[Template:Other uses](/wiki/Template:Other_uses" \o "Template:Other uses) [Template:Pp-semi-vandalism](/wiki/Template:Pp-semi-vandalism) [Template:Use American English](/wiki/Template:Use_American_English) [Template:Infobox person](/wiki/Template:Infobox_person) [thumb|A](/wiki/File:Moses-icon.jpg) [Russian Orthodox](/wiki/Russian_Orthodox) [icon](/wiki/Icon) of the prophet Moses, gesturing towards the [burning bush](/wiki/Burning_bush); 18th-century ([Iconostasis](/wiki/Iconostasis) of [Transfiguration](/wiki/Transfiguration_of_Jesus) Church, [Kizhi](/wiki/Kizhi) Monastery, [Karelia](/wiki/Karelia), Russia)

**Moses** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en);[[1]](#cite_note-1) [Template:Lang-he](/wiki/Template:Lang-he), [Modern](/wiki/Modern_Hebrew) [**Template:Transl**](/wiki/Template:Transl) [Tiberian](/wiki/Tiberian_vocalization) [**Template:Transl**](/wiki/Template:Transl) [ISO 259-3](/wiki/ISO_259-3) [**Template:Transl**](/wiki/Template:Transl); [Template:Lang-syr](/wiki/Template:Lang-syr) **Moushe**; [Template:Lang-ar](/wiki/Template:Lang-ar) [**Template:Transl**](/wiki/Template:Transl); [Template:Lang-el](/wiki/Template:Lang-el) [**Template:Transl**](/wiki/Template:Transl) in both the [Septuagint](/wiki/Septuagint) and the [New Testament](/wiki/New_Testament)) is a [prophet](/wiki/Prophet) in [Abrahamic religions](/wiki/Abrahamic_religions). According to the [Hebrew Bible](/wiki/Hebrew_Bible), he was a former [Egyptian](/wiki/Ancient_Egypt) prince who later in life became a religious leader and [lawgiver](/wiki/Law_of_Moses), to whom the [authorship](/wiki/Mosaic_authorship) of the [Torah](/wiki/Torah) is traditionally attributed. Also called *Moshe Rabbenu* in Hebrew ([Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang), [*lit.*](/wiki/Literal_translation) "Moses our Teacher"), he is the most important prophet in [Judaism](/wiki/Judaism).<ref name=aaa>[Template:Bibleref](/wiki/Template:Bibleref)</ref>[[2]](#cite_note-2) He is also an important prophet in [Christianity](/wiki/Prophets_of_Christianity), [Islam](/wiki/Prophets_in_Islam), [Baha'ism](/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith) as well as a number of [other faiths](/wiki/Abrahamic_religions#Other_Abrahamic_religions).

According to the [Book of Exodus](/wiki/Book_of_Exodus), Moses was born in a time when his people, the [Israelites](/wiki/Israelites), an enslaved minority, were increasing in numbers and the [Egyptian Pharaoh](/wiki/Pharaoh_of_the_Exodus) was worried that they might ally themselves with Egypt's enemies.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Moses' [Hebrew](/wiki/Hebrews) mother, [Jochebed](/wiki/Jochebed), secretly hid him when the Pharaoh ordered all newborn Hebrew boys to be killed in order to reduce the population of the Israelites. Through the Pharaoh's daughter (identified as Queen [Bithia](/wiki/Bithiah) in the [Midrash](/wiki/Midrash)), the child was adopted as a [foundling](/wiki/Child_abandonment) from the [Nile river](/wiki/Nile_river) and grew up with the Egyptian royal family. After killing an Egyptian slavemaster (because the slavemaster was smiting a Hebrew to death), Moses fled across the [Red Sea](/wiki/Red_Sea) to [Midian](/wiki/Midian), where he encountered The Angel of the Lord,[[4]](#cite_note-4) speaking to him from within a [burning bush](/wiki/Burning_bush) on [Mount Horeb](/wiki/Mount_Horeb) (which he regarded as the Mountain of God).

God sent Moses back to Egypt to demand the release of the Israelites from slavery. Moses said that he could not speak with assurance or eloquence,[[5]](#cite_note-5) so God allowed [Aaron](/wiki/Aaron), his brother, to become his spokesperson. After the [Ten Plagues](/wiki/Plagues_of_Egypt), Moses led the Exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt and [across the Red Sea](/wiki/Crossing_the_Red_Sea), after which they based themselves at [Mount Sinai](/wiki/Biblical_Mount_Sinai), where Moses received the [Ten Commandments](/wiki/Ten_Commandments). After 40 years of wandering in the desert, Moses died within sight of the [Promised Land](/wiki/Promised_Land).

[Rabbinical Judaism](/wiki/Rabbinical_Judaism) calculated a lifespan of Moses corresponding to 1391–1271 (120 years) [BCE](/wiki/Common_Era);[[6]](#cite_note-6) [Jerome](/wiki/Jerome) gives 1592 BCE,[[7]](#cite_note-7) and [James Ussher](/wiki/James_Ussher) 1571 BCE as his birth year.[[8]](#cite_note-8)[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) Scholarly consensus sees Moses as a legendary figure and not a historical person.<ref name=Archaeo/>

## Contents

* 1 Name[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]
* 2 Biblical narrative[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]
  + 2.1 Prophet and deliverer of Israel[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]
  + 2.2 Lawgiver of Israel[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]
* 3 Historicity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]
* 4 Sources[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]
* 5 Moses in Hellenistic literature[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]
  + 5.1 In Hecataeus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]
  + 5.2 In Artapanus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]
  + 5.3 In Strabo[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]
  + 5.4 In Tacitus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]
  + 5.5 In Longinus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]
  + 5.6 In Josephus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]
  + 5.7 In Numenius[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]
  + 5.8 In Justin Martyr[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]
* 6 Moses in Abrahamic religions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]
  + 6.1 Judaism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]
  + 6.2 Christianity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]
    - 6.2.1 Mormonism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]
  + 6.3 Islam[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]
  + 6.4 Baha'i Faith[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]
* 7 Modern reception[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]
  + 7.1 Politics and law[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]
    - 7.1.1 American history[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]
      * 7.1.1.1 Pilgrims[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]
      * 7.1.1.2 Founding Fathers of the United States[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]
    - 7.1.2 Slavery and civil rights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]
  + 7.2 Literature[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]
  + 7.3 In Freud[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]
  + 7.4 Criticism of Moses[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]
    - 7.4.1 Thomas Paine and Numbers 31:13-18[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]
  + 7.5 Figurative art[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]
  + 7.6 Michelangelo's statue[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]
  + 7.7 Film and television[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]
* 8 See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]
* 9 Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]
* 10 Citations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]
* 11 Further reading[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]
* 12 External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]

## Name[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

The Biblical account of Moses' birth provides him with a [folk etymology](/wiki/Folk_etymology) to explain the ostensible meaning of his name.[[9]](#cite_note-9)[[10]](#cite_note-10) He is said to have received it from the Pharaoh's daughter: "he became her son. She named him Moses (Moshe), saying, "I drew him out (*meshitihu*) of the water."[[11]](#cite_note-11)[[12]](#cite_note-12) This explanation links it to a verb *mashah*, meaning "to draw out", which makes the Pharaoh's daughter's declaration a play on words.[[12]](#cite_note-12)[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The princess made a grammatical mistake which is prophetic of his role in his future life, as someone who will "draw the people of Israel out of Egypt through the waters of the Red Sea."[[13]](#cite_note-13) Several etymologies have been proposed. An [Egyptian](/wiki/Egyptian_language) root *msy*, 'child of', has been considered as a possible etymology, arguably an abbreviation of a [theophoric name](/wiki/Theophoric_name), as for example in Egyptian names like [Thutmoses](/wiki/Thutmose) ([Thoth created him](/wiki/Thoth)) and [Ramesses](/wiki/Ramesses) ([Ra created him](/wiki/Ra)),[[9]](#cite_note-9) with the god's name omitted. [Abraham Yahuda](/wiki/Abraham_Yahuda), based on the spelling given in the [Tanakh](/wiki/Tanakh), argues that it combines 'water' or 'seed' and 'pond, expanse of water', thus yielding the sense of "child of the [Nile](/wiki/Nile)" (*mw-še*).[[14]](#cite_note-14) The [Hebrew](/wiki/Hebrew_language) etymology in the Biblical story may reflect an attempt to cancel out traces of Moses' [Egyptian origins](/wiki/Egyptians).[[13]](#cite_note-13) The Egyptian character of his name was recognized as such by ancient Jewish writers like [Philo of Alexandria](/wiki/Philo_of_Alexandria) and [Josephus](/wiki/Josephus).[[13]](#cite_note-13) Philo linked Mōēsēs ([Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)) to the Egyptian ([Coptic](/wiki/Coptic_language)) word for water (*mou*/μῶυ), while Josephus, in his [Antiquities of the Jews](/wiki/Antiquities_of_the_Jews), claimed that the second element, *-esês*, meant 'those who are saved'. The problem of how an Egyptian princess, known to Josephus as Thermutis (identified as Tharmuth)[[12]](#cite_note-12) and in later Jewish tradition as [Bithiah](/wiki/Bithiah),[[15]](#cite_note-15) could have known Hebrew puzzled medieval Jewish commentators like [Abraham ibn Ezra](/wiki/Abraham_ibn_Ezra) and [Hezekiah ben Manoah](/wiki/Hezekiah_ben_Manoah), known also as Hizkuni. Hizkuni suggested she either converted or took a tip from [Jochebed](/wiki/Jochebed).[[16]](#cite_note-16)[[17]](#cite_note-17)

