

An artistic illustration of Moses standing on a wooden plank, parting the Red Sea. The sea is depicted with dark, swirling waves above and a bright, glowing path below. Moses is shown from behind, wearing a blue robe and holding a staff. The word "MOSES" is written in large, white, serif capital letters across the center of the image, with a yellow and green gradient overlay.

MOSES

DAILY DEVOTIONAL - WEEK 2

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MOSES

WEEK 2



MONDAY

A flame of fire in the middle of a bush

When he became an adult, Moses showed his compassion for his fellow Hebrews (albeit in an unwise, impulsive way) by killing an Egyptian slave master. He fled to Midian, and found a home when his compassion for the weak led him to defend Reuel's daughters from bullies at a well (Exodus 2:11-22). He stayed "a long time," with a steady, safe (if fairly boring) job tending his father-in-law's sheep. One fateful day God called to Moses in a burning bush that didn't burn up. "God looked at the Israelites, and God understood" (Exodus 2:25). Yet God felt Israel's suffering as soon as Pharaoh began afflicting them. God didn't just wake up after 80 or 100 years of cruelty and think, "Hey—why's he hurting my people?" Much later, Peter wrote about the mystery of God's timing: "With the Lord a single day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a single day. The Lord isn't slow to keep his promise" (2 Peter 3:8-9). **Can you trust that God is aware of whatever worries you're facing? How can you learn to trust God even when help seems to take a long time to arrive?**

"Take off your sandals, because you are standing on holy ground." **What are some important ways in today's world that you can show reverence and respect for the God of the universe as you come into God's presence in worship, in prayer or in other ways? Do you think showing reverence and respect dulls the edge of the message of God's love for you, or do the two realities fit together well?**

read

Exodus 2:23-25

Exodus 3:1-6

pray

Lord God, sometimes when I'm in a hurry, you do not seem to be. Teach me to trust in your timing and eternal love, even when it is hard for me to understand your eternal patience. Amen.

TUESDAY

I'm sending you to Pharaoh and I will be with you

At first Moses just seemed curious. “How can that bush be in flames, yet not burn up?” Then he took off his sandals and hid his face from God’s glorious presence. But God’s call— “I’m sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people... out of Egypt” truly shocked Moses. His first reply was, “Who am I to go to Pharaoh?” Moses had grown up in Pharaoh’s court—he knew the king’s arrogance and claims to being a god. But God promised Moses, “I will be with you.” Moses didn’t feel strong enough, or important enough, to carry out God’s astonishing call. Go as one man, with no army at all, and demand that Pharaoh let most of his slave labour force go just because God told him to? **How did God respond in verse 12? What limits do you see on your ability to live for God? How (if at all) does it change your view of those limits if you believe God will be with you?**

Moses, raised in a palace, had spent years following a flock of sheep or goats around in the desert. **Do you suppose he ever thought, during those long years, “I guess this is all God has for me”? In what ways was his realization that, on his own, he wasn’t anywhere near strong or important enough to carry out the divine commission a key part of what made him an instrument God could use?**

read

Exodus 3:7-12

pray

Lord God, there was only one Moses. But there are many missions, large and small, needed to help your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Show me my mission(s), and guide and strengthen me for them. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

I Am Who I Am” the one LORD’S name

Like most ancient peoples, the Egyptians believed in many “gods,” including the Pharaoh. Moses initial question—“What’s this God’s name?”—had a “Which one of the many are you?” ring to it. But God’s reply (“I Am Who I Am”—Hebrew YHWH) identified the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the source and ground of all life, as the only God, the sole reason that (as philosophers might say) there is “something instead of nothing.” Most modern English translations (e.g. the Common English Bible, New International Version and New Revised Standard Version) print the Hebrew YHWH as LORD, using the capital letters to signal the divine name’s uniqueness. The other common term, Elohim, was more generic, and is usually translated “God.” **Learn how your preferred English Bible handles this—it will deepen and enrich your understanding of many Old Testament stories.**

For people who’d been slaves for many years, it was important to remember their heritage— “the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.” It’s your heritage, too. The apostle Paul wrote that “if you belong to Christ, then indeed you are Abraham’s descendants” (Galatians 3:29). **Re-read this dramatic passage, focusing on what it tells you about the LORD you serve, the LORD who redeemed and guides you.**

read

Exodus 3:13-20

pray

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in some ways those names seem so long ago, and almost too big to fit a regular person. But they were regular people, too—the “bigness” and enduring quality was in you. Thank you for including me in your eternal purpose. Amen.

