Red Sea with millions of people, and remember they were carrying with them the spoils of Egypt. Egypt said, we're going to give you guys our wealth just to get you out of here.

they'd gone through all the plagues and everything. And so they have the spoils of Egypt with them, but now the Egyptian army was in fast pursuit and not far behind.

There's a poignant line in the Ten Commandments by Cecil B. DeMille where it says, the Hebrew God's not a very good general. Because it appeared to block them in by the Red Sea and they were coming.

[ 30 : 43 ] They appeared to be trapped by the Red Sea. It did not appear to them that the Hebrew God was a very good military commander because he left no escape route.

Moses told them, start walking. And as they did, the sea parted and they passed over on dry land. Again, I've been to the Red Sea. I swam in it. It's big. It's deep. It's wide. In some places, miles and miles.

You can't see the other side. the picture of the Hebrew nation passing over to me is astonishing. So is the destruction of the Egyptian army when they gave pursuit and the water closed in around them.

a few years ago, I had dinner with Josh McDowell. That may be a name some of you recognize. And Dr. Piper and I had dinner with him at Oklahoma Wesleyan University.

[ 31 : 55 ] And he talked about a debate that he had a few years earlier with an atheist who totally mocked the Bible. And one of the things he scorned was the idea that the Red Sea parted.

He said that the Hebrews passed over water because of the alignment of the moon and all that. The Red Sea at that time was only two inches deep. So it appeared that the waters parted and the Hebrew people just went over it.

Well, then it was Josh's turn and he said, what my friend here has done is testified to one of the most amazing miracles in history. God was able to drown the entire Egyptian army in two inches of water.

I thought that was good. Faith takes God and His word. So at the word to cross through the Red Sea, the Hebrews started walking.

They were obedient and because of that, they lived. So we too have been called to a life of obedience. When we are obedient, we are fulfilling the will of God and are filled with the Holy Spirit under His control.

[ 33 : 17 ] When we are disobedient, we follow our own will and quench the spirit. But like Moses, we know that God never asked anything of us that is not in our best interest.

So our call is that we must diligently follow Him as did Moses. And I really like Him.