

Please click your browser's back button to return to the Church website (or click [HERE](#)).

Continuing our quest for learning from the lives of people in the Bible, last Sunday, we started to explore the life of Moses.

Two things stood out from our first scrutiny of Moses' life¹: **1)** the extraordinary detail preserved over time, and authenticated by archeology and the discovery of later manuscripts, and **2)** a pattern of life events which repeats itself throughout the Bible, reveals God's story of salvation, both of which we find right through the life of Moses.

Reading Moses' birth and infancy narratives, we are awestruck by the extraordinary lengths to which God goes to plan each of our lives, but this only becomes evident when we look back and see the hand of God, guiding and directing each of us to accomplish His plan and purpose; the further we travel along life's journey, as we look back, the clearer we see God at work. We are reading Moses' life in ***hindsight***, which they say, is 20/20 vision; hence we observe certain truths about God. I encourage you to use ***hindsight*** to strengthen and sustain your faith in God!²

One of the great tragedies of Christianity in the 20th century, is that the word *faith* became detached from the person in whom we are to have faith. I have heard people say, and surely you have too, *I have faith*, and they stop short of saying in whom they have faith.

Faith is an active, relationship word. Faith is about placing our trust in a person who does what they say. We know that us humans are fallible; at the best of times, we fail to live up to the trust others' place in us. But there is one person we can trust, and place our faith in Him, that is the One who created us and breathed His Spirit into us, Creator God Himself. He keeps His promise, **ALWAYS!**

So, because God is actively involved in bringing back His Creation into a right relationship with Himself, we are invited to exercise an active faith, if only to keep in step with what God is doing.

¹ In chapter 1 and 2:1-10

² see ***Footprints in the Sand***, a poem which describes the extent to which we misunderstand God's presence in our lives. Click [HERE](#) to read it

Please click your browser's back button to return to the Church website (or click [HERE](#)).

When you read the Gospels, you will discover that Jesus said very little about having faith in Him; Jesus invited people to **follow** Him, as an expression of their faith in God, because *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me"*.³ The word **follow** is used twice as many times as the word **faith**.

Moses has an envious relationship with God. *"There has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom **the Lord knew** face to face."*⁴

Wouldn't this be a fantastic epitaph on our tombstone? *Here lies ... whom the Lord knew face-to-face!*

We ended our reading last Sunday when the Princess took Moses into her home.⁵ The next verse reads, *"Many years later..."*. The gap between 2:10 and 2:11, is forty years!

Other than his birth narrative, the Bible tells us very little about Moses' early life, but we can make valid assumptions based on what we know from secular historical sources. Moses was an Egyptianised royal Prince, the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter named **Thermuthis**, who *". . . took him and brought him up as her own son. . . educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and act."*⁶

As a Prince, Moses would have worn rings on his fingers, necklaces of gold, ivory and precious stones around his neck, his body perfumed with finest oils and clothed in finest linen.

From the time Moses entered the Pharaoh's palace, he would have had a tutor who oversaw every aspect of his education, from learning the legends, wisdom and history of Egypt and the Mediterranean world, to reading and writing Egyptian hieroglyphics, and trained in mathematics and geometry in which the Egyptians excelled.

³ John 14:6

⁴ Deuteronomy 34:10

⁵ Exodus 2:10

⁶ Acts 7:21-22

Please click your browser's back button to return to the Church website (or click [HERE](#)).

Moses was no country bumpkin, but a highly educated and trained man of his time.

Amidst all this luxury, something gnawed at Moses' soul. We don't know if he worshipped the pantheon of Egyptian gods, but we know, like all adopted children, he wanted to know more about his birth parents. All adopted children struggle with a desire to know more about their birth parents, some struggle more than others.

There is something in each of us, that wants to know more about who we are, why we are where we are, to whom do we **belong**, the purpose of life, and this quest is stronger among those who have been adopted.

So, at the age of 40, Moses set out to identify with his race, his heritage and his culture.

One thing leads to another; Moses the Prince, kills an Egyptian taskmaster who was mistreating his people, hoping to gain favour with his people, but the plan backfires. The king finds out, suspects Moses is a mole in the palace and wants him dead.

Moses now, is on the run!

From being a **Royal Somebody**, Moses becomes a fugitive, running from the security of life he knew, into the unknown, unaware he was going to spend the next forty years, working for his father-in-law as a shepherd in the wilderness, and raising a family. Moses' first lesson in the desert, is a lesson every generation since has learned: the privileges and pleasures on which we place so much importance, are fleeting and can disappear in a moment. In recent news, Sir Philip Green, the man once celebrated for his Midas touch, is facing *material uncertainty* about the ability of his retail empire to continue trading without new funds, and life without his £100m yacht, might be difficult! Privileges and pleasures of life can disappear in an instant!

Time spent in the desert, is time when God prepares us for the greatest work yet to come! Whereas, in the plan of God, **He** placed Moses in the

Please click your browser's back button to return to the Church website (or click [HERE](#)).

King's palace for 40 years, God had to remove from Moses, any longing for the trappings of the Royal palace, before putting him back into the palace to negotiate with Pharaoh for the release of the Hebrew people.

Moses was 80 years old (!) when **God thought** Moses was ready for the greatest challenge in his life! We know that Moses died when he was 120 years old⁷, so his life is divided into 3 blocks of forty-years each! The final 40 years of Moses' life was spent fulfilling the prophesy given to Abraham, that the descendants of Jacob would be slaves in Egypt for 400 years, and God would move them out with a mighty hand!⁸

40 years as a Royal Somebody, 40 years as a Nobody in the desert, and then, finally 40 years as God's Special Somebody! God may have tried to get Moses' attention on earlier occasions, but had to set a desert bush on fire to finally get Moses' attention!

Looking around at this congregation, you might think me slightly unhinged if I were to close this service by saying, **Don't wait until you're 80 years old for God to grab your attention and use you in a significant way!** I might be addressing a very few people!

I might do better perhaps, to challenge you from the life of Fanny Crosby, the greatest hymn writer of the 19th century, one of the greatest who ever lived. When she was in her 80s, a friend asked her how long she was going to continue her vigorous activity. She replied, "*How long am I going to travel and lecture? Always! There is nothing that could induce me to abandon my work. It means nothing to be eighty-four years of age because I am still young!*"

God has a plan to use you; the question is, **Will you trust Him?**

AMEN.

⁷ Deuteronomy 34:7

⁸ Genesis 15:12-16