

A Survey of the Bible

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" Psalm 119:105

Lesson 3

The Land of Inheritance: Moses to Saul

Exodus to 1 Samuel

Moses, the Law Giver.

Moses is one of the most familiar names of the Bible. His life can be divided into three parts: Forty years in Egypt, Forty years in Midian [including his time back in Egypt to demand the release of Israel], and Forty years leading the Israelites through the wilderness.

Moses in Egypt. Moses was born 350 years into the Egyptian sojourn time period, a period of 430 years when the Israelites were in Egypt. The Israelites had been welcomed by the Pharaoh [ruler of Egypt, a title] of Joseph's time. In time the Israelites grew in number till a later Pharaoh feared that they would join his enemies. For this reason he made them slaves and to curb their growth demanded that all Israel's boys be killed at birth (Ex. 1). Moses was born in this perilous time.

Moses was hidden for three months before he was placed in an ark of bulrushes and placed in the Nile where the daughter of Pharaoh bathed. When the daughter of Pharaoh came to bath and heard the baby cry she had compassion on him. She took him for her own son and named him Moses. Moses' sister Miriam was nearby and offered to find a Hebrew to care for him. Pharaoh's daughter agreed and Moses' own mother became his nurse. Pharaoh's daughter raised Moses as an Egyptian. *"And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds"* (Acts 7:22 NKJ).

Moses knew his true heritage and sought to assist his brethren, the Israelites. On one occasion he killed an Egyptian for abusing an Israelite. He fled to Midian because Pharaoh sought his life.

Moses in Midian. As Moses entered Midian he helped some women water their flocks. He was invited to their 'home' [it was a tent, the dwelling of nomads] and met Reuel, also called Jethro, the father of the women he helped. Moses married Zipporah, a daughter of Jethro, and they had two sons.

At the end of nearly forty years in Midian Moses took the flocks to Mt. Horeb [also called Mt. Sinai], which was called the mountain of God. It was there that Moses saw the bush that appeared to be burning but was not consumed. He turned to see the amazing sight. God spoke to Moses at the bush and commissioned him to return to Israel and deliver the Israelites from bondage.

The Israelites cried to God because of their oppression. God took knowledge of them, remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and was going to deliver them and give them the promised land. Remember, God is faithful to his promises!

Moses was resistant and made excuses but God answered his excuses.

Moses returned to Egypt with one message for Pharaoh [the one who succeeded the Pharaoh who sought Moses life, and probably a man Moses knew well from his youth], *"Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness'"* (Ex. 5:1 NKJ). Pharaoh refused. It took ten plagues to finally convince Pharaoh to release the Israelites. The last plague was the death of the firstborn of Egypt. Israel was instructed to sacrifice a lamb, roast it and eat it with unleavened bread, and be ready to depart the next day. They were also to spread the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and across the top of the door of their house so that the plague would "pass over" them. From this time forward the Israelites were expected to keep **the feast of the Passover** to remember their deliverance by the hand of God.

The night of the plague Pharaoh told Moses to take Israel and depart. Moses led the Israelites from Egypt. They went to the Red Sea, where they were cornered by the hard hearted Pharaoh. Moses then led the Israelites across the Red Sea on dry ground as God provided. Pharaoh's army followed but drowned when God caused the water to return to its place.

Moses in the Wilderness. From the Red Sea Moses led the Israelites to camp at the base of Mt. Sinai. God called Moses up to the mountain and gave him the law which is often called ‘the law of Moses.’ The most well known parts of this law are the ten commandments.

All was not well with Israel though. Even before reaching Mt. Sinai the Israelites had disobeyed God. Then, while Moses was on the mount speaking with

Moses	Joshua & Caleb	
Crossing Red Sea	Law Given	Crossing the Jordan
1447 B.C.		1407 B.C.

God, the Israelites erected an altar and worshiped it. Moses interceded for the Israelites and God did not destroy them. The tribe of Levi stood with Moses against Israel and received the unique position as the priestly tribe. God rewarded their faithfulness.

Another event is significant at this time. While on the mount Moses was given a charge to build the tabernacle. He was given exact specifications of the tabernacle, and was repeatedly warned by God, *"And see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain"* (Ex. 25:40). God was again emphasizing his expectation of obedience. He did not tell Moses what not to use in the building but gave him a specific pattern for what to use. Through this pattern Moses understood what was acceptable as well as what was unacceptable to God. The closing chapter of Exodus records the faithful completion of the tabernacle.

