

CFC
CHRIST FELLOWSHIP CENTRE

MOSES: 120 YEARS OF LIFE, LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY

A CFC leadership study guide for Christian leaders in the 21st century

> **“Moses was 120 years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone.”**

Deuteronomy 34:7

1. The 120-year overview

Moses' life can be understood in three broad seasons of approximately 40 years each.

Years	Place and season	Main formation	Key passages
0–40	Egypt: formation	Identity, education, justice and premature action	Exodus 2:1–15; Acts 7:20–29
40–80	Midian: preparation	Obscurity, family, shepherding and encounter	Exodus 2:15–4:17; Acts 7:30–34
80–120	Exodus and wilderness: mission	Deliverance, covenant, intercession, governance and succession	Acts 7:36; Deuteronomy 34

Central insight

God used every season. The palace supplied knowledge and exposure. Midian developed patience and humility. The final 40 years tested whether Moses could use both in faithful service.

2. Years 0–40: Formation in Egypt

Primary passages: Exodus 1:22–2:15; Acts 7:20–29; Hebrews 11:24–26

Moses entered a world shaped by oppression. God preserved him through the faith and courage of his family, then placed him within Pharaoh's household. Acts 7:22 records that he received Egyptian learning and developed ability in speech and action.

Moses still identified with the Hebrews. When he saw injustice, he intervened violently and then fled. His burden was real, but his action moved ahead of God's method and timing.

Leadership lessons

- Education becomes ministry when it serves God's people rather than personal status.
- A leader's identity determines loyalty when privilege and conviction collide.
- Strong conviction still needs self-control, prayer and wise timing.
- Early failure can expose what God still needs to form.

3. Years 40–80: Preparation in Midian

Primary passages: Exodus 2:15–4:17; Acts 7:30–34

Midian replaced palace visibility with ordinary responsibility. Moses became a husband, father and shepherd. The work taught him to guide vulnerable creatures across difficult terrain, a fitting preparation for leading Israel through the wilderness.

At about 80, God called Moses from the burning bush. Moses responded with questions about identity, authority and ability. God’s decisive answer centred on His presence: He would be with Moses.

Leadership lessons

- Hidden years can form habits that public ministry will later require.
- Shepherd leadership protects, guides and stays with people through slow progress.
- A genuine encounter with God clarifies the mission and corrects self-reliance.
- Weakness becomes a place of dependence when the leader accepts God’s help.

4. Years 80–120: Deliverance and covenant

Primary passages: Exodus 5–40; Acts 7:36

Moses confronted Pharaoh, led Israel through the sea and carried the people to Sinai. The mission involved spiritual authority, public courage and sustained obedience through repeated resistance.

At Sinai, Moses received covenant instruction concerning worship, justice, community life and the tabernacle. Leadership therefore included more than escape from oppression. It helped form a people who could live under God’s rule.

Leadership lessons

- Leaders must keep the mission clear when opposition creates delay.
- Freedom requires formation. Deliverance without discipleship leaves old habits untouched.
- God’s presence must remain central to strategy, structure and worship.
- Courageous confrontation should flow from obedience rather than ego.

5. Wilderness leadership under pressure

Primary passages: Exodus 18; Exodus 32–34; Numbers 11–14; Numbers 20

The wilderness exposed fear, nostalgia, conflict and unbelief. Moses repeatedly interceded for people who resisted him. He carried their needs before God while also communicating God’s instruction.

Jethro saw that Moses’ leadership pattern would wear out both leader and people. Moses accepted correction and distributed responsibility. Later, at Meribah, anger affected how he represented God, and God held him accountable.

Leadership lessons

- Intercession keeps a leader’s heart connected to the people during conflict.
- Shared leadership improves care and prevents avoidable delay.
- Pressure does not excuse misrepresenting God.
- Long service never removes the need for accountability.

6. Moses’ major leadership strengths

Presence before progress

Moses refused to treat movement as success if God’s presence did not accompany the people. Exodus 33:12–17 places communion with God before organisational momentum.

Intercession for difficult people

He pleaded for mercy after serious rebellion. A spiritual leader does not use people’s failure to prove personal superiority. Numbers 14:13–19.

