



Healing Point Bible Study – Heroes of Faith

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MOSES. The great leader and lawgiver through whom God brought the Hebrews out of Egypt, constituted them a nation for his service, and brought them within reach of the land promised to their forefathers.

I. Name

In Ex. 2:10 it is said that ‘she called his name *Mōšeh*: and she said, Because I drew him (*m^ešîṭī-hû*) out of the water’. Most interpreters identify the ‘she’ as Pharaoh’s daughter, and this has led many to assume an Egypt. origin for the name *Mōšeh*, Egypt. *ms*, ‘child’ or ‘(one) born’ being the best possibility. However, the antecedent of ‘she’ could as easily be ‘the woman’, *i.e.* Moses’ own mother and nurse, who ‘had called his name ...’ (so W. J. Martin). Ex. 2:10 clearly links the name of *Mōšeh* with his being taken from the waterside (*māšâ*, ‘to draw forth’). This pun would come naturally to a Hebrew speaker but not to an Egyptian: which fact would favour the view just mentioned that it was Moses’ own mother who first named him, rather than Pharaoh’s daughter.

Mōšeh as it stands is an active participle meaning ‘one who draws forth’, and may be an ellipsis for some longer phrase. In the 14th/13th centuries BC Egypt. *ms*, ‘child’ (and the related grammatical form in such names as Ramose, ‘*Rē*, is born’) was pronounced approximately *māsē*, and there is no philological or other reason why Moses’ Egypt. adoptive mother should not have assimilated a Semitic *māši* or *Mōšeh* to the common name-word *Māsē*, *Mōšeh* in her own tongue. Compare assimilations such as German Löwe to English Lowe in our own day. Hence Moses’ name may simply be Semitic assimilated to Egypt. while in Egypt. The majority view, however, is that the daughter of Pharaoh called him *Mōse*, ‘child’ (or—less suitably—a theophoric name in *-mose*), which passed into Heb. speech as *Mōšeh*. This view, however, fails to account adequately for the Semitic pun, which there is no objective reason to reject as unhistorical, as it is a common practice in Egypt and elsewhere (including the OT) long before Moses; such a view, moreover, runs into real phonetic difficulties over Egypt. *s* appearing as *š* in *Mōšeh* but as *s* in *Ra’amses* and Phinehas in Hebrew, as was pointed out long ago by A. H. Gardiner, *JAOS* 56, 1936, pp. 192–194—a problem in no way solved by J. G. Griffiths, *JNES* 12, 1953, pp. 225–231, the best statement of this view.

II. Life and background

a. Ancestry

Moses belonged to the tribe of Levi, to the clan of Kohath, and to the house or family of Amram (Ex. 6:16ff.). That he was the distant descendant, not the son, of Amram by Jochebed is hinted at inasmuch as his parents are not named in the detailed account of his infancy (Ex. 2), and is made almost certain by the fact that Amram and his three brothers had numerous descendants within a year of the Exodus (Nu. 3:27f.). (*CHRONOLOGY OF THE OT, III. b.)

b. Egyptian upbringing

To save her baby son from the pharaonic edict ordering the destruction of Hebrew male infants, Moses' mother put him into a little basket of pitch-caulked reeds or papyrus among the rushes by the stream bank and bade his sister Miriam keep watch. Soon a daughter of Pharaoh came with her maidservants to bathe in the river, found the child, and took pity on him. Miriam discreetly offered to find a nurse for the child (in fact, his mother), and so Moses' life was saved. When weaned, he was handed over to his adoptive 'mother', the Egyptian princess (Ex. 2:1–10). Of Moses' growth to adult maturity in Egyptian court society no detail is given, but a boy in his position in New Kingdom period court circles could not avoid undergoing a substantial basic training in that 'wisdom of the Egyptians' with which Stephen credits him (Acts 7:22).