## Biblical narrative[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[thumb|240px|*Moses rescued from the Nile*, 1638, by](/wiki/File:MosesRescued_FromTheNile.JPG) [Nicolas Poussin](/wiki/Nicolas_Poussin)

### Prophet and deliverer of Israel[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[thumb|250px|Moses before the Pharaoh, a 6th-century miniature from the](/wiki/File:SyriacBibleParisFolio8rrMosesBeforePharaoh.jpg) [Syriac Bible of Paris](/wiki/Syriac_Bible_of_Paris) [thumb|A Middle-Eastern (](/wiki/File:Moshe_Ha'Ahron.png)[Mizrahi](/wiki/Mizrahi)) depiction of Moses and Aaron on cow hide [thumb|250px|Moses strikes water from the stone, by](/wiki/File:Bacchiacca_-_Moses_Striking_the_Rock.jpg) [Francesco Bacchiacca](/wiki/Francesco_Bacchiacca) [thumb|250px|Moses holding up his arms during the battle, assisted by Aaron and Hur; painting by](/wiki/File:VictoryOLord.JPG) [John Everett Millais](/wiki/John_Everett_Millais) The [Israelites](/wiki/Israelites) had settled in the [Land of Goshen](/wiki/Land_of_Goshen) in the time of [Joseph](/wiki/Joseph_(patriarch)) and [Jacob](/wiki/Jacob), but a new pharaoh arose who oppressed the children of Israel. At this time Moses was born to his father [Amram](/wiki/Amram), son of [Kehath](/wiki/Kehath) the [Levite](/wiki/Levite), who entered Egypt with Jacob's household; his mother was [Jochebed](/wiki/Jochebed) (also Yocheved), who was kin to Kehath. Moses had one older (by seven years) sister, [Miriam](/wiki/Miriam), and one older (by three years) brother, [Aaron](/wiki/Aaron).[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn)

The [Pharaoh](/wiki/Pharaoh) had commanded that all male Hebrew children born would be drowned in the river [Nile](/wiki/Nile), but Moses' mother placed him in an ark and concealed the ark in the [bulrushes](/wiki/Bulrush) by the riverbank, where the baby was discovered and adopted by Pharaoh's daughter. One day after Moses had reached adulthood he killed an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew. Moses, in order to escape the Pharaoh's [death penalty](/wiki/Capital_punishment), fled to [Midian](/wiki/Midian) (a desert country south of Judah).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

There, on [Mount Horeb](/wiki/Mount_Horeb), [God](/wiki/God) revealed to Moses his name [YHWH](/wiki/Tetragrammaton) (probably pronounced [Yahweh](/wiki/Yahweh)) and commanded him to return to Egypt and bring his [chosen people](/wiki/Jews_as_the_chosen_people) (Israel) out of bondage and into the [Promised Land](/wiki/Promised_Land) ([Canaan](/wiki/Canaan)).[[18]](#cite_note-18) Moses returned to carry out God's command, but God caused the Pharaoh to refuse, and only after God had subjected Egypt to [ten plagues](/wiki/Plagues_of_Egypt) did the Pharaoh relent. Moses led the Israelites to the border of Egypt, but there God hardened the Pharaoh's heart once more, so that he could destroy the Pharaoh and his army at the [Red Sea Crossing](/wiki/Crossing_the_Red_Sea) as a sign of his power to Israel and the nations.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

From Egypt, Moses [led the Israelites](/wiki/The_Exodus) to [biblical Mount Sinai](/wiki/Biblical_Mount_Sinai), where he was given the [Ten Commandments](/wiki/Ten_Commandments) from God, written on [stone tablets](/wiki/Stele). However, since Moses remained a long time on the mountain, some of the people feared that he might be dead, so they made a statue of a [golden calf](/wiki/Golden_calf) and [worshiped it](/wiki/Sacred_bull), thus disobeying and angering God and Moses. Moses, out of anger, broke the tablets, and later ordered the elimination of those who had worshiped the golden statue, which was melted down and fed to the [idolaters](/wiki/Idolatry). He also wrote the ten commandments on a new set of tablets. Later at Mount Sinai, Moses and the elders entered into a covenant, by which Israel would become the people of YHWH, obeying his laws, and YHWH would be their god. Moses delivered the laws of God to Israel, instituted [the priesthood](/wiki/Kohen) under the sons of Moses' brother [Aaron](/wiki/Aaron), and destroyed those Israelites who fell away from his worship. In his final act at Sinai, God gave Moses instructions for the [Tabernacle](/wiki/Tabernacle), the mobile shrine by which he would travel with Israel to the Promised Land. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

From Sinai, Moses led the Israelites to the [Desert of Paran](/wiki/Desert_of_Paran) on the border of Canaan. From there he sent [twelve spies](/wiki/The_Twelve_Spies) into the land. The spies returned with samples of the land's fertility, but warned that its inhabitants were [giants](/wiki/Giant_(mythology)#Abrahamic_mythology). The people were afraid and wanted to return to Egypt, and some rebelled against Moses and against God. Moses told the Israelites that they were not worthy to inherit the land, and would wander the wilderness for forty years until the generation who had refused to enter Canaan had died, so that it would be their children who would possess the land.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

When the forty years had passed, Moses led the Israelites east around the [Dead Sea](/wiki/Dead_Sea) to the territories of [Edom](/wiki/Edom) and [Moab](/wiki/Moab). There they escaped the temptation of idolatry, received God's blessing through [Balaam](/wiki/Balaam) the prophet, and massacred the [Midianites](/wiki/Midian), who by the end of the Exodus journey had become the enemies of the Israelites. Moses was twice given notice that he would die before entry to the Promised Land: in [Numbers](/wiki/Book_of_Numbers) 27:13, once he had seen the Promised Land from a viewpoint on [Mount Abarim](/wiki/Abarim), and again in Numbers 31:1 once battle with the Midianites had been won.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

On the banks of the [Jordan River](/wiki/Jordan_River), in sight of the land, Moses assembled the [tribes](/wiki/Tribes_of_Israel#The_Twelve_Tribes). After recalling their wanderings he delivered God's laws by which they must live in the land, sang a [song](/wiki/Song_of_Moses) of praise and pronounced a [blessing](/wiki/Blessing_of_Moses) on the people, and passed his authority to [Joshua](/wiki/Joshua), under whom they would possess the land. Moses then went up [Mount Nebo](/wiki/Mount_Nebo) to the top of [Pisgah](/wiki/Mount_Pisgah_(Bible)), looked over the promised land of Israel spread out before him, and died, at the age of one hundred and twenty. More humble than any other man (Num. 12:3), "there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom [YHWH](/wiki/Yahweh) knew face to face" ([Deuteronomy](/wiki/Book_of_Deuteronomy) 34:10). The [New Testament](/wiki/New_Testament) states that after Moses' death, [Michael the Archangel](/wiki/Michael_(archangel)) and the [Devil](/wiki/Devil) disputed over his body ([Epistle of Jude](/wiki/Epistle_of_Jude) 1:9).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[thumb|250px|Moses lifts up the](/wiki/File:The_Brazen_Serpent.jpg) [brass serpent](/wiki/Nehushtan), curing the Israelites from poisonous snake bites in a painting by [Benjamin West](/wiki/Benjamin_West)

### Lawgiver of Israel[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further)

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Rembrandt_-_Moses_Smashing_the_Tablets_of_the_Law_-_WGA19132.jpg)[*Moses Breaking the Tablets of the Law*](/wiki/Moses_Breaking_the_Tablets_of_the_Law) by [Rembrandt](/wiki/Rembrandt) [thumb|Death of Moses by](/wiki/File:Alexandre_Cabanel_-_Death_of_Moses.jpeg) [Alexandre Cabanel](/wiki/Alexandre_Cabanel)

Moses is honoured among [Jews](/wiki/Jews) today as the "lawgiver of Israel", and he delivers several sets of laws in the course of the four books. The first is the [Covenant Code](/wiki/Covenant_Code) ([Exodus](/wiki/Book_of_Exodus) [Template:Bibleverse-nb](/wiki/Template:Bibleverse-nb)–[Template:Bibleverse-nb](/wiki/Template:Bibleverse-nb)), the terms of the [covenant](/wiki/Mosaic_covenant) which God offers to the Israelites at biblical Mount Sinai. Embedded in the covenant are the [Decalogue](/wiki/Decalogue) (the [Ten Commandments](/wiki/Ten_Commandments), Exodus 20:1–17) and the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 20:22–23:19).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The entire [Book of Leviticus](/wiki/Book_of_Leviticus) constitutes a second body of law, the [Book of Numbers](/wiki/Book_of_Numbers) begins with yet another set, and the [Book of Deuteronomy](/wiki/Book_of_Deuteronomy) another. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Moses has traditionally been regarded as [the author of those four books](/wiki/Mosaic_authorship) and the [Book of Genesis](/wiki/Book_of_Genesis), which together comprise the [Torah](/wiki/Torah), the first and most revered section of the [Hebrew Bible](/wiki/Hebrew_Bible). [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

