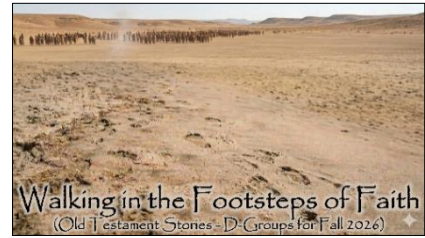


“Walking in the Footsteps of Faith”

OT Stories - Fall 2026 D-Groups

For Wednesday, September 30
MOSES (Exodus 3:1-15:21)



The Big Picture - Where We Are in the OT Timeline

As we turn from Genesis to Exodus, we focus in on **MOSES**. Abraham's significance rests on his identity as *the* father of God's people. Down the centuries, David becomes important as the king, the forerunner of the anticipated Messiah and His reign. Along with these two, Moses has a prominent place in the OT story. *(There are other key figures like some of the prophets; but, this trio of Abraham, Moses and David seem to have foundational places among the OT people of faith.)*

For the next four books, Moses has the chief human role. Even as Yahweh (*i.e.*, “the LORD” in the OT - a title that becomes especially significant in Exodus 3) orchestrates the deliverance of His people from slavery in Egypt, Moses is the human He uses. Moses also becomes a representative between the LORD and this nation being established by His grace, a chosen people. He even communicates to them God's Law as covenant terms along with the blessings and curses that would come depending on Israel's loyalty and allegiance. For that matter, he's recognized as the author of the Pentateuch as he records the story of these early years of Israel (Genesis through Deuteronomy) - the *Torah*. All in all, Moses plays such a crucial role in the OT story at this stage.

We're especially focusing on his role in the EXODUS itself (the basic term refers to the Israelite's “*departure*” from Egypt - though it's really a dramatic rescue), the story that unfolds in the first 15 chapters of the book. As we considered Joseph's story last session, Abraham's descendants, the people of promise, ended up being happily settled in Egypt. As time passes, though, the Egyptians come to see them as a threat, even to the point of enslaving them (see Exodus 1). Of course, even as we move to this different book and stage in Israel's history, we want to keep the promise of Genesis 12:1-3 in mind. Living as slaves in a foreign nation, even under its rule, is not at all in keeping with the ultimate promise Abraham received. Exodus - especially the first portion - tells the story of their deliverance by the LORD as they leave Egypt and are established as His chosen nation on their way to “the Land,” all in keeping with His promise. That's where we pick-up Moses' story.

The Close-Up for September 30 - Exodus 3:1-15:21

READ the TEXT: EXODUS 3:1-15:21 with a focus on 3:1-4:31; 11:1-12:42 and 13:17-15:21

Some notes on the overall flow of the story with emphasis on the key sections listed above:

3:1-4:31 ... This section highlights Moses' special call to this specific task that the LORD had for him. We could properly infer some principles about the way God enlists His people for special tasks (e.g., “*it's far more about Him as the Caller than us as the called*” or “*God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called*” or “*God's calling comes with a promise of His presence for the task,*” etc.). However, let's recognize the task that Moses is being called to is a special one. Amidst all that unfolds from the initial burning bush to grab Moses' attention,

to his reluctant obedience opening the door for Aaron's role, the story focuses on God's plans to faithfully fulfill His promise. He is going to rescue His people from slavery, having heard their cries for deliverance. He is going to bring them as a nation to the Promised Land. He's going to do it all as "Yahweh," the LORD, the Covenant Maker according to His own gracious choice and steadfast love. In many ways, this section makes it clear who really is the One rescuing the people. If anything, Moses' hesitant "yes" - even after re-assurance of the divine presence with him, bolstered by miraculous demonstrations - points us to the real Hero and Deliverer. That's an important reminder (yet again) for us in this journey.

5:1-10:29 (the confrontation with Pharaoh, including the first 9 plagues) ... This section lays out these disastrous plagues, each one part of an attempt to convince Pharaoh to release the people of Israel. Keep a few key things in mind amidst this section. First, the plagues weren't random punishments, each one targeted a specific Egyptian deity, demonstrating the superiority of Yahweh. Second, there's an interplay between Pharaoh hardening his heart and Yahweh hardening Pharaoh's heart. So, which is it? According to the text, both! The pattern seems to suggest that Pharaoh's stubborn refusal becomes cemented with divine assistance - a display of the interplay between human free will and God's sovereignty. Third, don't miss the distinction made amidst the plagues - what came upon the Egyptians *did not harm God's people*. It confirms what's really unfolding in the overall deliverance.

11:1-12:42 ... The 10th and final plague ultimately leads to the Israelites' departure from Egypt as the climax of God's rescue. Tied-in to the scene is the first Passover - a meal, prepared and eaten in haste, filled with symbolic reminders of Yahweh's salvation. There's also the blood of the lamb that provides covering for the Israelites so that they are spared from the plague as the death angel "passes over" their homes. By the end, Pharaoh sends the Israelites away. *Read from this side of Jesus, it's not hard to see the connections to our spiritual deliverance from sin. In fact, the timing of Jesus' death at Passover points to a divinely intended fulfillment.*

13:17-15:21 ... There is this one final piece to the story - as if to solidify Yahweh's superiority over Egypt so as to bolster His people's faith. What a powerful story at the Red Sea! Amidst it all, the text makes it abundantly clear who the Hero truly is (e.g., 14:13-14).

Two Key Reminders throughout This Semester

1. God is ultimately the HERO of these stories; remember, as part of Scripture, God is *revealing* Himself to us. *So, what do we learn about Him through this story? What can we learn from the human characters about putting our faith/trust in Him?*
2. We read these stories through a Christ-lens. *So, how do we read this story differently in light of Jesus and being His followers?* Consider the connections to what Jesus has done!

Some Additional Questions for Reflection

- *As you reflect on Moses' story as a whole, what stands out about a response of faith - whether to His call or His promise of deliverance?*
- *In your own story, when it comes to both your initial faith in Jesus (i.e., coming to salvation in Him) and your ongoing life of faith (including His "call" on your life), what does Moses' story teach us about trusting Him?*