Humility and teachability

Numbers 12:3 highlights his humility. Exodus 18 shows that humility in practice: Moses listened to counsel and changed a failing system.

Faithful stewardship

Hebrews 3:5 remembers Moses as faithful in God’s house. His authority came from stewardship under God, not ownership of God’s people.

Courage in public responsibility

Moses stood before Pharaoh, returned repeatedly after rejection and continued to communicate God’s command.

7. Costly lessons from Moses’ failures

Zeal without restraint

The killing of the Egyptian shows that a worthy concern can still produce sinful action. Leaders need spiritual conviction and emotional discipline.

Overload and delayed delegation

Moses tried to carry every dispute. Jethro warned that this would exhaust him and frustrate the people. Exodus 18:17–18.

Reluctance at the call

Moses focused on his limitations until God appointed Aaron to assist him. Honest weakness should lead to dependence and obedience, not endless avoidance.

Anger at Meribah

Moses struck the rock instead of following God’s instruction. Numbers 20:7–12 warns leaders that frustration can distort the way they represent God.

Accountability

Past achievements did not remove present consequences. Mature leadership accepts correction without rewriting the standard.

8. Leadership systems for the 21st-century church

- Shared responsibility: appoint trustworthy, capable people and give them meaningful authority. Exodus 18:21–26.
- Clear accountability: define decisions, reporting lines and standards before pressure exposes confusion.
- Spiritual formation: protect prayer, Scripture and worship from becoming ceremonial additions to administration.
- Care for people: measure leadership systems by whether people receive timely, just and compassionate support.
- Leader health: treat rest, counsel, boundaries and team support as stewardship rather than weakness.
- Change leadership: communicate the destination repeatedly because fear and hardship make people forget.
- Succession: identify emerging leaders early, develop them publicly and transfer responsibility gradually.

A practical test

If one person’s absence stops every decision, the ministry has activity but lacks a durable leadership system.

9. Succession through Joshua

Moses asked God to appoint a leader so the people would not be like sheep without a shepherd. God identified Joshua, and Moses commissioned him publicly before the priest and congregation. Numbers 27:15–23.

- Succession begins with prayer for the people's future, not fear about the current leader's relevance.
- Public commissioning gives clarity, confidence and legitimate authority.
- Authority should move with responsibility. A title without entrusted work does not prepare a successor.
- The outgoing leader should encourage the successor to trust God rather than imitate a personality. Deuteronomy 31:7–8.
- A leader's legacy includes places reached by those he or she prepared.

CFC leadership application

Every branch and ministry department should identify potential leaders, give them supervised responsibility, review their character and competence, and prepare them for faithful service.

10. Personal leadership assessment

Use these questions privately or in a leadership meeting.

1. Which season describes me now: formation, preparation, mission or succession?

_____

2. What early experience has shaped my leadership burden?

_____

3. Where has zeal moved faster than prayer, character or wise counsel?

_____

4. What is God teaching me in a hidden or difficult season?

_____

5. Which responsibilities should I delegate, and who needs development first?

_____

6. How do I respond when people resist change or criticise my leadership?

_____

7. What pressure most threatens my emotional self-control?

_____

8. Who can speak honestly into my decisions?

_____

9. Am I preparing a successor, or only protecting my present role?

_____

10. What would finishing faithfully look like in my current assignment?

_____

11. Group discussion and action plan

Discussion

- Which part of Moses' story speaks most directly to our present leadership challenges?
- Where is our ministry too dependent on one person?
- What resistance to change requires clearer communication and pastoral care?
- Which leadership habit should we stop, strengthen or begin?
- Who should receive a new development opportunity during the next three months?

Action plan

Leadership priority	Responsible person	First action	Review date

12. Closing charge and prayer

“Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

Psalm 90:12

Father, form our character before enlarging our influence. Teach us to lead from Your presence, receive wise counsel and serve people with patience. Guard us from pride, anger and isolation. Give us courage to obey You under pressure and humility to accept correction. Help us build strong teams and prepare faithful leaders for the next generation. May we finish our assignments with integrity and leave Your people stronger. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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Core Scripture references: Exodus 1–40; Numbers 11–14; Numbers 20; Numbers 27; Deuteronomy 31 and 34; Acts 7:20–36; Hebrews 3:1–6; Hebrews 11:23–29.