Modern knowledge of ancient Egypt yields a rich background for the early life of Moses in Egypt. The pharaohs of the New Kingdom period (c. 1550–1070 BC) maintained residences and *harîms* not only in the great capitals of Thebes, Memphis and *Pi-Ramessē* (*Ra 'amses*) but also in other parts of Egypt. Typical is the long-established *harîm* in the Fayum, where the royal ladies supervised a hive of domestic industry (A. H. Gardiner, *JNES* 12, 1953, pp. 145–149, especially p. 149). One such *harîm* must have been Moses' first Egyptian home.

Anciently, children of *harîm*-women could be educated by the Overseer of the *harîm* ('a teacher of the children of the king', F. Ll. Griffith and P. E. Newberry, *El Bersheh*, 2, 1894, p. 40). In due course princes were given a tutor, usually a high official at court or a retired military officer close to the king (H. Brunner, *Altägyptische Erziehung*, 1957, pp. 32–33); Moses doubtless fared similarly.

Moreover, as a Semite in Egypt, Moses would have had no difficulty whatever in learning and using the twenty or so letters of the proto-Canaanite linear alphabet, especially if he had been submitted to the much more exacting discipline of a training in the scores of characters and sign-groups of the Egyptian scripts (though even these require only application, not genius, to learn them). The fact that Egypt, not Palestine, was his home would be no barrier to familiarity with this simple linear script. The 'proto-Sinaitic' inscriptions of the early 15th century BC are certainly just informal dedications, work-notes and brief epitaphs (for offerings) by Semitic captives from the Egypt Delta (or Memphis settlements) employed in the turquoise-mines (*cf.* W. F. Albright, *BASOR* 110, 1948, pp. 12–13, 22), and illustrate free use of that script by Semites under Egyptian rule nearly two centuries before Moses. Still more eloquent of the ready use of the linear script by Semites in Egypt is an ostrakon from the Valley of the Queens at Thebes, some 560 km S of Palestine, Sinai, or the Delta (J. Leibovitch, *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 40, 1940, p. 119, fig. 26, and pl. 16, 19:50); the one word fully preserved can be reasonably read *'mht*, 'maid-servants' (Albright, *op.cit.*, p. 12, n. 33).

c. Foreigners at the Egyptian court

Semites and other Asiatics could be found at every level of Egyptian society in the New Kingdom. Besides thousands of prisoners brought from Canaan to be slaves (*cf.* *ANET*, pp. 246b, 247b), foreign artisans, Syrian warriors in Egyptian service (*e.g.* *ANEP*, fig. 157), Asian youths as attendants, fanbearers, *etc.*, at court (R. A. Caminos, 5, 1954, pp. 117, 200–201), Semites in Egypt could rise to the highest levels of the social pyramid. They were couriers between Egypt and Syria (*ANET*, p. 258b) charioteers who themselves owned servants (J. Černý, *JEA* 23, 1937, p. 186), and merchants (Caminos, *op.cit.*, p. 26: '*Aper-Ba 'al*); the daughter of a Syrian sea-captain *Ben- 'Anath* could marry a royal prince (W. Spiegelberg, *Recueil de Travaux*, 16, 1894, p. 64).

Under the Ramesside kings Asiatics were still more prominent. Thus, one of King Merenptah's trusted cupbearers was the Syrian *Ben-'Ozen* of *Šûr-Bashan* ('Rock-of-Bashan'), who accompanied the vizier in overseeing work on that pharaoh's tomb in the Valley of the Kings (*JEA* 34, 1948, p. 74). Further, at the very end of the 19th Dynasty, a Syrian very briefly took over control of Egypt itself: he was very possibly the immensely powerful Chancellor Bay (*Černý* in Gardiner, *JEA* 44, 1958, pp. 21–22).

