

Moses Monologue



It was a long climb, but it was worth it. From here I can see forever. Below me, I see the people I have grown to love. God promised to make the descendants of Abraham as numerable as the sand of the sea, and from here they look like sand.

Before me is the River Jordan. Beyond that lies the land my people are to possess. It is their everlasting inheritance from God. I would have liked to cross the Jordan, but it is better this way. It wouldn't have worked to have me lead them across. For if I were to lead the people into their land, they might forget it is God they are following. If I were to stay with them, there would be no good time for me to leave. There would be no good time for me to turn over the leadership to someone else. There would be no good time for me to die. If I were to die in the promised land, the people might make my grave a shrine; as it is, God will bury me, and no man will know where. They will not worship what they cannot find. It was my own sin that kept me on this side of

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the river, but the glory of God's plan is that it works, not only through our strengths, but also through our weaknesses. God is so great that he was able to work his plan through my mistakes. The way God works things out is always for the best.

From the beginning of this ordeal, I have had my share of problems and have caused them as well, but my reverence for God has never varied. I have given him the credit for everything. I have gone to him with my frustrations and with my problems and pleaded with him and interceded on behalf of my people. I had done all of this until the day I stood between a grumbling mob and a rock. I'm not sure why it happened. I suppose there were several reasons, but there was no excuse. I lost my temper.

“Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?”

How many times had I heard that? The irony was that we had been out of Egypt for 38 years, and most of them had been born in the desert. Most had never been to Egypt, it was just a phrase they had learned from their parents. I could think of better family traditions. For some reason, it really got to me this time. After everything they had been through — and all the ways they had been delivered by God — they had the gall to say that. I, too, grieved. Miriam had just died. She had watched over me as an infant. It's hard to say goodbye to a big sister. I loved my people and had always interceded for them, but this time I don't think I wanted them to believe God. I almost hoped he would destroy

them. When I stood up before that crowd and said, “Listen, you rebels, shall we bring water from this rock?” I half hoped God would ignore me. I was so disgusted with the people, I didn’t want to see them delivered.

Even then, God was faithful. When I raised the rod and struck the rock, water gushed out. God cared for the people despite my mistakes. Everything fit into his perfect plan.

From here — through the eye of my mind and my memory — I see a part of God’s great plan. I can only see a part, because God’s plan is from the beginning of time and before; it is to the end and beyond. His plan allows for every detail of every life, weaving them into the fabric of his perfect will. God does all this without denying any man’s freedom to do what he chooses.

God began revealing his plan for my people when he called Abraham away from the pagan gods. He called him to be a man set apart. He promised Abraham he would make his descendants like the stars of the sky. From here they look like stars. Millions of them fill the valley at the foot of the mountain and spill over into the foothills. Then he promised Abraham the land. I can see that land from here, and it takes my breath away. God promised Abraham a nation from his children. They are still a people separated from all others.

When God called Abraham to separate himself, he knew that in a large country a small family would become dispersed. They would not stay separate. Abraham's son was Isaac, and his son was Israel. Israel had twelve sons, but his family was still too small to take possession of such a great land. God had also solved this problem in His great plan. God used Egypt as an incubator to hatch His nation. Here they would be welcome, but they would always be separate. Israel's children were shepherds, and shepherds are an abomination to the Egyptians. Here, God's nation would be protected in its infancy, and it would be kept pure. It would remain separated from all other people.

Finally, it was time for the people to move to their new land. Like most people, Israel's children weren't easily motivated. So, God used adversity. He raised up a new Pharaoh who was not sympathetic to our people. Israel's children, God's people, were made slaves. Pharaoh began to fear the Hebrews because they were so many. He feared that in the event of war, these mistreated people might side with the enemy. To diminish their threat, Pharaoh commanded all baby boys born to Hebrew parents to be killed. The girls could live, but the boys were to be thrown into the Nile. It didn't seem to be a good time to be born in Egypt. I probably wouldn't have picked this time and place for my birth, if I had been given a choice. But I was given no choice. I love the irony of it. My mother did obey Pharaoh's order. She did

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throw me into the Nile. But she threw me very gently, and carefully laid me in a waterproof basket first. She didn't sacrifice me to the Nile; she offered me to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and He accepted the offering.

Miriam watched the basket, but it was God who guided it down the river along the bank, among the reeds. He sent me to the daughter of Pharaoh, and she pitied me. Miriam ran up and offered to find someone to care for me, and so, Pharaoh's daughter paid my mother wages to take care of me until I was old enough to live in Pharaoh's house.

