

MOSES, A PRINCE IN EGYPT

Exodus 2:1-25

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Moses, Moses' mother, and Pharaoh's daughter

Key-locations: Egypt and Midian

Key-repetitions:

- Israelites suffered in Egypt (Ex 2:11, 23-24).
- Baby's mother: saw he was a fine child (Ex 2:2); hid her baby boy (Ex 2:2); prepared basket and placed her son in it (Ex 2:3); paid by Pharaoh's daughter to nurse her own baby (Ex 2:8-9); took her baby to Pharaoh's daughter (Ex 2:10).
- Baby's sister: Watched to see what would happen (Ex 2:4); offered to fetch a nursing mother for Pharaoh's daughter (Ex 2:7); fetched the baby's mother (Ex 2:8).
- Moses helping: Visited fellow Israelites (Heb 11:23); watched Israelites at hard labor (Ex 2:11); killed Egyptian who beat Hebrew relative (Ex 2:12); rescued Jethro's daughters from shepherds and watered sheep (Ex 2:17).

Key-attitudes:

- Israelites' agony and suffering.
- Prince Moses' self-confidence.
- Israelites' rejection of Prince Moses when he attempted to help them.
- Moses' anger at injustice.

Initial-situation:

A Pharaoh who did not know about Joseph came to power and he feared the multitude of Israelites. Pharaoh enslaved the Israelites, but they kept increasing in number. Pharaoh ordered the Hebrew midwives to kill all Hebrew baby boys, but they refused. Finally, Pharaoh ordered to throw into the Nile River every Hebrew baby boy.

Initial-problem:

A Hebrew couple from the tribe of Levi married and the woman gave birth to a son.

Final-situation:

Egypt's king died many years after Moses went to Midian. The Israelites groaned under their slavery and cried out. God heard their cries, remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob, and was concerned about the Israelites.

BIBLE STORY

Moses in Egypt

A Hebrew couple from the tribe of Levi married and the woman gave birth to a son. The mother saw that he was a fine child and hid him for three months. The mother could no longer hide her baby boy. She took a basket made of papyrus, waterproofed it with tar and pitch, and placed the baby in it. The mother set the basket afloat in the reeds along the bank of the Nile River where there was less danger of crocodiles and where the current would not take it away. Miriam, the baby's sister, stood at a distance to see what would happen (Ex 2:1-4).

Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe and she saw the basket among the reeds. She sent her slave girl to get the basket. Pharaoh's daughter opened the basket and saw the crying baby. She felt sorry for the baby and said, "This is one of the Hebrew babies."

Miriam, the baby's sister, asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Do you want me to get a nursing Hebrew mother to nurse the baby for you?"

Pharaoh's daughter answered Miriam, the baby's sister, "Yes, go."

The baby's sister fetched the baby's mother. Pharaoh's daughter told her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me. I'll pay you." The woman took the baby and nursed him. After the child was weaned, the mother took him to Pharaoh's daughter. Pharaoh's daughter adopted the baby as her son. She named him Moses (*Pulled-Out*), saying, "I pulled him out of the water" (Ex 2:5-10).

Years passed. Moses became a forty year old man and he visited his fellow Israelites (Heb 11:23). Moses went to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his relatives. Moses looked all around and didn't see anyone. Moses killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand.

The next day Moses went out again and saw two Hebrew men fighting. Moses asked the one who started the fight, "Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?"

The man answered, "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you going to kill me the way you killed the Egyptian?" Moses panicked and thought, "People know what I did" (Ex 2:11-14).

Moses Flees to Midian

Pharaoh heard about Moses killing the Egyptian and tried to kill Moses. Moses fled to the land of Midian. He sat down by a well.

Jethro, a priest of Midian, had seven daughters. The daughters came to the well to water their father's sheep. Shepherds drove the girls away, but Moses came to their rescue and watered their sheep.

The girls returned to their father. Jethro asked, "That didn't take long. Why did you return so early today?"

The girls answered, "An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds, drew water for us, and watered the sheep."

Jethro asked, "And where is the Egyptian? Why did you leave him behind? Invite him to have something to eat with us."

Moses agreed to stay with Jethro. Jethro gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses in marriage. Zipporah gave birth to a son (Ex 2:16-22).

Many years after Moses went to Midian, the king of Egypt died and a new king ruled Egypt. The Israelites groaned under their slavery and cried out. God heard their cries and remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God saw what was happening and was concerned about the Israelites (Ex 2:23-25).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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| 1. | What catches your attention in the story? | 5. | How did the characters face their problems? |
| 2. | Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. | How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. | Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. | Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. | What problems did the characters face? | 8. | What does the story tell about God? |

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did a mother protect her baby boy from being thrown into the river to drown?
2. How did the sister seek to help her little brother?
3. What happened when the baby was put into a basket in the river?
4. How did the baby get to live in Pharaoh's home?
5. How was God involved in the process?
6. How could this story help us deal with what seems to be an impossible tragedy?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **Resist evil and trust God to use your effort, no matter how small it seems.** Moses' mother could not change Pharaoh's law to kill her baby boy. But she hid her baby and later placed him in a tiny papyrus basket on the river. God used her courageous acts to place her son in Pharaoh's house (Ex 2:3-4).
2. **Be alert for unexpected opportunities which God gives and take advantage of them.** Miriam, the baby's sister saw that Pharaoh's daughter had discovered her baby brother. Quickly she took the initiative to suggest her mother as a nurse to care for the baby.
3. **God coordinates events in order to protect and to guide his servants.** Divine providence was evident when God coordinated circumstances to protect Moses' life and to place him in the king's palace. There he received an education that would prepare him to be a leader who could lead the Israelites to the Promised Land (Ex 2:1-10).

4. **Sin finds the sinner.** A person cannot hide his sins. Moses thought no one saw him kill and bury the Egyptian. But, others knew of his actions and he had to flee the country (Ex 2:12-14). Even if a person is not caught in this life, he will still face God in judgment.
5. **A person, depending upon his own abilities and using human methods, cannot do God's work.** Moses tried to help God free the Hebrews from slavery by killing the Egyptians one by one. He was depending upon his force and skills (Ex 2:11-20). See Zechariah 4:6.
6. **God's time schedule may be different from the desires of people.** God had promised to bring the Hebrew slaves out of Egypt (Gen 15:16; 46:3). The Israelites cried out in their slavery. God heard and was concerned; however, he waited to rescue them on his time schedule (Ex 2:23-25).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Interaction with Characters in Story:

Invite listeners to interact with characters in the story with a question. What would you like to say:

- To Pharaoh who has ordered all Hebrew baby boys to be thrown into the river?
- To the mother who desperately puts her baby boy in a basket and places the basket into the river?
- To the baby's sister who anxiously stays on the river bank and watches to see what will happen?
- To Pharaoh's daughter who sees the basket hidden in the reeds on the river?