In New Kingdom Egypt, Canaanite and other Asiatic deities were accepted (Baal, Resheph, 'Ashtaroth, 'Anath, etc.; cf. *ANET*, pp. 249–250); and as well as innumerable loan-words, Canaanite literary themes were current, either borrowed or assimilated to Egyp. ones (W. F. Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, 1953, pp. 197–198 (rape of 'Anath); T. H. Gaster, *BO* 9, 1952, pp. 82–85, 232; and G. Posener, *Milanges Isidore Livy*, 1955, pp. 461–478 (the greed of the Sea); and reference to a story of Qazardi, *ANET*, p. 477b). Some Egyp. officials prided themselves on being able to speak the lip of Canaan as well as know its geography (*ANET*, p. 477b), not to mention those who had to learn Babylonian cuneiform for diplomatic purposes (cf. Albright, *Vocalization of the Egyptian Syllabic Orthography*, 1934, p. 13, n. 50, and *JEA* 23, 1937, pp. 191, 196–202).

d. In Midian and Sinai

Moses felt for his labouring brethren (cf. Acts 7:24) and slew an Egyp. overseer whom he found beating a Hebrew (Ex. 2:11f.); but the deed reached Pharaoh's ears, so Moses fled E over the border to Midian for safety (Ex. 2:15ff.). Flight over the E border was the escape chosen also by Sinuhe 600 years earlier (*ANET*, p. 19) and by runaway slaves later in the 13th century BC (*ANET*, p. 259b). Moses helped the daughters of a Midianite shepherd-priest Reuel/Jethro to water their flocks, and married one of them, Zipporah who bore him a son, Gershom (Ex. 2:16–22).

Through the wonder of the burning bush that was not consumed came Moses' call from God, the God of ancestral Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Ex. 3:6) and not just of his Midianite/Kenite in-laws, except in so far as they too were descendants of Abraham (cf. Gn. 25:1–6) and may have retained the worship of Abraham's God. After some procrastination, Moses obeyed the call (Ex. 3–4). Apparently Moses had omitted to circumcise one of his sons, perhaps under Zipporah's influence. At any rate, under threat of Moses' death by God's agency, she circumcised the boy, calling her husband 'a bridegroom of blood' (Ex. 4:24–26) because circumcision was binding on him and his people (but perhaps not on her people?). Moses may have gone on alone from this point, as later on Zipporah returns to Moses from Jethro's care (Ex. 18:1–6).

e. On the eve of the Exodus

After meeting his brother and the elders of Israel (Ex. 4:27–31), Moses with Aaron went before the pharaoh to request that he release the people to hold a feast to the Lord in the wilderness. But Pharaoh contemptuously dismissed them—there were already enough religious holidays and festivals on which no work was done, and this was just an excuse to be idle (Ex. 5:8, 17).

That Moses should be able to gain ready access to the pharaoh is not very surprising, especially if the pharaoh of the Exodus was Rameses II. P. Montet (*L'Égypte et la Bible*, 1959, p. 71) appositely refers to Papyrus Anastasi III, which describes how the 'young people of (*Pi-Ramessē*) Great of Victories ... stand by their doors ... on the day of the entry of *Wosermaetrē*-*Setenpenrē*' (i.e. Rameses II) ..., every man being like his fellow in voicing his petitions' (i.e. to the king), cf. *ANET*, p. 471b. For the brickmaking of the Israelites and use of straw, see *BRICK.

The organization of labour into gangs of workmen under foremen responsible to taskmasters is at once authentic and natural.

As for absence from work, Egypt. ostraca (*PAPYRI) include journals of work that give a day-to-day record of absenteeism, names of absentees and reasons. One ostrakon shows that the workmen of the royal tomb were idle at one period for 30 days out of 48. One journal of absences takes note of several workmen, 'offering to his god' (A. Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt*, 1894, pp. 124–125), and the laconic entry *wsfi* 'idle', is not infrequent in such journals. That the Hebrews should go 3 days' journey into the wilderness to celebrate their feast and not arouse Egypt. religious antagonism (Ex. 8:26f.; 10:9, 25f.) is, again, thoroughly realistic, as is pointed out by Montet (*op.cit.*, pp. 99–101 with references), in connection with sacred animals, especially the bull-cults in the Egypt. Delta provinces (*CALF, GOLDEN).

