



## Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

# Advanced Study 003: Character Study 2: Moses

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Read Numbers 12:1-8.

**Introduction.** Moses was a man of contrasts. He is described in Numbers 12 as the most humble man in all the earth, yet he confronted powerful Pharaoh then led a vast community of Hebrews to seek the Promised Land.

Review some of the incidents and characteristics in his life and see what made this man such an effective servant of the Lord.

**1. Starting with his demeanour of humility, or meekness.** The Hebrew is *anav*, which is rendered 'meek' in most translations of Psalm 37:11 (look this up and find its New Testament counterpart) but the translators of the Septuagint (Old Testament in Greek) chose the word *praus*, meaning 'gentle,' 'mild,' 'forgiving,' which probably best expresses the author's intention. How do you think this set Moses apart from his brother Aaron and sister Miriam in the incident recorded in Numbers 12:1-8?

**2. Read Moses' reservation about speaking,** in Exodus 4:10-16. What did Stephen say of Moses (Acts 7:22)? Who was wrong, Moses about himself, or Stephen? Or could Moses' speech have been powerful despite his apparent weakness? If so, how? (Note we don't read of many incidences of Aaron speaking for Moses. Could Moses have grown in confidence, perhaps? If so, what might that tell us of the value of stepping out in faith?)

**3. What about forgoing privilege?** Read Hebrew 11:24-26. No doubt Moses' former privilege of being the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter was what enabled him to approach Pharaoh with the Lord's demands. However, he did not claim this privilege for himself. Is Moses a 'type' of Christ in this respect? Why does the author of Hebrews say, in Heb 11:24, that it was "By faith" that Moses took this position?

**4. Moses' slip up.** Read Numbers 20:10-12. The only other time we read of Moses reacting impetuously was when he killed the Egyptian slave driver, decades earlier. (Exodus 2:11-12). One can understand Moses' reaction when people complained about lack of water; he was sorely provoked by the repeated grumbling of the Hebrews. What warning is implicit here about former tendencies of the old nature that have long ceased to affect us (see 1 Cor 10:12). (Note: Moses lost his home in the Promised Land because of his lapse, but he did not lose his eternal life – long after his natural death he was seen with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Mark 9:2-4.)

**For Further Study:** Read more about Moses and his activities using a Bible Dictionary of similar, looking for aspects of his faith, devotion to God and character.

**For Further Thought:** Why was Moses described as 'humble'?

**Self-examination:** How would you react in similar situations to those faced by Moses?