## Historicity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

The scholarly consensus is that the figure of Moses is [legendary](/wiki/Legend), and not [historical](/wiki/Historicity).<ref name=Archaeo>[William G. Dever](/wiki/William_G._Dever) 'What Remains of the House That Albright Built?,' in George Ernest Wright, Frank Moore Cross, Edward Fay Campbell, Floyd Vivian Filson (eds.) *The Biblical Archaeologist,* American Schools of Oriental Research, Scholars Press, Vol. 56, No 1, 2 March 1993 pp.25-35, p.33: 'the overwhelming scholarly consensus today is that Moses is a mythical figure.'</ref> No Egyptian sources mention Moses or the events of Exodus-Deuteronomy, nor has any archaeological evidence been discovered in Egypt or the [Sinai wilderness](/wiki/Sinai_Peninsula) to support the story in which he is the central figure.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The story of his discovery picks up a familiar motif in [ancient Near Eastern](/wiki/Ancient_Near_East) [mythological accounts](/wiki/Mythology) of the ruler who rises from humble origins: Thus [Sargon of Akkad's](/wiki/Sargon_of_Akkad) [Sumerian](/wiki/Sumer) account of his origins runs;

*My mother, the high priestess, conceived; in secret she bore me*  
*She set me in a basket of rushes, with bitumen she sealed my lid*   
*She cast me into the river which rose over me.*[[19]](#cite_note-19)

The tradition of Moses as a lawgiver and [culture hero](/wiki/Culture_hero) of the [Israelites](/wiki/Israelites) may go back to the 7th-century BC sources of the [Deuteronomist](/wiki/Deuteronomist), which might conserve earlier traditions. [Kenneth Kitchen](/wiki/Kenneth_Kitchen), a solitary voice among British [Egyptologists](/wiki/Egyptology),[[20]](#cite_note-20) argues that there is an historic core behind the Exodus, with Egyptian [corvée labour](/wiki/Corvée_labour) exacted from [Hebrews](/wiki/Hebrews) during the imperialist control exercised by the [Egyptian Empire](/wiki/New_Kingdom_of_Egypt) over [Canaan](/wiki/Canaan) from the time of the [Thutmosides](/wiki/Eighteenth_Dynasty_of_Egypt) down to the revolt against [Merneptah](/wiki/Merneptah) and [Rameses III](/wiki/Rameses_III).[[21]](#cite_note-21) [William Albright](/wiki/William_Foxwell_Albright) believed in the essential historicity of the biblical tales of Moses and the Exodus, accepting however that the core narrative had been overlaid by legendary accretions.<ref name =Coats/> [Biblical minimalists](/wiki/The_Copenhagen_School_(theology)) such as [Philip R. Davies](/wiki/Philip_R._Davies) and [Niels Peter Lemche](/wiki/Niels_Peter_Lemche) regard all biblical books, and the stories of an Exodus, [united monarchy](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Israel_(united_monarchy)), [exile](/wiki/Babylonian_captivity) and return as [fictions](/wiki/Fiction) composed by a social [elite](/wiki/Elite) in [Yehud](/wiki/Yehud_Medinata) in the [Persian](/wiki/Achaemenid_Empire) period or [even later](/wiki/Hellenistic_Judaism), the purpose being to legitimize a return to indigenous roots.[[22]](#cite_note-22) Despite the imposing fame associated with Moses, no source mentions him until he emerges in texts associated with the [Babylonian exile](/wiki/Babylonian_captivity).<ref name =Coats>George W. Coats, [*Moses: Heroic Man, Man of God,*](https://books.google.it/books?id=bk7_CMIAQOsC&pg=PA10) A&C Black, 1988 pp.10ff (p.11 Albright; pp.29-30,Noth).</ref> A theory developed by [Cornelius Tiele](/wiki/Cornelius_Tiele) in 1872, which had proved influential, and still held in regard by modern scholars, argued that Yahweh was a [Midianite](/wiki/Midian) god, introduced to the Israelites by Moses, whose father-in-law [Jethro](/wiki/Jethro_(Bible)) was a Midianite priest.[[23]](#cite_note-23) It was to such a Moses that Yahweh reveals his real name, hidden from the [Patriarchs](/wiki/Patriarchs_(Bible)) who knew him only as [El Shaddai](/wiki/El_Shaddai),[[24]](#cite_note-24) Against this view is the modern consensus that most of the Israelites were native to [Palestine](/wiki/Palestine_(region)).[[25]](#cite_note-25) [Martin Noth](/wiki/Martin_Noth) argued that the [Pentateuch](/wiki/Torah) uses the figure of Moses, originally linked to legends of a [Transjordan](/wiki/Transjordan_(Bible)) conquest, as a narrative bracket or late reductional device to weld together 4 of the 5, originally independent, themes of that work.[[26]](#cite_note-26)[[27]](#cite_note-27)[Manfred Görg](/wiki/De:wiki),[[28]](#cite_note-28) and [Rolf Krauss](/wiki/De:wiki)[[29]](#cite_note-29) the latter in a somewhat [sensationalist](/wiki/Sensationalism) manner,[[30]](#cite_note-30) have suggested that the Moses story is a distortion or transmogrification of the historical pharaoh [Amenmose](/wiki/Amenmesse) (ca. 1200 BCE), who was dismissed from office and whose name was later simplified to *msy* (Mose). [Aidan Dodson](/wiki/De:wiki) regards this hypothesis as "intriguing, but beyond proof."[[31]](#cite_note-31) [thumb|Memorial of Moses,](/wiki/File:Memorial_of_Moses,_Mt._Nebo.jpg) [Mount Nebo](/wiki/Mount_Nebo), Jordan

The Exodus narrative, which in traditional chronology begins with the impossible date of 1496 BCE,[[32]](#cite_note-32) itself has resisted numerous attempts to verify it or ground it in archaeological digs, which have been abandoned as a "fruitless pursuit," since the evidence points to an indigenous origin for Israelites.[[33]](#cite_note-33) Attempts to locate the [Yam Suph](/wiki/Yam_Suph) (*Reed sea*/[Red Sea](/wiki/Red_Sea)) as described in Exodus have failed.<ref name =Meyers>Carol Meyers, [*Exodus,*](https://books.google.it/books?id=0QHHITXsyskC&pg=PA112) Cambridge University Press 2005 p.112 (population of 600,000 p.100)</ref> The figure of 600,000 adult males described in Exodus 12:37, or 603,550 at Exodus 38:26, would imply a total population of Israelites in flight through the desert for 40 years of 2 to 2.5 million people, when the total population of Egypt at the time was 3 to 4.5 million. Had such a catastrophic demographic outflow taken place, it would have been recorded in Egyptian writings.<ref name =Noll>K. L. Noll,[*Canaan and Israel in Antiquity: A Textbook on History and Religion,*](https://books.google.it/books?id=hMeRK7B1EsMC&pg=PA97) 2nd Edition A&C Black, 2012 pp.97-99</ref>[[34]](#cite_note-34)[[35]](#cite_note-35)[[36]](#cite_note-36)[[37]](#cite_note-37) The name [King Mesha](/wiki/Mesha) of [Moab](/wiki/Moab) has been linked to that of Moses. Mesha also is associated with narratives of an exodus and a conquest, and several motifs in stories about him are shared with the Exodus tale and that regarding Israel's war with Moab ([2 Kings](/wiki/Books_of_Kings):3). Moab rebels against oppression, like Moses, leads his people out of Israel, as Moses does from Egypt, and his first-born son is slaughtered at the wall of [Kir-hareseth](/wiki/Kir_of_Moab) as the firstborn of Israel are condemned to slaughter in the Exodus story, "an infernal passover that delivers Mesha while wrath burns against his enemies".[[38]](#cite_note-38) An Egyptian version of the tale that crosses over with the Moses story is found in [Manetho](/wiki/Manetho) who, according to the summary in [Josephus](/wiki/Josephus), wrote that a certain [Osarseph](/wiki/Osarseph), a [Heliopolitan](/wiki/Heliopolis_(Ancient_Egypt)) priest, became overseer of a band of [lepers](/wiki/Leprosy), when [Amenophis](/wiki/Amenhotep_III), following indications by [Amenhotep, son of Hapu](/wiki/Amenhotep,_son_of_Hapu), had all the lepers in Egypt quarantined in order to cleanse the land so that he might see the gods. The lepers are bundled into [Avaris](/wiki/Avaris), the former capital of the [Hyksos](/wiki/Hyksos), where Osarseph prescribes for them everything forbidden in Egypt, while proscribing everything permitted in Egypt. They invite the Hyksos to reinvade Egypt, rule with them for 13 years – Osarseph then assumes the name Moses - and are then driven out.[[39]](#cite_note-39)

## Sources[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

Apart from a few scattered references elsewhere in the Jewish scriptures, all that is known about Moses comes from the books of [Exodus](/wiki/Book_of_Exodus), [Leviticus](/wiki/Book_of_Leviticus), [Numbers](/wiki/Book_of_Numbers) and [Deuteronomy](/wiki/Book_of_Deuteronomy).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The majority of scholars consider these books to go back to the [Persian period](/wiki/Yehud_Medinata), 538–332 BCE.[[40]](#cite_note-40)

