

How could we live in such a way that we might see God work in a greater way in our own life? (k) A *great prophet like Moses* [verse 37] is a promise of the Messiah who was to come. How was this promise fulfilled? [Note: the Hebrew people did not recognize Moses as a deliverer until he arrived a second time to help them.] How did this lack of recognition happen once again to the Jewish people concerning the arrival of the Messiah? [l] What are some things we can do to help us claim God's promises for ourselves and remain alert so we will not fail to recognize their fulfillments as they happen?

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An Interactive Life Application Bible Study of the Acts of the Apostles for Small Groups

Key: *Blue* = New Testament *Red* = Words of Jesus
Green = Old Testament Quotes

Lesson 9

1. Background: Stephen had been answering his critics in the Jewish High Council. They lied about him, when they accused him of speaking against the laws handed down from Moses. Stephen responded by giving an accurate summary of Hebrew history. In the process he was proving that he fully understood and was in harmony with their Jewish heritage.

2. Introduction: In Lesson 8 Stephen described the circumstances that brought their Hebrew ancestors into Egypt and eventually into slavery. In this lesson Stephen continues to support his view that God's hand was upon everything that happened in their history.

3. Persecution of the Israelites in Egypt:

Acts 7:20-22 "At that time Moses was born—a beautiful child in God's eyes. His parents cared for him at home for three months. ²¹ When they had to abandon him, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and raised him as her own son. ²² Moses was taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was powerful in both speech and action.

4. Discussion: (a) Describe, if you can, why the parents of Moses had to abandon him while he was still a baby? Also explain the circumstances that enabled Pharaoh's daughter to adopt him and raise him as a prince? [The story is found in Exodus 2:1-10] (b) How did his circumstance enable Moses to gain a deep understanding of both the Hebrew and Egyptian cultures?

5. Why Moses fled into the wilderness.

Acts 7:23-29 "One day when Moses was forty years old, [and he was still living in Pharaoh's household] he decided to visit his relatives, the people of Israel. ²⁴ He saw an Egyptian mistreating an Israelite. So Moses came to the man's defense and avenged him, killing the Egyptian. ²⁵ Moses assumed his fellow Israelites would realize that God had sent him to rescue them, but they didn't.

²⁶ "The next day he visited them again and saw two men of Israel fighting. He tried to be a peacemaker. 'Men,' he said, 'you are brothers. Why are you fighting each other?'

²⁷ "But the man in the wrong pushed Moses aside. 'Who made you a ruler and judge over us?' he asked. ²⁸ 'Are you going to kill me as you killed that Egyptian yesterday?' ²⁹ When Moses heard that, he fled the country and lived as a foreigner in the land of Midian. There his two sons were born. [Exodus 2:11-22 explains how it came about that, in Midian, Moses married Zipporah, who gave him sons.]

6. Discussion: (a) How did his authority as a prince in Egypt get Moses into trouble? (b) Jesus said, "God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God." (Matt. 5:9 NLT) Why does it take great wisdom to play the role of peacemaker? How might Moses have avoided the need to escape from Egypt? If you have ever met difficulties when trying to make peace, explain your experience?

7. God calls Moses.

Acts 7:30-37 "Forty years later, in the desert near Mount Sinai, an angel appeared to Moses in the flame of a burning bush. ³¹ When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight. As he went to take a closer look, the voice of the LORD called out to him, ³² 'I am the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.' Moses shook with terror and did not dare to look.

³³ "Then the LORD said to him, 'Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. ³⁴ I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groans and have come down to rescue them. Now go, for I am sending you back to Egypt.'

³⁵ "So God sent back the same man his people had previously rejected when they demanded, 'Who made you a ruler and judge over us?' Through the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush, God sent Moses to be their ruler and savior. ³⁶ And by means of many wonders and miraculous signs, he led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness for forty years.

³⁷ "Moses himself told the people of Israel, 'God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your own people.'

8. Discussion: (a) Where did the angel show his presence when God called Moses? What does this suggest about the ability of angels to do unusual things? (b) Why did Moses approach the burning bush? (c) How did God address Moses? (d) What reaction did Moses have to God's voice? (e) Why do you think God required Moses to remove his sandals? What does this suggest about the attitude we need to have when in the presence of God? Do you think God desires for us to be fearful or to be respectful? (f) Describe the oppression of God's people in Egypt. [Find it in Exodus 1:8-17 and 5:6-21] (g) What did God call Moses to do? (h) Does God have a special calling and purpose for each person who is willing to live in obedience and to walk by faith in God? If so, how do you think we could discover our personal calling and learn the purpose for our spiritual gifts? (i) After failing once, why do you think it was especially difficult for Moses to think about going back as a deliverer? How does what is learned the first time help prepare us for another opportunity to serve God? (j) What miracles would Moses have missed if he had disobeyed?