

The Birth of Moses

Exodus 1-2

There arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them."

Then the Egyptians set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile."

Now a man from the house of Levi took as his wife a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son, and she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer, she took a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch.² She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. His sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. She saw the basket among the reeds. When she opened it, she saw the child, and the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?"

Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother.

Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him.

When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

One day, after Moses had grown up, he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. He struck down¹ the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh.

Explanatory Notes

¹To keep them from becoming too powerful. ²Black, sticky, waterproofing substance. ³Killed.



She saw the child and took pity on him.

For Reflection

1. Moses' mother saved Moses by placing him in a small boat—a basket coated with tar and pitch so that it would float. Compare Moses and Noah.
2. How did God protect Moses from danger? How does He protect us?
3. Moses was received as a baby in order to rescue God's people from slavery in Egypt. What other baby was born to save His people? How did He save us?

Words to Remember

By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. *Hebrews 11:24-25*