## Moses in Hellenistic literature[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [thumb|250px|The Moses Window at the](/wiki/File:Lawrence_Saint_Moses_Closeup.JPG) [Washington National Cathedral](/wiki/Washington_National_Cathedral) depicts the three stages in Moses' life. Non-biblical writings about Jews, with references to the role of Moses, first appear at the beginning of the [Hellenistic period](/wiki/Hellenistic_period), from 323 BCE to about 146 BCE. Shmuel notes that "a characteristic of this literature is the high honour in which it holds the peoples of the East in general and some specific groups among these peoples."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

In addition to the Judeo-Roman or Judeo-Hellenic historians [Artapanus](/wiki/Artapanus_of_Alexandria), [Eupolemus](/wiki/Eupolemus), [Josephus](/wiki/Josephus), and [Philo](/wiki/Philo), a few non-Jewish historians including [Hecataeus of Abdera](/wiki/Hecataeus_of_Abdera) (quoted by [Diodorus Siculus](/wiki/Diodorus_Siculus)), [Alexander Polyhistor](/wiki/Alexander_Polyhistor), [Manetho](/wiki/Manetho), [Apion](/wiki/Apion), [Chaeremon of Alexandria](/wiki/Chaeremon_of_Alexandria), [Tacitus](/wiki/Tacitus) and [Porphyry](/wiki/Porphyry_(philosopher)) also make reference to him. The extent to which any of these accounts rely on earlier sources is unknown.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Moses also appears in other religious texts such as the [Mishnah](/wiki/Mishnah) (c. 200 CE), [Midrash](/wiki/Midrash) (200–1200 CE),[[41]](#cite_note-41) and the [Quran](/wiki/Quran) (c. 610–53).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

The figure of [Osarseph](/wiki/Osarseph) in [Hellenistic historiography](/wiki/Greek_historiography) is a renegade Egyptian priest who leads an army of lepers against the pharaoh and is finally expelled from Egypt, changing his name to Moses.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

### In Hecataeus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

The earliest existing reference to Moses in Greek literature occurs in the Egyptian history of [Hecataeus of Abdera](/wiki/Hecataeus_of_Abdera) (4th century BCE). All that remains of his description of Moses are two references made by [Diodorus Siculus](/wiki/Diodorus_Siculus), wherein, writes historian Arthur Droge, "he describes Moses as a wise and courageous leader who left Egypt and colonized [Judaea](/wiki/Judea)."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Among the many accomplishments described by Hecataeus, Moses had founded cities, established a temple and religious cult, and issued laws: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Droge also points out that this statement by Hecataeus was similar to statements made subsequently by [Eupolemus](/wiki/Eupolemus).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

### In Artapanus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

The Jewish historian [Artapanus of Alexandria](/wiki/Artapanus_of_Alexandria) (2nd century BCE), portrayed Moses as a cultural hero, alien to the Pharaonic court. According to theologian John Barclay, the Moses of Artapanus "clearly bears the destiny of the Jews, and in his personal, cultural and military splendor, brings credit to the whole Jewish people."[[42]](#cite_note-42)[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Artapanus goes on to relate how Moses returns to Egypt with Aaron, and is imprisoned, but miraculously escapes through the name of [YHWH](/wiki/YHWH) in order to lead the Exodus. This account further testifies that all Egyptian [temples](/wiki/Egyptian_temple) of [Isis](/wiki/Isis) thereafter contained a rod, in remembrance of that used for Moses' miracles. He describes Moses as 80 years old, "tall and ruddy, with long white hair, and dignified."[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Some historians, however, point out the "[apologetic](/wiki/Apologetics) nature of much of Artapanus' work,"[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) with his addition of extra-biblical details, such as his references to Jethro: the non-Jewish Jethro expresses admiration for Moses' gallantry in helping his daughters, and chooses to adopt Moses as his son.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

### In Strabo[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Strabo](/wiki/Strabo), a Greek historian, geographer and philosopher, in his [*Geographica*](/wiki/Geographica) (c. 24 CE), wrote in detail about Moses, whom he considered to be an Egyptian who deplored the situation in his homeland, and thereby attracted many followers who respected the deity. He writes, for example, that Moses opposed the picturing of the deity in the form of man or animal, and was convinced that the deity was an entity which encompassed everything – land and sea:[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) [Template:Blockquote](/wiki/Template:Blockquote)

In Strabo's writings of the history of [Judaism](/wiki/Judaism) as he understood it, he describes various stages in its development: from the first stage, including Moses and his direct heirs; to the final stage where "the [Temple of Jerusalem](/wiki/Temple_of_Jerusalem) continued to be surrounded by an aura of sanctity." Strabo's "positive and unequivocal appreciation of Moses' personality is among the most sympathetic in all ancient literature."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) His portrayal of Moses is said to be similar to the writing of [Hecataeus](/wiki/Hecataeus_of_Abdera) who "described Moses as a man who excelled in wisdom and courage."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

Egyptologist [Jan Assmann](/wiki/Jan_Assmann) concludes that Strabo was the historian "who came closest to a construction of Moses' religion as [monotheistic](/wiki/Monotheism) and as a pronounced counter-religion." It recognized "only one divine being whom no image can represent... [and] the only way to approach this god is to live in virtue and in justice."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

### In Tacitus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

The Roman historian [Tacitus](/wiki/Tacitus) (c. 56–120 CE) refers to Moses by noting that the Jewish religion was monotheistic and without a clear image. His primary work, wherein he describes [Jewish philosophy](/wiki/Jewish_philosophy), is his [*Histories*](/wiki/Histories_(Tacitus)) (c. 100), where, according to Arthur Murphy, as a result of the Jewish worship of one God, "[pagan](/wiki/Paganism) mythology fell into contempt."[[43]](#cite_note-43) Tacitus states that, despite various opinions current in his day regarding the Jews' ethnicity, most of his sources are in agreement that there was an Exodus from Egypt. By his account, the Pharaoh [Bocchoris](/wiki/Bakenranef), suffering from a [plague](/wiki/Plague_(disease)), banished the Jews in response to an oracle of the god [Zeus](/wiki/Zeus)-[Amun](/wiki/Amun). [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

In this version, Moses and the Jews wander through the desert for only six days, capturing the [Holy Land](/wiki/Holy_Land) on the seventh.<ref name=Tacitus>Tacitus, Cornelius. *Tacitus, The Histories, Volume 2*, Book V. Chapters 5, 6 p. 208.</ref>

### In Longinus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

The [Septuagint](/wiki/Septuagint), the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, influenced [Longinus](/wiki/Longinus_(literature)), who may have been the author of the great book of literary criticism, [*On the Sublime*](/wiki/On_the_Sublime). The date of composition is unknown, but it is commonly assigned to the late Ist century C.E.[[44]](#cite_note-44) The writer quotes [Genesis](/wiki/Book_of_Genesis) in a "style which presents the nature of the deity in a manner suitable to his pure and great being," however he does not mention Moses by name, calling him 'no chance person' ([Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)) but "the Lawgiver" ([Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang), [thesmothete](/wiki/Archon#Ancient_Greece)) of the Jews," a term that puts him on a par with [Lycurgus](/wiki/Lycurgus_of_Sparta) and [Minos](/wiki/Minos).[[45]](#cite_note-45) Aside from a reference to [Cicero](/wiki/Cicero), Moses is the only non-Greek writer quoted in the work, contextually he is put on a par with [Homer](/wiki/Homer),<ref name=Feldman>[Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).</ref> and he is described "with far more admiration than even Greek writers who treated Moses with respect, such as [Hecataeus](/wiki/Hecataeus_of_Abdera) and [Strabo](/wiki/Strabo).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

### In Josephus[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

In [Josephus'](/wiki/Josephus) (37 – c. 100 CE) [*Antiquities of the Jews*](/wiki/Antiquities_of_the_Jews), Moses is mentioned throughout. For example Book VIII Ch. IV, describes [Solomon's Temple](/wiki/Solomon's_Temple), also known as the First Temple, at the time the [Ark of the Covenant](/wiki/Ark_of_the_Covenant) was first moved into the newly built temple: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

According to Feldman, Josephus also attaches particular significance to Moses' possession of the "cardinal virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice." He also includes piety as an added fifth virtue. In addition, he "stresses Moses' willingness to undergo toil and his careful avoidance of bribery. Like [Plato's](/wiki/Plato) [philosopher-king](/wiki/Philosopher_king), Moses excels as an educator."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

### In Numenius[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Numenius](/wiki/Numenius_of_Apamea), a Greek philosopher who was a native of [Apamea](/wiki/Apamea,_Syria), in Syria, wrote during the latter half of the 2nd century CE. Historian Kennieth Guthrie writes that "Numenius is perhaps the only recognized Greek philosopher who explicitly studied Moses, the prophets, and the life of [Jesus](/wiki/Jesus)..."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) He describes his background: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

### In Justin Martyr[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

The Christian saint and religious philosopher [Justin Martyr](/wiki/Justin_Martyr) (103–165 CE) drew the same conclusion as [Numenius](/wiki/Numenius_of_Apamea), according to other experts. Theologian Paul Blackham notes that Justin considered Moses to be "more trustworthy, profound and truthful because he is *older* than the [Greek philosophers](/wiki/Ancient_Greek_philosophy)."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) He quotes him: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