For the next forty years, God used Pharaoh, himself, to train me for my task. I was the adopted grandson of Pharaoh. For forty years I was trained as a statesman, a soldier, and a leader. God gave me that training through Pharaoh so that in God's time, I could be a Pharaoh's adversary and I could meet a Pharaoh face to face.

Looking back at my life, I can see God working in my flight from Egypt. It was time for a decision. I was forty years old, and I was going to have to take sides. Were the Egyptians my people, or did my people descend from Israel? Then the moment of my decision came. I was a hasty young man, and when I saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, I knew I had to act. First, I looked to see if anyone was watching. You see, I wanted to take the side of the

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Hebrews, but without anyone knowing. I killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand.

If the plan had been mine, it might have included a Pharaoh named Moses. Then my people would live in harmony as they did in the time of Joseph. But that wouldn't have moved God's people to their land. Another plan might have included Moses as the general, leading his people out by force. If God had told me to do that at the time, I would have tried. I would have tried and failed. I was a very well-trained leader by men's standards, but I was still to attend God's graduate school of leadership, on the Midian campus. He had a course of study planned for me; I was to major in humility.

The next day, people knew about the dead Egyptian. Word soon reached Pharaoh, and when he learned what I had done, he ordered my death. I ran and ended up in Midian where a man named Jethro gave me shelter. Knowing how Egyptians felt about shepherds, I thought I would be safe there. God not only kept me safe, but He also began to shape me and mold me into the man He wanted me to be. He did this slowly and subtly, and I was unaware of it at the time, but He taught me many things.

It was a humbling experience moving from the palace of Pharaoh to the tent of Jethro. Again it was God's plan; humility was what I needed. Yes, I was well trained, but the one thing I hadn't

learned was to rely on God for strength, guidance, and simple daily existence. It took the next forty years to put my first forty years into perspective. Along with the life I led in Egypt came a certain air of pride. God had to deal with that. He taught me slowly and patiently the meaning of humility. This was to be my most important lesson. All the Egyptian training would have been worthless had I not been able to rely on and obey God. Pride brings a false sense of self-sufficiency that would have kept me from putting my trust in God. I hope my people can remember that as they enter their land. Humility is often misunderstood, and yet it is quite simple. People seem to think humility forces them to deny any glimmer of greatness in their lives. They are wrong. Humility allows you to develop the greatness God has put in you. Humility is simply having an accurate picture of yourself. I've experienced some rather great things in my life. Parting the Red Sea was pretty spectacular by itself, but after the ten plagues, it was child's play. The plagues, the Red Sea, the sweetening of the water at Mara, and all the other miracles were nothing compared with leading my people through forty years of aimless wandering. All of those would have been great deeds if someone else had done them, and it would be dishonest to say they were not great deeds because I had something to do with them. Humility comes in understanding that it is God who does the work, and we are merely His instruments. It makes no difference who God works through, the important thing is that

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when He does choose to use us, we are willing to be used.

Humility and faith are inseparable. They are just different aspects of the same quality. Humility and faith never exist apart from each other. Without humility, you can't see that anyone greater than yourself exists. Without faith, you can't focus on something above you, and hence can't break out of the feeling of self-sufficiency that kills humility. I hope my people are beginning to understand. If they don't learn humility for themselves, God will teach them. They must understand that it is God giving them the land, and without Him they are nothing.

When God called to me from the burning bush, I didn't realize he had spent 80 years training me for the job. The humility and patience I learned as a shepherd in Midian, along with the dynamic leadership I learned in Egypt, made me the only man who could stand before Pharaoh, and the only man who could lead my people out of bondage.

When I returned to Egypt, the people were ready to go. They were ready to follow me. Then when things became difficult, their hearts became hard. After all God had done for them, they wouldn't trust Him. At the Red Sea, they panicked, but He delivered us. Then at the water of Mara, they grumbled. Did they think a God who parted the sea for them would let them die of thirst?

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Over the next forty years, I led them, heard and settled their disputes, and learned to love them as my own children. My goal was to lead them to their land and teach them to trust God. Some of them got the idea. When we sent out twelve spies, two of them trusted God to give us the victory, but ten said no. One of the two was Joshua, their new leader. My last request of God was a new leader, a good leader to take over, and He gave me Joshua. Joshua has courage and integrity. He will need it to lead that group.

God has kept me strong for 120 years, but now I am tired. It is time to go on to my people. It is time to be gathered with Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. It is time to be with their God — and mine. It is time to die.