

## Moshe – Traitor or Hero?

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Reading our Parsha, one could argue Moshe was a traitor. I mean, look at the facts. As a baby, his life was saved by an Egyptian. And not by just any Egyptian, by Egyptian royalty. Raised in the royal court, not only was he spared the hardships of slavery but rather he enjoyed all the privileges of Egyptian life. Although he was aware that he was ethnically a Hebrew (“Moses grew up and went out to his brothers”), culturally and socially, he was Egyptian (as we see him identified by the daughters of Yitro as an “Egyptian man”).

When Moshe sees a fellow Egyptian doing his lawful job, he interprets it as an injustice being done to a Hebrew person he never met or knew and intervenes on his behalf. Taking extreme measures, he breaks the law of the land as well as the natural balance that existed for hundreds of years between Egyptians and Hebrews. He had nothing to gain and everything to lose by turning on his Egyptian benefactors, who had so totally accepted him as an individual, as well as afforded him a lifestyle so few Jews were lucky enough to enjoy.

Upon the discovery of his actions Moshe was forced into a forty-year exile, far away from his family and land. Instead of recognizing the mistakes and consequences of his actions, his time in exile had the opposite effect; he recognizes and accepts upon himself a strange faith and lifestyle. By the time he was permitted to return from his exile the transformation was complete. He had turned his back wholly on his Egyptian upbringing and become a symbol of independence and even a great danger to Egyptian culture and dominance.

Indeed, if we were Egyptians, looking through Egyptian eyes, we would probably see Moshe as a traitor. To the Jewish eye, however, he was a hero. A hero who put everything on the line for the sake of his fellow Jews. With everything to lose and nothing to gain he risked the comfort he enjoyed from his adoptive land for the sake of a people he had little connection to. And despite the severe consequences he suffered, not only did not give up but only strengthened his connection and devotion to them.

Jonathan Pollard, our brother! We choose to see you, as well, through Jewish eyes. You are our hero, who sacrificed so many years of your life for our sake; for the sake of your brothers and sisters, many of whom never fully recognized or acknowledged the extent of what you did for them.

We rejoice in your redemption and welcome you home to the safety and warmth of a grateful nation. We see you through Jewish eyes as the Jewish hero you are.

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