## Moses in Abrahamic religions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

### Judaism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article)[Template:Infobox saint](/wiki/Template:Infobox_saint)

There is a wealth of stories and additional information about Moses in the [Jewish apocrypha](/wiki/Jewish_apocrypha) and in the genre of [rabbinical](/wiki/Rabbi) [exegesis](/wiki/Exegesis) known as [Midrash](/wiki/Midrash), as well as in the primary works of the Jewish [oral law](/wiki/Oral_law), the [Mishnah](/wiki/Mishnah) and the [Talmud](/wiki/Talmud). Moses is also given a number of bynames in Jewish tradition. The [Midrash](/wiki/Midrash) identifies Moses as one of seven biblical personalities who were called by various names.[[46]](#cite_note-46) Moses' other names were: Jekuthiel (by his mother), Heber (by [his father](/wiki/Amram)), Jered (by [Miriam](/wiki/Miriam)), Avi Zanoah (by Aaron), [Avi Gedor](/wiki/Avigdor_(name)) (by [Kohath](/wiki/Kohath)), Avi Soco (by his wet-nurse), Shemaiah ben Nethanel (by people of Israel).[[47]](#cite_note-47) Moses is also attributed the names Toviah (as a first name), and Levi (as a family name) (Vayikra Rabbah 1:3), Heman,[[48]](#cite_note-48) Mechoqeiq (lawgiver)[[49]](#cite_note-49) and Ehl Gav Ish (Numbers 12:3).[[50]](#cite_note-50) Jewish historians who lived at [Alexandria](/wiki/Alexandria), such as [Eupolemus](/wiki/Eupolemus), attributed to Moses the feat of having taught the [Phoenicians](/wiki/Phoenicia) [their alphabet](/wiki/Phoenician_alphabet),[[51]](#cite_note-51) similar to legends of [Thoth](/wiki/Thoth). [Artapanus of Alexandria](/wiki/Artapanus_of_Alexandria) explicitly identified Moses not only with Thoth/[Hermes](/wiki/Hermes), but also with the Greek figure [Musaeus](/wiki/Musaeus_of_Athens) (whom he called "the teacher of [Orpheus](/wiki/Orpheus)"), and ascribed to him the division of Egypt into 36 districts, each with its own liturgy. He named the princess who adopted Moses as Merris, wife of Pharaoh Chenephres.[[52]](#cite_note-52) Ancient sources mention an Assumption of Moses and a Testimony of Moses. A Latin text was found in [Milan](/wiki/Milan) in the 19th century by [Antonio Ceriani](/wiki/Antonio_Ceriani) who called it the [Assumption of Moses](/wiki/Assumption_of_Moses), even though it does not refer to an assumption of Moses or contain portions of the Assumption which are cited by ancient authors, and it is apparently actually the Testimony. The incident which the ancient authors cite is also mentioned in the [Epistle of Jude](/wiki/Epistle_of_Jude).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

To [Orthodox Jews](/wiki/Orthodox_Judaism), Moses is called *Moshe Rabbenu, `Eved HaShem, Avi haNeviim zya"a*: "Our Leader Moshe, Servant of God, Father of all the Prophets (may his merit shield us, amen)".[[53]](#cite_note-53) In the orthodox view, Moses received not only the Torah, but also the revealed (written and oral) and the hidden (the *`hokhmat nistar* teachings, which gave Judaism the [Zohar](/wiki/Zohar) of the [Rashbi](/wiki/Shimon_bar_Yochai), the Torah of the [Ari haQadosh](/wiki/Isaac_Luria) and all that is discussed in the Heavenly Yeshiva between the [Ramhal](/wiki/Moshe_Chaim_Luzzatto) and his masters). He is also considered the greatest prophet.[[54]](#cite_note-54) Arising in part from his age, but also because 120 is elsewhere stated as the maximum age for [Noah's](/wiki/Noah) descendants (one interpretation of [Template:Bibleverse](/wiki/Template:Bibleverse)), "[may you live to 120](/wiki/Live_until_120)" has become a common blessing among Jews.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

### Christianity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[thumb|left|Moses appearing at the](/wiki/File:Transfigurationbloch.jpg) [Transfiguration of Jesus](/wiki/Transfiguration_of_Jesus) Moses is mentioned more often in the [New Testament](/wiki/New_Testament) than any other [Old Testament](/wiki/Old_Testament) figure. For [Christians](/wiki/Christianity), Moses is often a symbol of [God's law](/wiki/Divine_law), as reinforced and [expounded on](/wiki/Expounding_of_the_Law) in the teachings of [Jesus](/wiki/Jesus). New Testament writers [Template:Who](/wiki/Template:Who) often compared Jesus' words and deeds with Moses' to explain Jesus' mission. In [Acts](/wiki/Acts_of_the_Apostles) 7:39–43, 51–53, for example, the rejection of Moses by the Jews who worshiped the [golden calf](/wiki/Golden_calf) is likened to the rejection of Jesus by the Jews that continued in traditional Judaism. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Moses also figures in several of Jesus' messages. When he met the [Pharisee](/wiki/Pharisees) [Nicodemus](/wiki/Nicodemus) at night in the third chapter of the [Gospel of John](/wiki/Gospel_of_John), he compared Moses' lifting up of the [bronze serpent](/wiki/Nehushtan) in the wilderness, which any Israelite could look at and be healed, to his own lifting up (by his death and [resurrection](/wiki/Resurrection)) for the people to look at and be healed. In the sixth chapter, Jesus responded to the people's claim that Moses provided them [*manna*](/wiki/Manna) in the wilderness by saying that it was not Moses, but God, who provided. Calling himself the "[bread of life](/wiki/Bread_of_Life_Discourse)", Jesus stated that He was provided to feed God's people. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Moses, along with [Elijah](/wiki/Elijah), is presented as meeting with Jesus in all three Gospel accounts of the [Transfiguration of Jesus](/wiki/Transfiguration_of_Jesus) in [Matthew 17](/wiki/Matthew_17), [Mark 9](/wiki/Mark_9), and [Luke 9](/wiki/Luke_9), respectively. Later Christians [Template:Who](/wiki/Template:Who) found numerous other parallels between the life of Moses and Jesus to the extent that Jesus was likened [Template:By whom](/wiki/Template:By_whom) to a "second Moses." For instance, Jesus' escape from the [slaughter by Herod in Bethlehem](/wiki/Massacre_of_the_Innocents) is compared [Template:By whom](/wiki/Template:By_whom) to Moses' escape from Pharaoh's designs to kill Hebrew infants. Such parallels, unlike those mentioned above, are not pointed out in Scripture. See the article on [typology](/wiki/Typology_(theology)). [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

His relevance to modern Christianity has not diminished. Moses is considered to be a [saint](/wiki/Saint) by several churches; and is commemorated as a prophet in the respective [Calendars of Saints](/wiki/Calendar_of_saints) of the [Eastern Orthodox Church](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church), the [Roman Catholic Church](/wiki/Catholic_Church), and the [Lutheran](/wiki/Lutheranism) churches on [September 4](/wiki/September_4). In [Eastern Orthodox liturgics](/wiki/September_4_(Eastern_Orthodox_liturgics)) for September 4, Moses is commemorated as the "Holy Prophet and God-seer Moses, on Mount Nebo".[[55]](#cite_note-55)[[56]](#cite_note-56)[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn) The Orthodox Church also commemorates him on the [Sunday of the Forefathers](/wiki/Nativity_Fast#Sunday_of_the_Forefathers), two Sundays before the [Nativity](/wiki/Nativity_of_Jesus).[[57]](#cite_note-57) The [Armenian Apostolic Church](/wiki/Armenian_Apostolic_Church) commemorates him as one of the Holy Forefathers in their [Calendar of Saints](/wiki/Calendar_of_Saints_(Armenian_Apostolic_Church)) on July 30. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

#### Mormonism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) Members of [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](/wiki/The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints) (colloquially called [Mormons](/wiki/Mormons)) generally view Moses in the same way that other Christians do. However, in addition to accepting the biblical account of Moses, Mormons include [Selections from the Book of Moses](/wiki/Book_of_Moses) as part of their scriptural canon.[[58]](#cite_note-58) This book is believed to be the translated writings of Moses, and is included in the [Pearl of Great Price](/wiki/Pearl_of_Great_Price_(Mormonism)).[[59]](#cite_note-59) Latter-day Saints are also unique in believing that Moses was taken to heaven without having tasted death ([translated](/wiki/Translation_(LDS_Church))). In addition, [Joseph Smith](/wiki/Joseph_Smith) and [Oliver Cowdery](/wiki/Oliver_Cowdery) stated that on April 3, 1836, Moses appeared to them in the [Kirtland Temple](/wiki/Kirtland_Temple) (located in [Kirtland, Ohio](/wiki/Kirtland,_Ohio)) in a glorified, immortal, physical form and bestowed upon them the "keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the [ten tribes](/wiki/Ten_Lost_Tribes#Mormonism) from the land of the north."[[60]](#cite_note-60)

### Islam[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Nabi_Musa_jerico-Jerusalam.jpg)[Maqam El-Nabi Musa](/wiki/Nabi_Musa), [Jericho](/wiki/Jericho).

