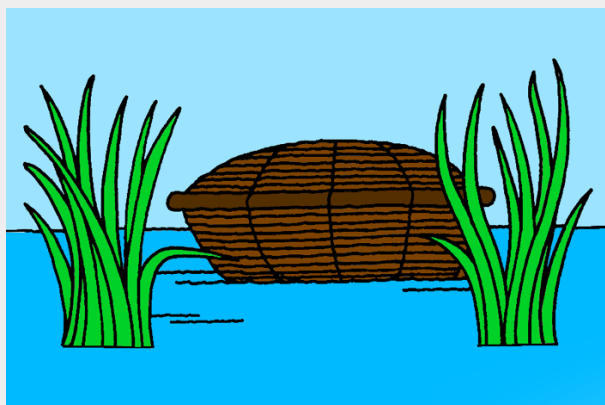
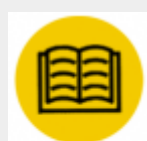


# Birth of Moses

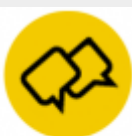


Scripture Reference: [Exodus 1:1-2:10](#)

**Suggested Emphasis:** Family members love and protect each other.



Background Study



Story Introduction



Telling the Story



Review Questions



Songs



Learning Activities



Other Online Resources

## Story Overview:

Almost 400 years had passed since the time when Joseph invited his family to move to Egypt. The Pharaoh who now ruled Egypt hated the Israelites and worried that they had become so numerous. He made them slaves and ordered the deaths of all baby boys born to them. To save her infant son, Jochabed placed him in a basket and hid him among the reeds along the Nile River. His big sister, Miriam, watched after him. Pharaoh's daughter discovered the baby as she was bathing and adopted him and raised him as her son. She called him Moses.

# Background Study:

Children are often able to relate easily to the family in this story because they are familiar with parents and siblings and how a family functions together. In sharp contrast to the family dysfunction we learned about in some of the later Genesis stories (such as [Jacob, Esau and the Birthright](#) and [Joseph Sold By His Brothers](#)) here we see that Moses was born into a family that, by all appearances, seemed to care very much for each other.

Moses' mother was Jochebed and his father Amram (as we later learn [Exodus 6:20](#); [Numbers 26:59](#)). At the time of Moses' birth this couple already had a daughter, Meriam, and a three-year-old son, Aaron (calculated from [Exodus 7:7](#)). Jochebed and Amram were descendants of Levi who was one of the twelve sons of Israel.

The children in this family each would eventually play important roles in the Exodus. The tribe of Levi will later be assigned a priestly role with Moses' brother, Aaron, becoming the first priest ([Exodus 28:1-5](#)). Meriam will eventually become one of only a few women in the Bible who are referred to as prophets ([Exodus 15:20-21](#)).

**Names for God's People:** In Exodus and throughout the Bible God's people are referred to in various ways. Earlier in [Genesis 12:2](#) we learn that God chose Abraham to become the father of a great nation that would bless the earth.

- **Israelites:** The name of Abraham's grandson, Jacob, was changed to "Israel" in [Genesis 32:27-28](#)) and his descendants are sometimes called "Israelites".  
*"Look", [Pharaoh] said to his people, "the Israelites have become much too numerous for us." Exodus 1:9, NIV*
- **Hebrews:** "Abram the Hebrew" is mentioned in [Genesis 14:13](#). Although there are a few different possible origins for this name it is usually used by foreigners ([biblestudytools.com](http://biblestudytools.com)).  
*"Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: 'Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live.'" Exodus 1:22, NIV*

- **Jews:** This term was not used until long after the time of Moses. During the captivity Daniel's people are referred to as "Jews" [Daniel 3:8](#).




Four hundred years had passed since Pharaoh had so admired Joseph and invited Joseph's family to come and live in Egypt. At that time the family numbered only seventy people in all ([Genesis 46:27](#)). Judging by the references later given we can assume that that number, including women and children, would now easily exceed a million ([Exodus 12:37](#)). Over these four hundred years the status of the Israelites had fallen from honoured guests to despised slaves. They were treated ruthlessly and forced to work hard.

