

Zoom Bible Study

Growing Closer to God

The life of Moses

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Trusting him with who we are.

God uses our everyday automatics to build our trust in him.

As Christians, what is our goal in making daily decisions?

2 Peter 3:18: *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

1 Timothy 4:7: *Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.*

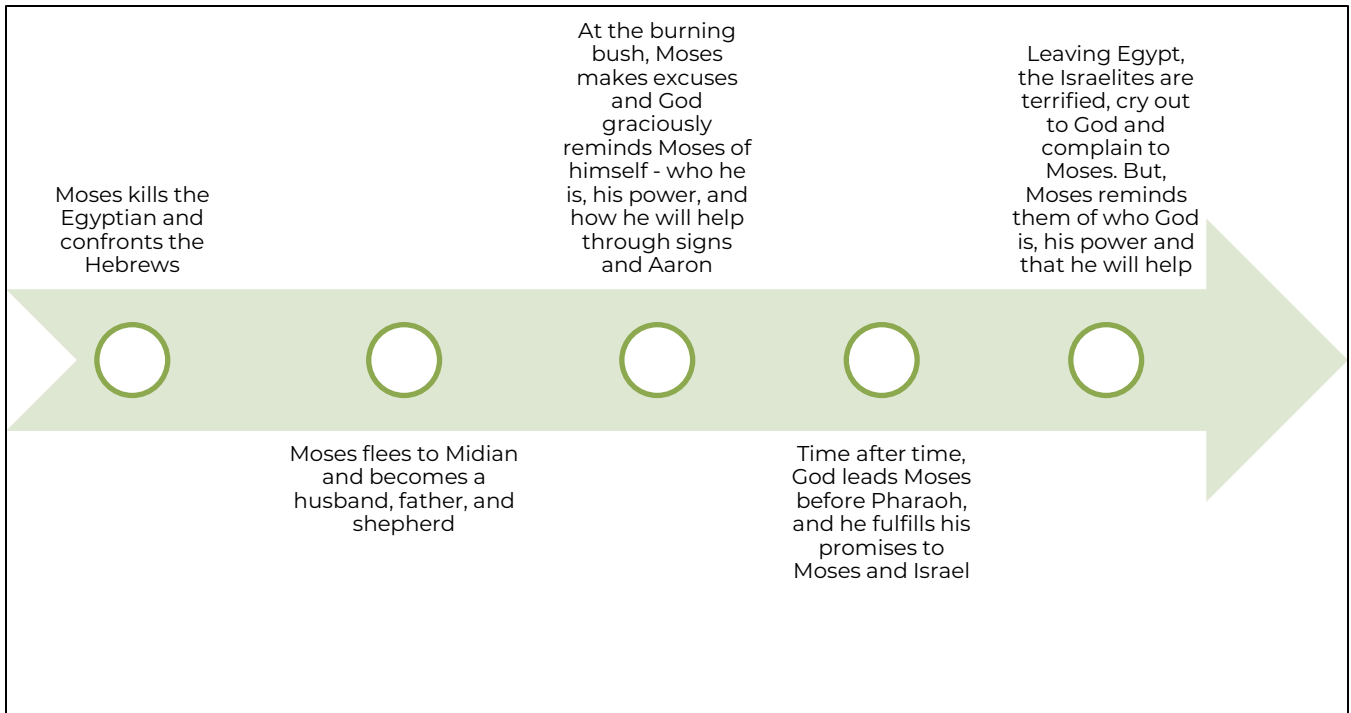
Romans 12:1-2: Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

How do we grow? How do we train? How are we transformed and renewed?

Reflection questions. What is my automatic when

1. I am angry?	11. I feel alone?
2. I feel pressure to do something?	12. I need help?
3. Someone doubts me?	13. I know more than another person?
4. I see an injustice happening right before my eyes?	14. Someone knows more than me?
5. I am attracted to someone?	15. I feel threatened or uncertain in a situation?
6. I am hungry (starving)?	16. Someone embarrasses me?
7. I am late, very late?	17. I don't get what I want?
8. I want to do something good?	18. I am worried about someone I love?
9. I want to do something bad?	19. I don't trust someone?
10. I feel inadequate?	20. I feel invisible?

Do any of these questions resonate with you?



1. Moses avenges the mistreated slave and kills the Egyptian and confronts the two Hebrews. What set the stage for Moses's automatics here? Listen for clues about why Moses may have responded like he did.

Exodus 2:11-14

One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. ¹² Looking this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. ¹³ The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong, "Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?" ¹⁴ The man said, "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "What I did must have become known."