After the rebuff from Pharaoh, Moses was reassured by God that he would fulfil his covenant to their descendants, bringing them from Egypt to Palestine (Ex. 6:2–9). It should be noted that Ex. 6:3 does *not* deny knowledge of the name of YHWH to the Patriarchs, though it may possibly deny real knowledge of the significance of the name: see on this, W. J. Martin, *Stylistic Criteria and the Analysis of the Pentateuch*, 1955, pp. 16–19, and J. A. Motyer, *The Revelation of the Divine Name*, 1959, pp. 11–17. Successive *PLAGUES demonstrated the God of Israel's power to Pharaoh in judgment (Ex. 7:14–12:36). On the eve of the last plague, the smiting of the first-born, the families of Israel had to kill a spotless lamb and mark the jambs and lintels of their house-doors with the blood, so that God should not destroy their firstborn: 'the sacrifice of the Lord's passover' (Ex. 12:27). It has been suggested by B. Couroyer (*RB* 62, 1955, pp. 481–496) that the Hebrew *psh* is derived from the Egyptian *p(')-sh*, 'the stroke, blow' (*i.e.* of God), but this meaning does not fit all the Hebrew evidence, and so remains doubtful.

f. From Succoth to Sinai

On the date of the Exodus, see *CHRONOLOGY OF THE OT; also J. J. Bimson, *Redating the Exodus and Conquest*, 1978; for its route from Ra'amses and Succoth out of Egypt, see *ENCAMPMENT BY THE SEA, *PITHOM; for travels in Sinai, see *WILDERNESS OF WANDERING. When Israel encamped by the *yam sūp*, 'sea of reeds', the pharaoh and his people imagined that the Hebrews were trapped (Ex. 14:1–9). For the figure of over 600 chariots (Ex. 14:7), compare the figures of 730 and 1,092 (*i.e.* 60 + 1032) Syr. chariots captured in Canaan on two campaigns by Amenophis II (*ANET*, pp. 246–247); on the role of chariots in the Egyptian army, *cf.* R. O. Faulkner, *JEA* 39, 1953, p. 43. But God divided the waters, led his people to safety and turned the waters upon the Egypt. forces. Then Moses and the Hebrews raised their song of God's triumph (Ex. 15).

Israel encamped at the foot of Mt Sinai and Moses went up to commune with God and receive the terms of the covenant (the 'ten commandments' of Ex. 20), which were the foundation of Israel's subsequent role as the people of God (he being their great King), and also the series of statutes carrying the commandments into effect (Ex. 21–23).

After the idolatrous lapse over the golden *CALF and the restoration of the covenant so quickly violated (Ex. 32:1–35:3), the tabernacle, ark and furnishings were duly made and inaugurated for the worship of God (Ex. 35:4–40:33). The techniques used for the portable tabernacle reflect Moses' Egypt. training in so far as such techniques had been used in Egypt for portable structures (religious and otherwise) for over 1,000 years before his time (*cf.* K. A. Kitchen, *THB* 5/6, 1960, pp. 7–13). However, the representational and didactic nature of the tabernacle sacrifices stands out in marked contrast to Egypt. ritual. The Heb. sacrifices speak in picture-language of the offensiveness of sin in God's sight, and of the need of atonement for its cancellation, and were not

merely a magically efficacious re-enactment of daily life needed to keep the god fed and flourishing as in Egyp. ritual.

At Sinai a census was taken, the manner of Israel's camp and marching order laid down. Levitical care for the tabernacle and its contents was arranged (Nu. 1–4) among other things on the eve of leaving Sinai (Nu. 5:1–10:10). The arrangement of the tribes by their standards in a 'hollow rectangle' round the tabernacle is also probably a mark of God's use of Moses' Egyp. training (*cf.* Kitchen, *op.cit.*, p. 11). The long, silver trumpets and their use for civil assembly and military and religious purposes (Nu. 10:1–10) is illustrated by contemporary Egyp. use of such trumpets (*cf.* H. Hickmann, *La Trompette dans l'Égypte Ancienne*, 1946, especially pp. 46–50). Ox-wagons were regularly used on campaigns in Syria by the pharaohs from Tuthmosis III (c. 1470 BC) onwards (*ANET*, p. 204a, 'chariot'), e.g. by Rameses II, c. 1270 BC, at Qadesh (C. Kuentz, *La Bataille de Qadech*, 1928/34, pl. 39, left centre). With Moses' wagons each drawn by a span of (two) oxen in Sinai, compare the ten wagons (Egyp. 'grt from Heb. 'glt, same word, in Nu. 7:3, 6–7) each drawn by six spans of oxen that carried supplies for 8,000 quarrymen of Rameses IV (c. 1160 BC) from the Nile valley into the deserts of Wadi Hammamat between the Nile and the Red Sea, in very similar conditions to Sinai (*ARE*, 4, § 467).