And yet their numbers increased and Pharaoh feared them. The killing of baby boys would have been one way to prevent boys possibly growing up into fighting rebels. When midwives refused to follow his direction and act as executioners Pharaoh put out a general command that *anyone* spotting a baby boy Israelite was to throw him into the Nile River. This was an extremely dangerous time for a boy to be born.

Jochebed must have been desperate to protect her baby but how long can a baby in a house remain hidden from the community? At three months she waterproofed a basket and floated him among the reeds at the edge of the Nile River. The family's care for this child can be seen in how big sister Miriam stood guard over her brother from a distance.

The baby was spotted when the Pharaoh's daughter came to the river to bathe. She knew the baby was a Hebrew and would have been under Pharaoh's command to throw Hebrew baby boys into the Nile. And yet she felt sorry for him.

Miriam bravely approached and offered to find someone to take care of the infant. Of course that "someone" was actually Jochebed. Pharaoh's daughter offered to pay her to nurse Moses until he was old enough for her to take to live in the palace as her adopted son. In this way Moses was allowed to live with his own family during the first few years of his life.

-  [What happened before this story?](#)
-  [What happens after this story?](#)
-  [List of all Bible stories and themes on this website.](#)

[top](#)

## Way to Introduce the Story:

Older children could look up Egypt on a map. Bring books from the public library or National Geographic Magazines to show pictures of the Nile River. Discuss what it would be like on the edge of a river. There would be squishy mud and reeds. Ask younger children if they have ever been to a river or if they have ever stepped in mud. "Today's story from the bible takes place right beside a river."

[top](#)

## The Story:

Many years ago God's people lived in tents in Egypt. At first they had moved to Egypt as special guests of the Pharaoh. Their ancestor, Joseph, had saved the whole country of Egypt from Famine.

But now, 400 years later, the memories of Joseph and the old Pharaoh had faded. The current Pharaoh did not like it that there were so many Israelites living in his country. He thought, "What if we are attacked by enemies? There are so many Israelites that they might take the side of the enemies and fight against Egypt."

So Pharaoh thought of a plan to make the Israelites weak. He told his leaders that the Israelites were now going to be slaves in Egypt. They would have to work very hard but never get paid. The Israelites were forced to carry large stones and build huge

buildings. They were treated very badly.

Even though they were treated so badly Pharaoh's plan to make them weak did not work. Still the population of the Israelites increased. More and more children were born. Pharaoh was so angry that he thought up another plan to stop the number of Israelites from increasing.

Two women were midwives who helped the Israelite mothers when they were having babies. Pharaoh called the women before him and said, "Every time when you are helping a mother and she gives birth to a boy, I want you to kill the baby boy right away."

"Now I will stop the boys growing up to fight against me," Pharaoh thought to himself.

But, once again, the plan did not work. The midwives tricked Pharaoh and told him that they could never make it there in time to kill the baby boys.

Pharaoh was furious! He now made a new law that was terrible. He told *everyone* in Egypt that, if they saw a baby boy among the Israelites, they were to take the baby boy and throw him into the Nile River so that he would die.

Of all the times to have a baby boy this was probably the worst. But this is when Jochebed and her husband, Amram, gave birth to their third child. He was a boy and his name was Moses. Amram and Jochebed loved Moses. His big sister, Meriam, and big brother, Aaron, loved Moses too.

They did not want anyone to take him and kill him! For three months they hid baby Moses so no one knew that they had a baby boy. But babies cannot be hidden in a house for long. A baby cries and crawls and soon the neighbours would know he was there.

So Jochebed had her own plan to protect Moses. She made a basket out of papyrus (the plants that grow by the river). Then she covered the basket with thick tar so that it would

be waterproof. She was making a basket that could float.

Jochebed put the baby in the basket at the edge of the river. Moses' big sister, Meriam, stayed nearby. Maybe no one would find the baby hidden in the reeds.

But someone did find Moses. Of all the people who might find him it was the Pharaoh's own daughter. Her handmaid brought the baby to her. Little Moses was crying and she felt sorry for him.