Acts 7:20-29

"At that time Moses was born, and he was no ordinary child. For three months he was cared for by his family. ²¹ When he was placed outside, Pharaoh's daughter took him and brought him up as her own son. ²² Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action. ²³ "When Moses was forty years old, he decided to visit his own people, the Israelites. ²⁴ He saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian, so he went to his defense and avenged him by killing the Egyptian. ²⁵ Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not. ²⁶ The next day Moses came upon two Israelites who were fighting. He tried to reconcile them by saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why do you want to hurt each other?' ²⁷ "But the man who was mistreating the other pushed Moses aside and said, 'Who made you ruler and judge over us? ²⁸ Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' ²⁹ When Moses heard this, he fled to Midian, where he settled as a foreigner and had two sons. (ESV)

Using the same reflection questions, what reasons may have led to Moses' automatic responses (killing and confrontation)?

2. Moses flees to Midian (Exodus 2: 15-22).

Exodus 2:16-19

Now a priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came to draw water and fill the troughs to water their father's flock. ¹⁷ Some shepherds came along and drove them away, but Moses got up and came to their rescue and watered their flock. ¹⁸ When the girls returned to Reuel their father, he asked them, "Why have you returned so early today? They answered, "An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds. He even drew water for us and watered the flock."

What reasons may have led to Moses' automatic here (rescuing the daughters and their flock)?

What are you passionate about?

3. At the burning bush, Moses makes excuses, but God graciously assures him by speaking truth about who he is, his power, and how he will help (Exodus 3:1-4:17).

Exodus 3:9-10: *God said, "And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."*

Moses' response (from Mary's notes):

- Moses' first objection to God's call: Who am I?
- Moses' second objection to God's call: What shall I tell them?
- Moses' third objection to God's call: What if they do not believe me or listen to me?
- Moses' fourth objection to God's call: I can't talk good.

What about here? Using the same reflection questions, what reasons may have led to Moses' automatic excuses?

Isaiah 53:3: *He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.*

Hebrews 4:15-16: For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Moses was honest and God started to transform his way of thinking by revealing truth about himself to Moses. He does the same for us.

The last objection struck me.

Exodus 4:10: *Moses said to the LORD, "Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue."*

But, remember Acts 7:22?

Acts 7:22: *Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action.*

Why does Moses present this variance, from well-educated in Egypt, capable in the privileged life-style led by Pharaoh to being slow in speech and tongue? What happened to him during his 40 years in Midian anyway?

Proverbs 16:18: *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*

Proverbs 11:2: *When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.*

1 Peter 5:6-7: *Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*

What motivates your automatics—humiliation or humility—the way you think, speak, or act at work, at home, or in the grocery store, for instance? Do you ever exert superiority in a situation just to later act inferior in hopes of masking your pride?

Another thought is that Moses was his own worst critic, assailing God's beautiful and useful design in him, his calling.

Matthew 7:6 says, *do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.*

It seems to me that Moses reacted from his insecurities, or what he perceived to be lacking in himself, rather than from the fullness of God.

But, Moses was learning, this whole dialogue between Moses and God (for us, this is prayer), the back and forth is Moses growing in the grace and knowledge of God, because God fulfills his promises and assurances to Moses: Exodus 3:12, 14; 4:1-17: "I will be with you," "I AM WHO I AM...it is I AM who is sending you, I will help you with signs from your staff and with Aaron.

4. God leads Moses before Pharaoh in the ten plagues—the evidence that God can be trusted: He is who he says he is, and he does what he says he will do. Moses obeyed and observed God and all that he was doing. (Exodus Chapters 5-11) [Moses in training]
5. Before crossing the Red Sea, the Israelites are terrified, but Moses encourages them with the truth of who God is, his power and how he will help them [Moses is transformed, his thinking is renewed]. (Exodus 14)

Exodus 14:10 – 14

As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. 11 They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? 12 Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!" 13 Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. 14 The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still."

Using the reflection questions, what other ways could Moses have automatically responded to the Israelites?

Moses changed. With God, Moses grew, he trained, he was transformed and renewed in his mind. The knowledge of God is fuel for growth—to trust him more. We can follow in Moses' footsteps:

1. Talk to God, be honest with him, confess your sins and your fears, seek and accept his help
2. Know Scripture, in increasing measure, obey and observe what God is doing
3. Point others to God, acknowledging who he is, his power, and the way he helps

Psalms 25:12-15 says: *Who is the [woman] who fears the LORD? [She] will he instruct in the way that [she] should choose. ¹³ [Her] soul shall abide in well-being, and [her] offspring shall inherit the land. ¹⁴ The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant. ¹⁵ My eyes are ever toward the LORD, for he will pluck my feet out of the net.* (ESV)