Moses is mentioned more in the [Quran](/wiki/Quran) than any other individual and his life is narrated and recounted more than that of any other [Islamic prophet](/wiki/Prophets_of_Islam).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) In general, Moses is described in ways which parallel the Islamic prophet [Muhammad](/wiki/Muhammad),[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) and "his character exhibits some of the main themes of [Islamic theology](/wiki/Schools_of_Islamic_theology)," including the "moral injunction that we are to submit ourselves to God." [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Moses is defined in the Quran as both prophet (*nabi*) and messenger ([*rasul*](/wiki/Prophets_and_messengers_in_Islam)), the latter term indicating that he was one of those prophets who brought a scripture and law to his people. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[Template:Harvnb](/wiki/Template:Harvnb) describes an account in the Quran of meetings in heaven between Moses and Muhammad, which Huston states were "one of the crucial events in Muhammad's life," and resulted in Muslims observing [5 daily prayers](/wiki/Salah).[[61]](#cite_note-61) Moses is mentioned 502 times in the Quran; passages mentioning Moses include [2](/wiki/Al-Baqara).49–61, [7](/wiki/Al-A'raf).103–160, [10](/wiki/Yunus_(sura)).75–93, [17](/wiki/Al-Isra).101–104, [20](/wiki/Ta-Ha).9–97, [26](/wiki/Ash-Shu'ara).10–66, [27](/wiki/An-Naml).7–14, [28](/wiki/Al-Qisas).3–46, [40](/wiki/Al-Ghafir).23–30, [43](/wiki/Az-Zukhruf).46–55, [44](/wiki/Ad-Dukhan).17–31, and [79](/wiki/An-Naziat).15–25. and many others. Most of the key events in Moses' life which are narrated in the Bible are to be found dispersed through the different [Surahs](/wiki/Surah) of the Quran, with a story about meeting [Khidr](/wiki/Khidr) which is not found in the Bible.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

[thumb|*The Finding of Moses*, painting by](/wiki/File:Moses_-_Alta-Tadema.jpg) [Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema](/wiki/Sir_Lawrence_Alma-Tadema), 1904

In the Moses story related by the Quran, Jochebed is commanded by God to place Moses in an ark and cast him on the waters of the Nile, thus abandoning him completely to God's protection.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)[[62]](#cite_note-62) The Pharaoh's wife [Asiya](/wiki/Asiya), not his daughter, found Moses floating in the waters of the Nile. She convinced the Pharaoh to keep him as their son because they were not blessed with any children. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

The Quran's account has emphasized Moses' mission to invite the Pharaoh to accept God's divine message[[63]](#cite_note-63) as well as give salvation to the Israelites.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)[[64]](#cite_note-64) According to the Quran, Moses encourages the Israelites to enter Canaan, but they are unwilling to fight the Canaanites, fearing certain defeat. Moses responds by pleading to Allah that he and his brother Aaron be separated from the rebellious Israelites. After which the Israelites are made to wander for 40 years.[[65]](#cite_note-65) According to Islamic tradition, Moses is buried at [Maqam El-Nabi Musa](/wiki/Nabi_Musa), [Jericho](/wiki/Jericho). [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

### Baha'i Faith[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Expand section](/wiki/Template:Expand_section) Moses is one of the most important prophets in the [Bahá'í Faith](/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith). He is considered to be a [messenger from God](/wiki/Manifestation_of_God) who is equally authentic as those sent in other eras.[[66]](#cite_note-66) An epithet of Moses in Baha'i scriptures is *Interlocutor of God,*[[67]](#cite_note-67)[Template:Page needed](/wiki/Template:Page_needed) or alternatively the One Who Conversed with God.[[68]](#cite_note-68) Important figures in the Baha’i religion, such as [Abdul’l-Baha](/wiki/%60Abdu'l-Bahá), have highlighted the fact that Moses, like [Abraham](/wiki/Abraham), had none of the makings of a [great man of history](/wiki/Great_Man_theory), but through God's assistance he was able achieve many great things. He is described as having been "for a long time a shepherd in the wilderness," of having had a [stammer](/wiki/Stuttering), and of being "much hated and detested" by the Pharaoh and the ancient Egyptians of his time. He is said to have been raised in an oppressive household, and to have been known, in Egypt, as a man who had committed murder – though he had done so in order to prevent an act of cruelty.[[69]](#cite_note-69) Nevertheless, like Abraham, through the assistance of God, he achieved great things and gained renown even beyond the [Levant](/wiki/Levant). Chief among these achievements was the freeing of his people, the Hebrews, from bondage in Egypt and leading "them to the Holy Land." He is viewed as the one who bestowed on Israel 'the religious and the civil law' which gave them "honour among all nations," and which spread their fame to different parts of the world.[[69]](#cite_note-69) Furthermore, through the law, Moses is believed to have led the Hebrews 'to the highest possible degree of [civilization](/wiki/Civilization) at that period.’ Abdul’l-Baha asserts that the ancient Greek philosophers regarded "the illustrious men of Israel as models of perfection." Chief among these philosophers, he says, was [Socrates](/wiki/Socrates) who "visited Syria, and took from the children of Israel the teachings of the Unity of God and of the immortality of the soul."[[69]](#cite_note-69) Moses is further described as paving the way for [Baha'ullah](/wiki/Bahá'u'lláh) and his ultimate revelation, and as a teacher of truth, whose teachings were in line with the customs of his time.[[70]](#cite_note-70)

## Modern reception[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

### Politics and law[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[thumb|Statue of Moses at the](/wiki/File:Moses_LOC.jpg) [Library of Congress](/wiki/Library_of_Congress) In a metaphorical sense in the Christian tradition, a "Moses" has been referred to as the leader who delivers the people from a terrible situation. Among the [Presidents of the United States](/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_the_United_States) known to have used the symbolism of Moses were [Harry S. Truman](/wiki/Harry_S._Truman), [Jimmy Carter](/wiki/Jimmy_Carter), [Ronald Reagan](/wiki/Ronald_Reagan), [Bill Clinton](/wiki/Bill_Clinton), [George W. Bush](/wiki/George_W._Bush) and [Barack Obama](/wiki/Barack_Obama), who referred to his supporters as "the Moses generation."[[71]](#cite_note-71) [Winston Churchill](/wiki/Winston_Churchill), in his essay called "Moses—the Leader of a People", published in 1931, used the story of Moses to convince the British population of its need for strong leadership, and that "human success depends on the favor of God."[[72]](#cite_note-72) He saw Moses as more than a [metaphor](/wiki/Metaphor), however, rejecting as "[myth](/wiki/Myth)" the assertions that Moses was only a legendary figure.<ref name=Churchill>[Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).</ref>

He described him as "the supreme law-giver, who received from God that remarkable code upon which the religious, moral, and social life of the nation was so securely founded… [and] one of the greatest human beings with the most decisive leap forward ever discernable in the human story."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Churchill also noted the relevance of the story of Moses to [modern Britain](/wiki/History_of_the_United_Kingdom): "We may believe that they happened to a people not so very different from ourselves..."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

In his essay, Churchill implied that the Ten Commandments were a primary set of laws, "Here [Mount Sinai] Moses received from [God] the tables of those fundamental laws which were henceforth to be followed, with occasional lapses, by the highest forms of human society."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

In subsequent years, theologians linked the Ten Commandments with the formation of early [democracy](/wiki/Democracy). Scottish theologian [William Barclay](/wiki/William_Barclay_(theologian)) described them as "the universal foundation of all things… the law without which [nationhood](/wiki/Nation) is impossible. …Our society is founded upon it.[[73]](#cite_note-73) [Pope Francis](/wiki/Pope_Francis) addressed the [United States Congress](/wiki/United_States_Congress) in 2015 stating that all people need to "keep alive their sense of unity by means of just legislation... [and] the figure of Moses leads us directly to God and thus to the transcendent dignity of the human being.[[74]](#cite_note-74)

#### American history[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[thumb|Pilgrims](/wiki/File:Embarkation_of_the_Pilgrims.jpg) [John Carver](/wiki/John_Carver_(Mayflower_passenger)), [William Bradford](/wiki/William_Bradford_(Plymouth_Colony_governor)), and [Miles Standish](/wiki/Miles_Standish), at prayer during their voyage to America. Painting by [Robert Walter Weir](/wiki/Robert_Walter_Weir).

