

## **Highlight Reel: Moses**

### **Exodus 3:11-12; Exodus 4:1-17; Matthew 28:16-20**

In this series, we are looking at some people from the Old Testament who are well-known for their heroic acts and powerful faith. However, there is always more to the story. It is easy to see their amazing accomplishments and overlook their faults. But it's their flaws that make them relatable.

The people of the Bible are often sensationalized to the point of forgetting they were actual people. A pet peeve of mine is calling people in the Bible 'Bible characters'. It implies a fictional persona. If you believe the Bible is documentation of actual events that happened here on this earth then you have to believe that these were real people. People with faults and flaws who struggled with many of the same things that we also struggle with. They were a product of their time and culture but also existed in the brokenness of the world, just like we do. I don't believe that it is disrespectful to look at the stories of these people and see them as more than the heroes that they have been portrayed as in the flannelgraph lessons we learned as kids. I feel that it is honoring to who they were as actual people...real people struggling to live in a broken world with faith. Reducing them to the level of fictional characters like you would learn lessons from in fairy tales or Aesop's fables is what is disrespectful.

**Moses's Highlight Reel:** Moses is probably one of the best-known people from the Bible. He is credited for writing the first 5 books of the Old Testament (The Torah: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). His story is recorded from his birth to his death which is more than most other people in the Bible.

Moses's Highlight Reel includes big moments like: 10 plagues in Egypt, leading the Hebrew slaves to freedom, splitting the Red Sea, the Ten Commandments, and leading Israel in the desert for 40 years. But the highlight reel only shows the victories - not the struggles.

Through all of these big moments, Moses battled self-doubt and the pressure of leadership. If we ignore what happened behind the scenes, then we miss out on understanding how God can work through our flaws.

**Burning Bush:** In Exodus 3, God spoke to Moses through a burning bush. God had heard the cries of His people living in slavery in Egypt and he was going to send Moses to deliver them.

Read Exodus 3:11-12. Does anyone else totally relate to this? God says 'I'm sending you' and our natural response is often, 'why me?'

Moses asked God "Who am I?" The feeling of being inadequate when called to do something so massively uncomfortable and difficult is a common feeling. But God said "I've got you. I'm going with you. I'll give you what you need when you need it."

However, Moses still wasn't convinced. Read Exodus 4:1-9. At this point, I feel like God has made it pretty clear that He is powerful enough to sustain Moses through anything. Think about it. God's voice is coming through a fire covered bush that is not actually burning, the stick in Moses hand became a snake and then a stick again, Moses' own hand was cursed then immediately cured when Moses did what he was told to do, and God told him there would be more signs if needed. Yet Moses still has doubts and fears being rejected.

Read Exodus 4:10-13. Have you ever said something to someone over and over again and they still just want to argue with you? Like when you tell your kids to clean their room and they

just keep having excuses why they can't do it then actually have the nerve to say 'can't you just do it?'

Read Exodus 4:14-17. Moses made excuses because he felt inadequate for the job God was telling him to do. That's a pretty natural response. We are all inadequate on our own. But God wasn't asking Moses to work alone. God would be with him and so would his brother Aaron. God was offering Moses all the resources and support he would need.

**Self-Doubt:** When we read the story of Moses we can see how God chose him, preserved him, prepared him, and equipped him to carry out this mission. God protected a baby floating down a dangerous river in a basket. Then the basket just happened to float right to the one person who could keep him safe from the Pharaoh's decree. God softened Moses' heart toward the slaves even though he was raised in the Pharaoh's palace. He also provided for Moses in the desert when he fled from Egypt as an exile

Moses allowed his self-doubt to prevent him from immediately believing that God would use him to accomplish something incredible, but he didn't let it stop him.

Here's the truth. Moses wasn't wrong when he said he was inadequate. On his own, he would not be able to deliver his people out of slavery...but that was never the point. God wasn't asking Moses to be enough or to do it on his own. God was asking Moses to be willing to go and to trust that God is enough.

**Our Calling:** Every one of us has a calling from God. It probably won't come in the form of a burning bush, yet that doesn't make it less real. God isn't asking any of us to deliver thousands of people out of literal slavery, but he is asking us to share the path to spiritual freedom in the world. It may look like raising a child to know Jesus; serving and loving someone in need; being a light in the darkness at your job or school; forgiving someone who hurt you; stepping into a new ministry, job, or responsibility that you don't feel qualified for; or showing others who God is by reflecting His character in your life, words, and actions.

Like Moses, our first instinct is to ask God 'Who am I?', to tell God that we aren't qualified, and to ask Him to please send someone else. But God's response to us is the same as what he said to Moses: "*I will be with you*".

After Jesus resurrected from the dead, he spent time with his disciples. Before he ascended into heaven, He left them with one final commission. (Read Matthew 28:16-20.) Even after all they had seen, some still doubted. Still Jesus promised to be with them always.

Moses doubted himself, but God never doubted His plan. The same God who took an insecure, excuse-making shepherd and turned him into a deliverer also took 11 flawed men who followed Jesus and turned them into the apostles who began spreading the Gospel through the world. That same God can take your ordinary life and do extraordinary things through it.

The real highlight reel of your life won't be the moments you nailed everything perfectly. It will be the moments when you trusted God to shine through the cracks of your brokenness. Those moments when you stood strong, despite your weakness. The times when you stepped out of your comfort zone even though you felt unqualified. The moments when you believed His steady faithfulness was greater than your self-doubt.

God is calling everyone of us to do something for His Kingdom, but he doesn't expect you to do it on your own. He doesn't need you to be perfect. He just needs you to be willing.

**Discussion Questions:**

- Can you relate to Moses? Do you have a tendency to look at your past or your weaknesses as excuses to follow God's calling?
- Think about your life...
  - Where do you feel God leading you to go?
  - Do you feel inadequate to respond to God's call?
  - How can you trust God to fill that gap?
    - Does knowing that God actually was with Moses help you with your self-doubt about God's call?