

Moses Story Summary

Battles and Final Years



Moses and the Ten Commandments, source unknown

• The Israelites have several violent encounters with other peoples living in the region. In their battle against the Amalekites, Moses wields the power of God by lifting his arms up over the battlefield. As long as his arms are raised, the Israelites have the advantage. When his arms fall, the Amalekites start winning. Aaron and Hur help Moses hold up his arms, and the Israelites win the battle. In another encounter, the Israelites attack and slaughter the Midianites for having sent women into the Israelite camp to seduce their men.



Aaron and Hur lift Moses' arms, source unknown

- When the Israelites complain again in thirst, God instructs Moses to speak to a nearby rock to spring forth water. Moses and Aaron say to the people, "Do we have to strike yet another rock for you!?" They hit the rock and water springs forth. However, in their frustration, Moses and Aaron fail to credit God for the miracle or follow God's instructions carefully. God says to Moses, "You don't reveal my holiness to the people any more. You will not be the one to lead them into the promised land."
- On the near shore of the Jordan River, Moses delivers his parting words to the Hebrews, which become the book of Deuteronomy, restating God's law and exhorting the people to follow it.
- Moses dies at the age of 120 on Mount Nebo. God buries him in a valley. In place of Moses, Joshua was called by God to lead the people of Israel to the promised land.



Israelis taken prisoner by the Canaanites in water Merom, Byzantine manuscript, 13th Century BCE



Joshua, Hosios Loukas, Greece Byzantine fresco, 1355-1245 BCE