g. From Sinai to Jordan

In their 2nd year out from Egypt (Nu. 10:11), Israel left Sinai and reached Kadesh-barnea. Moses thence sent spies into Canaan. The land was a goodly one, but its inhabitants were powerful (Nu. 13:17–33). At this report, faithless Israel rebelled, but Moses pleaded with God to spare Israel (Nu. 14:5–19). Therefore the Lord decreed instead that Israel's travels in the wilderness should last 40 years until the rebellious generation had died and given place to a new one (Nu. 14:20–35).

It is very easy to forget that, prior to this tragic episode, Israel was intended to have crossed from Egypt-*via* Sinai-directly to the Promised Land within a few years; the 40 years in the wilderness was purely a commuted sentence (Nu. 14:12, 20–30, 33) and *not* part of God's 'first and best' plan for Israel. This should be remembered when reading the laws in Ex. 22–23, relating to agriculture, vineyards, *etc.*; Israel at Sinai had had 4 centuries living in Egypt amid a pastoral and agricultural environment (*cf.* Dt. 11:10), neither they nor their patriarchal forefathers were ever true desert nomads (*cf.* Gn. 26:12 and 37:6–8), and at Sinai they might well count themselves within striking distance of the land where these laws would find a speedy application. Israel had no need to settle in Canaan before such laws could be given, as is so often asserted (*cf.* Kitchen, *op.cit.*, pp. 13–14).

On the twin rebellion of Korah against the ecclesiastical role (Nu. 16:3), and Dathan and Abiram against the civil authority (Nu. 16:13), of Moses and Aaron, see *WILDERNESS OF WANDERING. This double revolt was followed by the threat of general revolt (Nu. 16:41–50). Back at Kadesh-barnea, where Miriam died, Moses himself and Aaron sinned blasphemously casting themselves in God's role: 'Hear now, you rebels; shall *we* [not God] bring forth water for you out of this rock?' (Nu. 20:10); their punishment was that neither should enter the Promised Land, and was one which Moses later felt very keenly (Dt. 3:24–27). The Edomites (Nu. 20:14–21; also Moab, *cf.* Jdg. 11:17) refused Israel passage through their territories so that Israel must go round their borders. At this time Aaron died and was buried in Mt Hor (Nu. 20:22–29). Yet again Israel rebelled. God punished them by sending serpents among them, and again Moses interceded for them. God commanded him to set up a bronze *SERPENT on a pole (Nu. 21:4–9), to which those bitten might look and live, through faith in the Healer. Thereafter Israel reached the Amorite

kingdom of Sihon. Sihon marched—unprovoked—to attack Israel, into whose hand God then delivered him and his land; Og of Bashan, likewise hostile, met a similar fate (Nu. 21:21–35).

At last, Israel encamped in the plains of Moab (Nu. 22:1; 25:1). A second census was carried out, and preparations for apportioning the Promised Land were begun. A punitive war was conducted against Midian, and the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half-Manasseh were allowed to take Transjordan as their portion on condition that they would help their brethren beyond Jordan after Moses' death.

