

Moses as an Advocate

Source Sheet by the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

Exodus 3:11-13

שמות ג': א-י"ג

(11) But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and free the Israelites from Egypt?” (12) And He said, “I will be with you; that shall be your sign that it was I who sent you. And when you have freed the people from Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain.” (13) Moses said to God, “When I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?”

(יא) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הַאֱלֹהִים מִי אֲנֹכִי כִּי אֵלֶךְ אֶל־פַּרְעֹה וְכִי אוֹצִיא אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרָיִם: (יב) וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְזֶה־לְךָ הָאוֹת כִּי אֲנֹכִי שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ בְּהוֹצִיאֶךָ אֶת־הָעָם מִמִּצְרָיִם תַּעֲבֹדוּן אֶת־הַאֱלֹהִים עַל הַהָר הַזֶּה: (יג) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הַאֱלֹהִים הַנִּה אֲנֹכִי בֹא אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתִּי לָהֶם אֵלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם וְאָמְרוּ־לִי מִה־שְּׁמוֹ מָה אֲמַר אֱלֹהִים:

Exodus 4:10-17

שמות ד': י'-י"ז

(10) But Moses said to the LORD, “Please, O Lord, I have never been a man of words, either in times past or now that You have spoken to Your servant; I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.” (11) And the LORD said to him, “Who gives man speech? Who makes him dumb or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? (12) Now go, and I will be with you as you speak and will instruct you what to say.” (13) But he said, “Please, O Lord, make someone else Your agent.” (14) The LORD became angry with Moses, and He said, “There is your brother Aaron the Levite. He, I know, speaks readily. Even now he is setting out to meet you, and he will be happy to see you. (15) You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth—I will be with

(י) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה כִּי אֲדַנְיָ לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים אֲנֹכִי גַם מִתְּמוֹל גַּם מִשְׁלֹשׁ גַּם מֵאִז וְצַרְפָּרָה אֶל־עַבְדְּךָ כִּי כְבֹד־פֶּה וּכְבֹד לְשׁוֹן אֲנֹכִי: (יא) וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָיו מִי עָשָׂה פֶה לְאָדָם אוֹ מִי־יִשְׁוֶם אֲלֵם אוֹ חֵרֶשׁ אוֹ כִּסֹּם אוֹ עֹרֶר הֲלֹא אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה: (יב) וְעַתָּה לֵךְ וְאִנְכִי אֶהְיֶה עִם־פִּיךָ וְהוֹרִיתִיךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּדְבָּר: (יג) וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי אֲדַנְיָ שְׁלַח־נָא בְּנִדְוֹתֶיךָ לַחַתָּה: (יד) וַיִּסְרֵ־אֶף יְהוָה בְּמֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְיִדְעַתִּי כִּי־יִדְבַר יְדַבֵּר הוּא וְגַם הַנִּהֵה־הוּא יֵצֵא לְקִרְאתְךָ וְרָאֶךָ וְשָׁמַח בְּלִבּוֹ: (טו) וְדַבַּרְתָּ אֵלָיו וְשָׁמַתְּ אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים בְּפִיו וְאֲנֹכִי אֶהְיֶה עִם־פִּיךָ וְעִם־פִּיהוּ וְהוֹרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂוּן: (טז) וְדַבַּרְתָּ הוּא לְךָ אֶל־הָעָם

you and with him as you speak, and tell both of you what to do— (16) and he shall speak for you to the people. Thus he shall serve as your spokesman, with you playing the role of God to him, (17) and take with you this rod, with which you shall perform the signs.”

וְהָיָה הוּא יְהִי־לְךָ לְפָנָי וְאַתָּה תְהִי־לְוֹ
לְאֵלֵיהֶם: (יז) וְאַתָּה־תִּמְטֵה הַזֶּה תִּקַּח בְּיָדְךָ
אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה־בּוֹ אֶת־הָאֵתוֹת: (פ)

Exodus 7:1-4

(1) The LORD replied to Moses, “See, I place you in the role of God to Pharaoh, with your brother Aaron as your prophet. (2) You shall repeat all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh to let the Israelites depart from his land. (3) But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, that I may multiply My signs and marvels in the land of Egypt. (4) When Pharaoh does not heed you, I will lay My hand upon Egypt and deliver My ranks, My people the Israelites, from the land of Egypt with extraordinary chastisements.

שמות ז':א'-ד'

(א) וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה רְאֵה נִמְתִּיךָ
אֱלֹהִים לְפָרְעֹה וְאַתָּה תִּבְיָאֵד:
(ב) אַתָּה תִּדְבֹר אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה וְאַתָּה
אֲחִיךָ יִדְבַר אֶל־פָּרְעֹה וְשַׁלַּח
אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ: (ג) וְאֲנִי אֶקְשֶׁה
אֶת־לֵב פָּרְעֹה וְהָרַבִּיתִי אֶת־אֲתֹמֹתַי
וְאֶת־מוֹפְתֵי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: (ד) וְלֹא־יִשְׁמַע
אֶלְכֶם פָּרְעֹה וְנִמְתִּי אֶת־יָדַי בְּמִצְרַיִם
וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־צְבָאֹתַי אֶת־עַמִּי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּשִׁפְטִים גְּדֹלִים:

Exodus 12:29-31

(29) In the middle of the night the LORD struck down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on the throne to the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of the cattle. (30) And Pharaoh arose in the night, with all his courtiers and all the Egyptians—because there was a loud cry in Egypt; for there was no house where there was not someone dead. (31) He summoned Moses and Aaron in the night and said, “Up, depart from among my people, you and the Israelites with you! Go, worship the LORD as you said!

שמות י"ב:כ"ט-ל"א

(כט) וַיְהִי אִ בְּחֹצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וַיַּהֲרֹג ה' כָּל־בְּכוֹרֵי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבְּכוֹר פָּרְעֹה
הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאוֹ עַד בְּכוֹר הַשְּׂבִי אֲשֶׁר
בְּבֵית הַבּוֹר וְכָל בְּכוֹר בְּהֵמָה: (ל) וַיִּקָּם
פָּרְעֹה לַיְלָה הוּא וְכָל־עַבְדָּיו וְכָל־מִצְרַיִם
וַתְּהִי צַעֲקָה גְדֹלָה בְּמִצְרַיִם כִּי־אֵין בַּיִת
אֲשֶׁר אֵין־שָׁם מָת: (לא) וַיִּקְרָא לְמֹשֶׁה
וְלְאַהֲרֹן לַיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר קוּמוּ צֵאוּ מִתּוֹךְ עַמִּי
גַם־אַתֶּם גַּם־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְכוּ עַבְדוּ
אֶת־יְהוָה כְּדַבַּרְכֶּם:

Discussion Questions:

- Is Moses an advocate?
- What is he advocating for? What is his ideal outcome?
- On whose behalf is he advocating?
- Is he a willing advocate or does he need to be convinced? Who convinces him?
- What was his strategy? What were the strengths of this strategy? What were the weaknesses?
- Is he a good advocate? Why or why not?
- Is Moses successful?



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