##### Pilgrims[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

References to Moses were used by the [Puritans](/wiki/Puritans), who relied on the story of Moses to give meaning and hope to the lives of [Pilgrims](/wiki/Pilgrim_Fathers) seeking [religious](/wiki/Freedom_of_religion) and [personal freedom](/wiki/Civil_liberties) in America. [John Carver](/wiki/John_Carver_(Plymouth_Colony_governor)) was the first governor of [Plymouth colony](/wiki/Plymouth_colony) and first signer of the [Mayflower Compact](/wiki/Mayflower_Compact), which he wrote in 1620 during the ship [*Mayflower*](/wiki/Mayflower)***s three-month voyage. He inspired the Pilgrims with a "sense of earthly grandeur and divine purpose," notes historian*** [***Jon Meacham***](/wiki/Jon_Meacham)***,***[***Template:Sfn***](/wiki/Template:Sfn) ***and was called the "Moses of the Pilgrims."***[***[75]***](#cite_note-75) ***Early American writer*** [***James Russell Lowell***](/wiki/James_Russell_Lowell) ***noted the similarity of the founding of America by the Pilgrims to that of*** [***ancient Israel***](/wiki/History_of_ancient_Israel_and_Judah) ***by Moses:*** [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Following Carver's death the following year, [William Bradford](/wiki/William_Bradford_(Plymouth_Colony_governor)) was made governor. He feared that the remaining Pilgrims would not survive the hardships of the new land, with half their people having already died within months of arriving. Bradford evoked the symbol of Moses to the weakened and desperate Pilgrims to help calm them and give them hope: "Violence will break all. Where is the meek and humble spirit of Moses?"[[76]](#cite_note-76) [William G. Dever](/wiki/William_G._Dever) explains the attitude of the Pilgrims: "We considered ourselves the 'New Israel,' particularly we in America. And for that reason we knew who we were, what we believed in and valued, and what our '[manifest destiny'](/wiki/Manifest_destiny) was."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)[[77]](#cite_note-77)

##### Founding Fathers of the United States[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[thumb|First proposed seal of the United States, 1776](/wiki/File:FirstCommitteeGreatSealReverseLossingDrawing.jpg)

On July 4, 1776, immediately after the [Declaration of Independence](/wiki/United_States_Declaration_of_Independence) was officially passed, the [Continental Congress](/wiki/Continental_Congress) asked [John Adams](/wiki/John_Adams), [Thomas Jefferson](/wiki/Thomas_Jefferson), and [Benjamin Franklin](/wiki/Benjamin_Franklin) to design a seal that would clearly represent a symbol for the new United States. They chose the symbol of Moses leading the Israelites to freedom.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The [Founding Fathers of the United States](/wiki/Founding_Fathers_of_the_United_States) inscribed the words of Moses on the [Liberty Bell](/wiki/Liberty_Bell): "Proclaim Liberty thro' all the Land to all the Inhabitants thereof." (Levit. 25)

Upon the death of [George Washington](/wiki/George_Washington) in 1799, two thirds of his eulogies referred to him as "America's Moses," with one orator saying that "Washington has been the same to us as Moses was to the Children of Israel."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

[Benjamin Franklin](/wiki/Benjamin_Franklin), in 1788, saw the difficulties that some of the newly independent [American states](/wiki/U.S._state) were having in forming a government, and proposed that until a new code of laws could be agreed to, they should be governed by "the laws of Moses," as contained in the Old Testament.<ref name=Franklin>[Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).</ref> He justified his proposal by explaining that the laws had worked in biblical times: "The [Supreme Being](/wiki/Supreme_Being)… having rescued them from bondage by many miracles, performed by his servant Moses, he personally delivered to that chosen servant, in the presence of the whole nation, a constitution and code of laws for their observance.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

[John Adams](/wiki/John_Adams), 2nd [President of the United States](/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_the_United_States), stated why he relied on the laws of Moses over [Greek philosophy](/wiki/Ancient_Greek_philosophy) for establishing the [United States Constitution](/wiki/United_States_Constitution): "As much as I love, esteem, and admire the Greeks, I believe the Hebrews have done more to enlighten and civilize the world. Moses did more than all their legislators and philosophers.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Swedish historian [Hugo Valentin](/wiki/Hugo_Valentin) credited Moses as the "first to proclaim the [rights of man](/wiki/Human_rights)."<ref name= Shuldiner>[Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).</ref>

#### Slavery and civil rights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

Historian Gladys L. Knight describes how leaders who emerged during [slavery time](/wiki/Slavery_in_the_United_States) and after often personified the Moses symbol. "The symbol of Moses was empowering in that it served to amplify a need for freedom."[[78]](#cite_note-78) Therefore, when [Abraham Lincoln](/wiki/Abraham_Lincoln) was [assassinated in 1865](/wiki/Assassination_of_Abraham_Lincoln) after [freeing the slaves](/wiki/Thirteenth_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution), [Black Americans](/wiki/African_Americans) said they had lost "their Moses".[[79]](#cite_note-79) Lincoln biographer [Charles Carleton Coffin](/wiki/Charles_Carleton_Coffin) writes, "The millions whom Abraham Lincoln delivered from slavery will ever liken him to Moses, the deliverer of Israel."[[80]](#cite_note-80) Similarly, [Harriet Tubman](/wiki/Harriet_Tubman), who rescued approximately seventy enslaved family and friends, was also described as the "Moses" of her people.[[81]](#cite_note-81) In the 1960s, a leading figure in the [civil rights movement](/wiki/African-American_Civil_Rights_Movement_(1954–68)) was [Martin Luther King, Jr.](/wiki/Martin_Luther_King,_Jr.), who was called "a modern Moses," and often referred to Moses in his speeches: "The struggle of Moses, the struggle of his devoted followers as they sought to get out of Egypt. This is something of the story of every people struggling for freedom."[[82]](#cite_note-82)

### Literature[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Expand section](/wiki/Template:Expand_section) [Template:Wikiquote](/wiki/Template:Wikiquote) [Thomas Mann's](/wiki/Thomas_Mann) [novella](/wiki/Novella) [*The Tables of the Law*](/wiki/The_Tables_of_the_Law) (1944) is a retelling of the story of the Exodus from Egypt, with Moses as its main character. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

### In Freud[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[Sigmund Freud](/wiki/Sigmund_Freud), in his last book, [*Moses and Monotheism*](/wiki/Moses_and_Monotheism) in 1939, postulated that Moses was an Egyptian nobleman who adhered to the [monotheism](/wiki/Monotheism) of [Akhenaten](/wiki/Akhenaten). Following a theory proposed by a contemporary [biblical critic](/wiki/Biblical_criticism), Freud believed that Moses was murdered in the wilderness, producing a collective sense of [patricidal](/wiki/Patricide) [guilt](/wiki/Guilt_(emotion)) that has been at the heart of Judaism ever since. "Judaism had been a religion of the father, Christianity became a religion of the son", he wrote. The possible Egyptian origin of Moses and of his message has received significant scholarly attention.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)[Template:Page needed](/wiki/Template:Page_needed)[[83]](#cite_note-83) Opponents of this view observe that the religion of the Torah seems different from [Atenism](/wiki/Atenism) in everything except the central feature of devotion to a single god,[[84]](#cite_note-84) although this has been countered by a variety of arguments, e.g. pointing out the similarities between the [Hymn to Aten](/wiki/Great_Hymn_to_the_Aten) and [Psalm 104](/wiki/Psalm_104).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)[Template:Page needed](/wiki/Template:Page_needed)[[85]](#cite_note-85) Freud's interpretation of the historical Moses is not well accepted among [historians](/wiki/Historian), and is considered [pseudohistory](/wiki/Pseudohistory) by many.[[86]](#cite_note-86)[Template:Page needed](/wiki/Template:Page_needed)

### Criticism of Moses[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Synthesis](/wiki/Template:Synthesis) Moses' prominence in religious literature has made him a popular target for [biblical critics](/wiki/Criticism_of_the_Bible), most of whom question his reputation as a just and compassionate leader, drawing attention to certain passages in which he appears to display a more brutal and unforgiving side. Given his holy status in the minds of Jews, Christians and Muslims, criticism of Moses' life and teachings has been for the most part by [deists](/wiki/Deism), [agnostics](/wiki/Agnosticism) and [atheists](/wiki/Atheism).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

#### Thomas Paine and Numbers 31:13-18[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

In the late eighteenth century, the deist [Thomas Paine](/wiki/Thomas_Paine) commented at length on Moses' Laws in [*The Age of Reason*](/wiki/The_Age_of_Reason) (1794, 1795, and 1807). Paine considered Moses to be a "detestable [villain](/wiki/Villain)", and cited [Template:Bibleverse](/wiki/Template:Bibleverse) as an example of his "unexampled atrocities".[[87]](#cite_note-87) In the passage, the Jewish army had returned from conquering the [Midianites](/wiki/Midian), and Moses has gone down to meet it: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

The prominent atheist [Richard Dawkins](/wiki/Richard_Dawkins) also made reference to these verses in his 2006 book, [*The God Delusion*](/wiki/The_God_Delusion), concluding that Moses was "not a great [role model](/wiki/Role_model) for modern moralists".[[88]](#cite_note-88) However, some Jewish sources defend Moses' role. The [Chasam Sofer](/wiki/Moses_Sofer) emphasizes that this war was not fought at Moses' behest, but was commanded by God as an act of revenge against the Midianite women,[[89]](#cite_note-89) who, according to the Biblical account, had seduced the Israelites and led them to sin. Rabbi Joel Grossman argued that the story is a "powerful [fable](/wiki/Fable) of [lust](/wiki/Lust) and [betrayal](/wiki/Betrayal)", and that Moses' execution of the women was a symbolic condemnation of those who seek to turn sex and desire to evil purposes.[[90]](#cite_note-90) Alan Levin, an educational specialist with the [Reform](/wiki/Reform_Judaism) movement, has similarly suggested that the story should be taken as a [cautionary tale](/wiki/Cautionary_tale), to "warn successive generations of Jews to watch their own idolatrous behavior".[[91]](#cite_note-91)