*DEUTERONOMY gives Moses' farewell addresses to his people; the covenant between God and Israel was renewed and placed under sanctions of blessing and cursing in a manner calculated to be widely understood in the 14th/13th centuries BC (as shown by *COVENANTS or treaties from the contemporary Hittite state archives, *cf.* G. E. Mendenhall, *BA* 17, 1954, pp. 53–60 and *passim*). Finally, Moses saw to it that Israel had her covenant-law in written form, appropriately placed alongside the ark of the covenant (Dt. 31:24), left them a song to enjoin on them obedience to that law (Dt. 32, especially vv. 44–47), and laid upon them his dying blessing (Dt. 33) before ascending Mt Nebo to view the land he was not destined to enter, and being laid to rest in the land of Moab (Dt. 32:42–48; 34:1–8).

III. The work of Moses

a. Leader

As a leader of his people, Moses was not only equipped technically through his Egyp. upbringing and training (Acts 7:22), but was also, on a much more fundamental level, a supreme leader by being a close follower of his God by faith (Heb. 11:23–29; *cf.* Acts 7:23–37). Israel repeatedly failed to have faith in their God in all circumstances, broke the commandments, and rejected God's leadership in rebelling against Moses (sometimes Moses and Aaron) through whom that leadership was manifested (*e.g.* Nu. 14:4, 10; 16:41f.). Moses' own family let him down (Ex. 32:1ff., 21; Nu. 12:1f.). Great indeed was Moses' forbearance (Nu. 12:3); he was constantly interceding with God for sinning Israel (*e.g.* Nu. 14:13ff.; 16:46, *etc.*) and pleading with Israel to be faithful to their delivering God (*e.g.* Nu. 14:5–9). That he was a man of enduring faith in the invisible God (Heb. 11:27b) and so jealous for God's name (*cf.* Nu. 14:13ff.) can alone explain his achievement (*cf.* Phil. 4:13).

b. Prophet and lawgiver

As one especially prominent in declaring and teaching the will, commandments and nature of God, Moses was characteristically the model of all later true prophets until the coming of that One of whom he was forerunner (Dt. 18:18; Acts 3:22f.), to whom all the prophets bear witness (Acts 10:43). He was called by God (Ex. 3:1–4:17) not only to lead the people out of bondage but to make known God's will. Typical is Ex. 19:3, 7: God speaks to Moses, and he to the people.

Moses communed with God long (Ex. 24:18) and often (*e.g.* Ex. 33:7–11), as did later prophets (*cf.* Samuel's life of prayer, 1 Sa. 7:5; 8:6; 12:23; 15:11). Just as the covenant was declared and renewed (Dt. 29:1) through Moses, so the later prophets in turn repeatedly reproved Israel for breaking the covenant and its conditions (*e.g.* 1 Ki. 18:18; 2 Ki. 17:15, 35–40; 2 Ch. 15:1f., 12; Je. 6:16, 19; 8:7f., 11:1–5, 6–10; Ho. 6:7; Am. 2:4; Hg. 2:5; Mal. 2:4ff.), though Jeremiah (31:31–34) could also look forward to a new covenant.

The term ‘code’ often given to various parts of the Pentateuch is misleading: Moses was not simply the promulgator of some kind of ideal, civil ‘*code Napoleon*’ for Israel. Contemporary Near Eastern treaty-documents of the 13th century BC show that Moses was moved by God to express Israel’s relationship to God in the form of a ‘suzerainty’ treaty or *COVENANT, by which a great king (in this case, God, the King of kings) bound to himself a vassal-people (here, Israel), the form in question being uniquely transmuted to the religious and spiritual plane. This was a kind of formulation that would be universally understood at the time. For Israel, the basic stipulations of their covenant were the Ten Commandments, in effect moral law as the expression of God’s will; and the detailed covenant-obligations took the form of ‘civil’ statute rooted in the moral law of the Ten Commandments (e.g. Ex. 21–23; Dt. 12–26, etc.), and even of prescriptions governing the forms of permissible and authorized religious practice (e.g. Ex. 25:1ff.; 35:10ff.; Lv.); Israel’s life in every way was to be marked by righteousness and holiness as issuing from obedience to the covenant, or, in other words, fulfilling the law. Attainment, however, waited upon further divine provision; cf. Gal. 3:23ff. (also 15–22, especially 21f.).