She knew the baby was an Israelite but, even though her father had commanded everyone in Egypt to throw Israelite babies into the Nile river, she wanted to keep him. Moses' big sister, Meriam, was watching as all of this happened. Bravely, Meriam approached the princess and said that someone would need to take care of the baby since he was so small. Meriam asked if the princess would like her to go and find an Israelite woman to be like a caregiver or nurse to the baby.

Pharaoh's daughter thought that this was a good idea. The princess said she would like to pay a woman to do all of that work. When the baby got older he could come and live in the palace with her. So who do you think Meriam brought back to the princess? It was their very own mother!

God helped Moses' family take care of him and protect him. Moses stayed in their house with them until he was big enough to live in the palace with the princess.

Even though Pharaoh had all kinds of plans to hurt God's people God knew that someday Moses would be a great leader of his people. Even though there was danger everywhere else, Moses grew up safely in the very palace where the Pharaoh lived.

[top](#)

# Ways to Tell the Story:

*This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.*

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Download the slideshow](#) or [download the pictures to print](#). Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

## Review Questions:

1. Why did the new Pharaoh hate the Israelites? Because there were so many of them and he thought they might join with Egypt's enemies.
2. How did the Pharaoh treat the Israelites? He made them slaves and made them work very hard. He was cruel to them.
3. What did the Pharaoh tell everyone to do if they saw a baby Israelite boy? They were to throw them into the river to die.
4. What were the names of Moses' family members? Amram (father), Jochabed (mother), Aaron (brother), and Miriam (sister).
5. How did Moses' mother hide him? Put him in a woven basket that was made to float in the reeds beside the Nile River.
6. Who found the basket with baby Moses inside? The Pharaoh's daughter.
7. What did Pharaoh's daughter do? She adopted Moses and raised him in the palace.

## Song Suggestions:

- [Love is Something, If You Give It Away](#)
- [Ha-la-la-la Song](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

## Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

### *Activities:*

- Have the children look up the book of Genesis and read some of the key verses in today's story.
- It might not work everywhere but our class talked about God having an "Exit" plan revealed in the Book of Exodus. "Exit-us" We compared God's people in a terrible situation in Egypt to having to exit the building in case of a fire. Our class went on a walk around the church building spotting all of the Exit signs.
- Show family photos of newborn babies and their parents.
- Younger children could wrap dolls in blankets and put them in baskets.
- Ask someone with an infant to come to class today. Discuss how difficult it would be to keep the baby hidden.
- Game: Hide a baby Moses (doll in a basket) and let the children find him.
- Game: Children stand in a circle. Blindfolded child in middle turns around and then points randomly to someone and they have to make a baby sound. If the blindfolded person guesses who is making the baby sound then that person goes to the middle and becomes "it". Otherwise they repeat until they guess. Works best if kids shuffle around places in between turns.
- Older children could learn some basic babysitting principles.
- Find Egypt on a map or globe. Let children find the Nile River.
- There are many books about ancient Egypt in most public libraries. Take the time to



obtain some of these books. They will really enhance your bible lessons over the next weeks. You will find photos of the Nile River and of Pharaoh's and princesses.

### *Crafts:*

- Use flax or paper and weave a small place mat.
- Make a relief map of Egypt.
- Guide children to use salt-dough to make their own Baby Moses. Following is a lesson plan for teaching 4-5 year olds: [Birth of Moses Lesson Plan](#)

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "Birth of Moses" printables to print \(A4 paper\)](#)

[Click here for "Birth of Moses" printables to print \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

[top](#)

## Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Video: Animated telling of Baby Moses \(The Foundry Kids\)](#)
- [Craft of Miriam watching over baby Moses \(DLTK's Bible Crafts for Kids\)](#)
- [Baby Moses in a basket printable craft \(Danielle's Place\)](#)
- [Printable bookmarks-enter your own personal text \(Activities for Kids\)](#)
- [Old Testament worksheets \(HubPages\)](#)
- [Interactive Group Games \(Sermons4Kids\)](#)

- [Moses' birth through plagues online activities \(Garden of Praise\)](#)
- [Egypt through the Wilderness Wanderings activities \(Garden of Praise\)](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynnz/moses-birth-through-leaving-egypt/>

[top](#)



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