After about two years at Mt. Sinai the Israelites received the command of God, through Moses, to depart. They were off to the promised land! When they came near the southern edge of Palestine God told them to send twelve men to spy out the land. When the spies returned all twelve reported how good and pleasant the land was. But ten of the twelve did not have faith in God to know that they could take the land. Only **Joshua** and **Caleb** had faith to know the land would be theirs through the power of God. Because of their unfaithfulness the Israelites were forbidden entrance into the land for forty years. All, except Joshua and Caleb, who were twenty years old and older when they crossed the Red Sea died in the wilderness.

Israel wandered thirty eight more years. Finally, as the time drew near, God directed the Israelites to travel around the Dead Sea, around the nations of Edom and Moab, and to camp on the east of the Jordan River just above the Dead Sea. The Israelites could look over the Jordan River to the promised land. God’s was fulfilling his promise!

Because of Moses’ disobedience in the wilderness he was not allowed to enter the promised land. He appointed Joshua to succeed him, looked over the Jordan to the promised land, and died on Mt. Nebo.

The Conquest of Canaan.

After mourning Moses’ death Joshua sent two spies into Canaan. These spies were treated kindly by **Rahab** of Jericho. She said that the whole land was terribly afraid of Israel, having heard what God was doing for them. She asked to be spared for hiding the spies and her request was honored.

When the spies returned Joshua received instruction from the Lord to lead the Israelites across the Jordan River. God caused the Jordan River to pile up at Adam, a city upriver, and the Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry ground. They encamped at Gilgal where all the men were circumcised because they had not been circumcised in the wilderness.

The first city to fall was Jericho. It was obvious to all that God was fighting for Israel. For six days the Israelites would march around Jericho once. On the seventh day they marched around Jericho seven times. When the priests blew the trumpets the walls of Jericho fell and the Israelites killed the inhabitants. Israel was told to take nothing of Jericho because it was a dedicated city - the treasure was the Lord’s.

The second city attacked was Ai. The first attempt was unsuccessful, Israel fled from the inhabitants of Ai. Israel failed because of sin. Achan had taken from Jericho a Babylonish mantle [garment], silver, and gold. Because of his sin he and his family were stoned. Israel purged sin from the camp and again went against Ai. The Lord delivered Ai into the hands of Joshua.

Joshua led the Israelites in battle against the inhabitants of Canaan. In time the Israelites had gone throughout the land, but they did not obey the will of God completely. They made a covenant with one group in the land and did not utterly destroy the

inhabitants of the land. Because of this disobedience they had constant problems. Israel frequently made the choice to follow the gods of the people of the land rather than to follow God. Even though God had brought them to the land Israel chose to ignore his blessings and be like the nations around them.

Joshua set the divisions of the land according to the tribes. Two and a half tribes chose to take their inheritance on the east of the Jordan, so nine and one-half tribes received their land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. God was fulfilling his promise. Within this division the tribe of Levi did not receive a tribal division but received cities throughout all the tribes. They were the servants of God and their inheritance was in serving him. Joseph received a blessing from his father [Gen. 48,9] which doubled his portion. For this reason the division of the land does not include a land area for Joseph but regions for his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh.

Judges for Israel.

There were several periods in the history of Israel which were challenging. The period of the judges was one of the most challenging. This period is a series of cycles: disobedience to God, oppression by a foreign power, crying for God’s deliverance, God’s deliverance by the use of a judge, and then a return to disobedience which began the cycle again. From this period we learn of man’s continued disposition toward disobedience, God’s disciplining of his children, and then of God’s mercy in delivering them from oppressions.

There were several judges during this period, including a woman judge - Deborah. Deborah the judge when another woman handed a military victory to Israel by the use of a tent-pen (Judges 4). Gideon is noted for his victory over the multitudes of the Midianites with an Army of 300 (Judges 6-8). Jephthah is known as the judge who made a vow which cost him his daughter (Judges 11). Samson is the judge remembered for his great physical strength, and for killing more of Israel’s enemies in his death than during his life (Judges 14-16). Eli is known for his instruction of Samuel but also for his sin of loving his sons more than God (1 Samuel 1-4). Samuel was

the last judge in Israel. He was a man who demonstrated great leadership in Israel and anointed the first two kings of Israel (1 Samuel 3-16).