### Figurative art[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

[thumb|Sculpture in the](/wiki/File:Moses_bas-relief_in_the_U.S._House_of_Representatives_chamber.jpg) [U.S. House of Representatives](/wiki/U.S._House_of_Representatives). Moses is depicted in several U.S. government buildings because of his legacy as a lawgiver. In the [Library of Congress](/wiki/Library_of_Congress) stands a large statue of Moses alongside a statue of the [Paul the Apostle](/wiki/Paul_the_Apostle). Moses is one of the 23 lawgivers depicted in [marble](/wiki/Marble) [bas-reliefs](/wiki/Bas-relief) in the [chamber](/wiki/United_States_Capitol#House_Chamber) of the [U.S. House of Representatives](/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives) in the [United States Capitol](/wiki/United_States_Capitol). The plaque's overview states: "Moses (c. 1350–1250 B.C.) Hebrew prophet and lawgiver; transformed a wandering people into a nation; received the Ten Commandments."[[92]](#cite_note-92) The other twenty-two figures have their profiles turned to Moses, which is the only forward-facing bas-relief.[[93]](#cite_note-93)[[94]](#cite_note-94) [thumb|Statue by](/wiki/File:'Moses'_by_Michelangelo_JBU160.jpg) [Michelangelo Buonarotti](/wiki/Michelangelo_Buonarotti) — in Basilica San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome

Moses appears eight times in carvings that ring the [Supreme Court Great Hall](/wiki/United_States_Supreme_Court_Building) ceiling. His face is presented along with other ancient figures such as [Solomon](/wiki/Solomon), the Greek god [Zeus](/wiki/Zeus) and the Roman goddess of wisdom, [Minerva](/wiki/Minerva). The Supreme Court Building's east pediment depicts Moses holding two tablets. Tablets representing the Ten Commandments can be found carved in the oak courtroom doors, on the support frame of the courtroom's bronze gates and in the library woodwork. A controversial image is one that sits directly above the [Chief Justice of the United States'](/wiki/Chief_Justice_of_the_United_States) head. In the center of the 40-foot-long Spanish marble carving is a tablet displaying [Roman numerals](/wiki/Roman_numerals) I through X, with some numbers partially hidden.[[95]](#cite_note-95)

### Michelangelo's statue[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

[Michelangelo's](/wiki/Michelangelo) [statue of Moses](/wiki/Moses_(Michelangelo)) in the Church of [San Pietro in Vincoli](/wiki/San_Pietro_in_Vincoli), [Rome](/wiki/Rome), is one of the most familiar masterpieces in the world.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The horns the sculptor included on Moses' head are the result of a mistranslation of the Hebrew Bible into the Latin [Vulgate Bible](/wiki/Vulgate) with which Michelangelo was familiar. The Hebrew word taken from *Exodus* means either a "horn" or an "irradiation." Experts at the [Archaeological Institute of America](/wiki/Archaeological_Institute_of_America) show that the term was used when Moses "returned to his people after seeing as much of the Glory of the Lord as human eye could stand," and his face "reflected radiance."[[96]](#cite_note-96) In early [Jewish art](/wiki/Jewish_culture#Visual_arts_and_architecture), moreover, Moses is often "shown with rays coming out of his head."[[97]](#cite_note-97) Another author explains, "When [Saint Jerome](/wiki/Jerome) translated the Old Testament into [Latin](/wiki/Latin), he thought no one but [Christ](/wiki/Christ) should glow with rays of light — so he advanced the secondary translation.[[98]](#cite_note-98)[[99]](#cite_note-99) However, writer J. Stephen Lang points out that Jerome's version actually described Moses as "giving off hornlike rays," and he "rather clumsily translated it to mean 'having horns.'"[[100]](#cite_note-100) It has also been noted that he had Moses seated on a [throne](/wiki/Throne), yet Moses was never given the title of a [King](/wiki/Monarch) nor ever sat on such thrones.[[101]](#cite_note-101)

### Film and television[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]

Moses was portrayed by [Theodore Roberts](/wiki/Theodore_Roberts) in [Cecil B. DeMille's](/wiki/Cecil_B._DeMille) 1923 [silent film](/wiki/Silent_film) [*The Ten Commandments*](/wiki/The_Ten_Commandments_(1923_film)). Moses appeared as the central character in the 1956 DeMille movie, also called [*The Ten Commandments*](/wiki/The_Ten_Commandments_(1956_film)), in which he was portrayed by [Charlton Heston](/wiki/Charlton_Heston). A [television remake](/wiki/The_Ten_Commandments_(miniseries)) was produced in 2006.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[Burt Lancaster](/wiki/Burt_Lancaster) played *Moses* in the 1975 television [miniseries](/wiki/Miniseries) [*Moses the Lawgiver*](/wiki/Moses_the_Lawgiver). [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

In the 1981 [comedy film](/wiki/Comedy_film) [*History of the World, Part I*](/wiki/History_of_the_World,_Part_I), Moses was portrayed by [Mel Brooks](/wiki/Mel_Brooks).[[102]](#cite_note-102) Sir [Ben Kingsley](/wiki/Ben_Kingsley) was the narrator of the 2007 [animated](/wiki/Animation) film, [*The Ten Commandments*](/wiki/The_Ten_Commandments_(2007_film)).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Moses appeared as the central character in the 1998 [DreamWorks](/wiki/DreamWorks) Pictures' [animated movie](/wiki/Animated_cartoon), [*The Prince of Egypt*](/wiki/The_Prince_of_Egypt). He was voiced by [Val Kilmer](/wiki/Val_Kilmer).[[103]](#cite_note-103) [Christian Bale](/wiki/Christian_Bale) portrayed Moses in [Ridley Scott's](/wiki/Ridley_Scott) 2014 film [*Exodus: Gods and Kings*](/wiki/Exodus:_Gods_and_Kings)[[104]](#cite_note-104) which portrayed Moses and [Rameses II](/wiki/Rameses_II) as being raised by [Seti I](/wiki/Seti_I) as cousins. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]

* [Crossing the Red Sea](/wiki/Crossing_the_Red_Sea)
* [Moses in Islam](/wiki/Moses_in_Islam)
* [Table of prophets of Abrahamic religions](/wiki/Table_of_prophets_of_Abrahamic_religions)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]

[Template:Notelist](/wiki/Template:Notelist) [Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## Citations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## Further reading[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]

* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation). 208 pp.
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Kirsch, Jonathan](/wiki/Jonathan_Kirsch). *Moses: A Life.* New York: Ballantine, 1998. ISBN 0-345-41269-9.
* Kohn, Rebecca. *Seven Days to the Sea: An Epic Novel of the Exodus*. New York: Rugged Land, 2006. ISBN 1-59071-049-5.
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation)
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).
* [Template:Citation](/wiki/Template:Citation).

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]

[Template:Wiktionary](/wiki/Template:Wiktionary) [Template:Commons category](/wiki/Template:Commons_category) [Template:Wikiquote](/wiki/Template:Wikiquote) [Template:Wikisource author](/wiki/Template:Wikisource_author)

* [Template:JewishEncyclopedia](/wiki/Template:JewishEncyclopedia)
* [*The Geography*, Book XVI, Chapter II](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Strabo/16B*.html) The entire context of the cited chapter of Strabo's work

[Template:S-start](/wiki/Template:S-start) [Template:S-hou](/wiki/Template:S-hou) [Template:S-bef](/wiki/Template:S-bef) [Template:S-ttl](/wiki/Template:S-ttl) [Template:S-aft](/wiki/Template:S-aft) [Template:End](/wiki/Template:End)

[Template:Prophets of the Tanakh](/wiki/Template:Prophets_of_the_Tanakh) [Template:Prophets in the Qur'an](/wiki/Template:Prophets_in_the_Qur'an) [Template:Ark of the Covenant](/wiki/Template:Ark_of_the_Covenant) [Template:Catholic saints](/wiki/Template:Catholic_saints)

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[Category:Ancient Egyptian Jews](/wiki/Category:Ancient_Egyptian_Jews) [Category:Angelic visionaries](/wiki/Category:Angelic_visionaries) [Category:Moses](/wiki/Category:Moses) [Category:15th-century BC biblical rulers](/wiki/Category:15th-century_BC_biblical_rulers) [Category:Biblical murderers](/wiki/Category:Biblical_murderers) [Category:Book of Exodus](/wiki/Category:Book_of_Exodus) [Category:Adoptees](/wiki/Category:Adoptees) [Category:Ancient Egyptian princes](/wiki/Category:Ancient_Egyptian_princes) [Category:Christian saints from the Old Testament](/wiki/Category:Christian_saints_from_the_Old_Testament) [Category:Prophets of Islam](/wiki/Category:Prophets_of_Islam) [Category:People in the canonical gospels](/wiki/Category:People_in_the_canonical_gospels) [Category:People in the General Epistles](/wiki/Category:People_in_the_General_Epistles) [Category:Torah people](/wiki/Category:Torah_people) [Category:Wonderworkers](/wiki/Category:Wonderworkers) [Category:Founders of religions](/wiki/Category:Founders_of_religions)