Because Israel’s covenant was not merely a treaty of political obligations but regulated their daily life before God, its ordinances served also as a minimum basis of ‘civil’ law for the people. The existence of long series of laws promoted by individual heads of state from the end of the 3rd millennium BC onwards makes it superfluous to date the giving of the pentateuchal laws any later than Moses (13th century BC).

The number or quantity of ‘civil’ laws in the Pentateuch is in no way excessive or exceptional when compared with other collections. In Ex. 21–23 may be discerned about 40 ‘paragraphs’, in Lv. 18–20 more than 20 ‘paragraphs’, and in Dt. 12–26 nearly 90 ‘paragraphs’, of very variable length from a chapter or half-chapter of the present-day text-divisions down to one short sentence; say, about 150 ‘paragraphs’ in these sections altogether, leaving aside the more obviously religious prescriptions. This figure compares very reasonably with the 282 paragraphs of Hammurapi’s laws, the 115 surviving paragraphs of the Middle Assyrian laws (many more being lost) or the 200 paragraphs of the Hittite laws.

c. Author

In modern times estimates of Moses’ role as an author have varied over the whole range of conceivable opinion between the two extremes of either attributing to him every syllable of the present Pentateuch, or denying his very existence.

That Moses’ name was attached to parts of the Pentateuch right from the start is clearly shown by the biblical text itself. Thus, at an utter minimum, Moses as a writer is undeniably credited with the following: a brief document on God’s judgment against Amalek (Ex. 17:14); the ‘book of the covenant’ (Ex. 24:4–8; on the external parallels, this must include Ex. 20 and 21–23, the commandments and attendant laws); the restoration of the covenant (Ex. 34:27, referring to 34:10–26); an itinerary (Nu. 33:1f., referring to the document that furnished 33:3–40); the major part of Dt. to 31 (Dt. 31:9–13, 24ff., referring to renewal of the covenant and re-enforcement of its laws that precede ch. 31); and two poems (Dt. 32; cf. 31:22; and Ps. 90 by title, which there is no objective evidence to doubt). Later OT and NT references to Moses in this connection are collected by various scholars, e.g. by E. J. Young, *IOT*, 1949, pp. 50f.

The ability to write historical narrative, record laws and compose poetry in one man is not unique. An Egypt. example of this kind of ability 7 centuries before Moses is probably furnished by Khety (or Akhtoy), son of Duauf, a writer under the pharaoh Amenemhat I (c. 1991–1962 BC), who was apparently educator, political propagandist and poet. He wrote the *Satire of the Trades*

for use in scribal schools, was probably commissioned to give literary form to the ‘Teaching of Amenemhat I’, a political pamphlet, and may have been author of a well-known Hymn to the Nile often copied out by scribes along with the other two works (*cf.* Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum, Third Series*, 1935, 1, pp. 40, 43–44 and Posener, *Littérature et Politique dans l’Égypte de la XIIe Dynastie*, 1956, pp. 4–7, 19, n. 7, 72–73). However, beyond the ‘utter minimum’ already mentioned above, there is no objective reason why Moses should not have written, or have caused to be written (at dictation—hence third person pronouns), considerably more of the contents of the present Pentateuch, though just how much more must remain a matter of opinion.

d. Later fame

From Joshua (8:31; *cf.* 1 Ki. 2:3; 2 Ki. 14:6; Ezr. 6:18, *etc.*) to NT times (Mk. 12:26; Lk. 2:22; Jn. 7:23), the name of Moses was associated with the OT, especially the Pentateuch; note 2 Cor. 3:15, where ‘Moses’ stands *pars pro toto* for the OT. And it was Moses and Elijah, the representatives of OT law and prophecy, who stood with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt. 17:3f.).

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*The family of Moses.*¹

¹ Payne, D. F. (1996). [Moserah, Moseroth](#). In D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman (Eds.), *New Bible dictionary* (3rd ed., pp. 783–788). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.