The book of judges also records the terrible sins of Israel when there was no leadership in the nation. Without leaders to point them to God the Israelites were plagued with problems which included idolatry, sexual immorality, and civil war. A positive lesson to glean from this period is the ever present need for godly leadership.

A highlight of this period is seen in **Ruth**, a Moabitess who married an Israelite man. When her husband and father-in-law had both died she insisted on following Naomi, her mother-in-law. Ultimately she was favored by a man named **Boaz** who was a next of kin and, obeying the law of Moses, married Ruth. Ruth and Boaz were blessed with a son, Obed. In their descendants are named some of the brightest figures of the Old Testament: Jesse, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, and Josiah. Ultimately this Moabitess woman was known as an ancestor to him who came to bless the whole earth - Jesus Christ (see Matthew 1, especially verse 5).

God had not forgotten his promise to Abraham. Through Moses he gave the law which was a schoolmaster to bring Israel to Christ (Galatians 3:26). Through Moses he promised the prophet who would be like Moses, Jesus Christ (Deuteronomy 18:18; Acts 3:22). Through Joshua he delivered Israel to the land of promise. And, through this time we continue to follow the family through whom Jesus was to be born. God was working to bring redemption to all.

Judges in Israel

- Othniel
- Ehud
- Shamgar
- Deborah
- Gideon
- Abimelech
- Tola
- Jair
- Jephthah
- Ibzan
- Elon
- Abdon
- Samson
- Eli
- Samuel

Joshua	Judges	Samuel
Crossing the Jordan		Anointing Saul King
1407 B.C.		1051 B.C.

For Further Study.

William Smith. Old Testament History, rev. by Wilbur Fields (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1970).

The Survey of the Bible is written by Greg Weston.
Go to www.tftw.org for Chinese and Spanish studies.

Why A King?

The nation of Israel asked Samuel to appoint a king. The reason? They first pointed to the character of the sons of Samuel. Obviously Samuel’s sons were not as qualified to judge Israel as Samuel had been. But why not another judge? Why a king? The answer is given by Israel herself: *“Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations”* (1 Sam. 8:5). Israel wanted to be like the other nations!

Isn’t it interesting that Israel was rejecting their status as the chosen nation of God in their desire to be like the nations around them. Which of the other nations could reflect back upon a man of faith like Abraham? Which of the other nations could present a deed to their land from the Almighty God? Which of the nations around them had the blessing of God’s care and guidance through the wilderness, settling them in the land he had promised? Which nation, other than Israel, had a law written by the finger of God? Do you see the blessed position of Israel of old? Why would they want to cast it all away just to be like “other nations”?

There is a lesson for us in this illustration. God has given us the opportunity to serve him. He has sent his Son, Jesus, to die for our sins and make us a people for his own possession (Matt. 26:28; Tit. 3:14). He has also given a pattern for living. However, like those of Samuel’s day, many like to change the pattern God has given for a pattern man has devised. It matters not whether this change involves five percent of the law of Christ or ninety-five percent, it is still changing a divine pattern for a man-made pattern.

In this survey of the Bible we will eventually study the specific pattern God has given. You may run ahead to find more about that pattern, but one important question for you to ask is, “Will I commit myself to follow God’s pattern?” The person who hears God’s word and does it is the one who answers - Yes! The one who argues with God’s word is the one who says - No! Which are you?

For Review.

- 1. Describe the education Moses received.
- 2. What did Moses receive on Mt. Sinai? Read Exodus 19-20 and describe the attitude of the Israelites toward God.
- 3. Why did the Israelites have to wander in the wilderness.
- 4. Describe Israel’s victory over Jericho [Joshua 6].

Periods of Bible History
(15 Periods)
Ante-Diluvian (Before the Flood)
From Creation to the Flood
Post-Diluvian (After the Flood)
From the Flood to the Call of Abraham
Patriarchal (Fathers)
From the Call of Abraham to the Death of Jacob
Egyptian Sojourn (Slaves in Egypt)
From Death of Jacob to Crossing the Red Sea
Wilderness Wandering
From Crossing the Red Sea to Crossing the Jordan River
Period of Conquest
From Crossing the Jordan River to the Death of Joshua
Period of Judges
From the Death of Joshua to the anointing of Saul as King

- 5. Identify the following.
- Moses.
- Joshua
- Caleb
- Deborah
- Othniel
- Samson
- Eli
- Samuel
- Saul

Review. Make a time line below of Biblical people and events from creation to Saul. When you have completed this time line from memory, go to the lessons and the scriptures given and fill in more details.