THURSDAY

Moses' excuses, the LORD'S power

Even having God reveal a unique divine name didn't completely "sell" Moses on God's call. Next, he raised the issue that the Israelite people weren't there with him at the burning bush. They'd have to take his word for what had happened, and Moses feared, "They might say, 'The Lord didn't appear to you!'" No problem—God gave him signs to show cynics the divine power at work.

As Moses struggled with God's call, God didn't give Moses 10,000 soldiers, or even a spear-proof chariot. Instead, God asked, "What's that in your hand?" He used what Moses already had. (On Saturday, we'll read that when Moses left for Egypt, he took that staff with him.)

What's in your hand? What abilities, experiences or connections do you have that God can use, if you make them available?

Notice that God didn't start with visible, hard-to-explain signs. Sometimes we think, "If God would just dazzle me with some sign of power, then I could believe." But Scripture often told stories that show people who saw signs, yet still refused to believe (including Pharaoh, as we'll see—and notably in Jesus' life). **What, now or earlier in your life, caused you to hold back from believing? How did you make the inner shift to becoming willing to believe?**

read

Exodus 4:1-9

pray

Dear God, I sometimes wish for some amazing sign of power, yet I shrug off a beautiful sunset or a stirring joyful bird's song as just business as usual. Open my heart to the signs of your power and love all around me. Amen.

FRIDAY

More excuses, same divine calling

Moses remembered well Pharaoh's power and arrogance and kept making excuses. In verse 13, he expressed a sort of "last resort" desperation: "Please, my LORD, just send someone else." But God didn't stop calling. When God said Moses' brother Aaron was already on his way to meet Moses and help him, the chain of excuses finally came to an end. **Review in this week's readings (Exodus 3:11 – 4:13) all of the reasons Moses offered for not doing what God was calling him to do. With how many, if any, of them do you resonate?**

The thing Moses didn't do was walk away from the conversation. **Are you willing to keep listening, and pushing back if you must, until God is able to use you in your home, workplace, neighbourhood or somewhere else that you sense God calling you to?**

Most strengths come with some kind of trade-off, some area in which we are not as strong.

Those who study and write about strengths note that seldom does anyone have all the abilities needed for important tasks. **In what parts of life could you benefit from having an "Aaron"—one or more people whose gifts lie in areas where you are not as strong? How can you work with God to find those people?**

read

Exodus 4:10-17

pray

O God, Moses was a great man, yet throughout his story he had other people who helped and supported him. Help me to find the people I need to help me make of my life and service to you all that it can be. Amen.

SATURDAY

Moses went back to the land of Egypt

It's interesting that Moses did not tell his father-in-law, "I'm taking your grandchildren and daughter to Egypt to challenge Pharaoh's power." In this extraordinary story, an 80-year-old shepherd set out with just his family, one donkey and a shepherd's rod to oppose and overcome that great empire. But the shepherd's rod was "from God." God went with him—and that single fact radically shifted the odds that seemed so stacked against Moses' mission.

In Exodus 3:19, God told Moses, "I know that Egypt's king won't let you go unless he's forced to do it." In today's reading, we find a phrase that troubles many people, when God says, "I'll make him stubborn." We'll examine this more closely next week. But realize that Pharaoh was NOT willing to release the Israelites before Moses ever appeared before him. What God did through Moses made Pharaoh's stubbornness dramatically visible, but God did not have to make the Egyptian ruler stubborn. Pharaoh had already made those choices. **How about you? If you stubbornly resist something you believe God is calling you to do, is your stubbornness your responsibility, or God's? How can you open your heart to become more willing to follow God's leading?**

read

Exodus 4:18-23

pray

O God, I try to imagine how exposed Moses must have felt taking his family (and almost nothing else) with him to Egypt. But somehow he was eternally safe, because you were with him. Heighten my awareness that you are with me, too, today and every day. Amen.