

# Church of God Sunday School

## THE BIRTH OF MOSES

Exodus 1:1 — 2:10

Many years had passed since Joseph's family had moved to Egypt. Joseph and his brothers had died. All the Egyptians who had known Joseph had also died. Joseph's descendants (known as the Israelites or the Hebrew people) increased and multiplied so much that the land of Egypt was filled with them.

A new pharaoh came to the throne. This pharaoh had not known Joseph. He was afraid of the Israelites because they were so many. He said to his people: "Look! The people of Israel are too many! And they are too strong for us to handle! We must make plans against them. If we don't, the number of their people will grow even more" (*International Children's Bible*).

Taskmasters (slave drivers) were set up to make life difficult for the Israelites. They had to labor to build the great treasure cities for Pharaoh, and they had to work in the fields too. Whatever they were given to do, it was hard, hard work! But the more the Israelites were afflicted, the more they multiplied.

Pharaoh's fear of the Israelites grew, so he spoke to two of the Hebrew midwives (a midwife helps at the birth of a baby). He told them to kill every little boy who was born! But the midwives feared God instead of Pharaoh. They did not do as he told them to do, but they "saved the men children alive." The Hebrews continued to multiply. Pharaoh then commanded his people to throw every little newborn boy into the river!

About that time, a baby boy was born to a Hebrew man named Amram (*AM-ram*) and his wife, Jochebed (*JOK-uh-bed*). They already had a daughter, Miriam, and a young son named Aaron. Jochebed saw that the baby "was a goodly child." This baby was in danger because of Pharaoh's orders, so he was kept hidden. After three months the baby could not be hidden any longer.

Jochebed made an ark, or a covered basket, from the bulrushes (reeds) that grew beside the river. Very carefully, she coated the ark with slime and pitch (tar) to keep the water out. Next, she gently laid the baby in the basket and took him down to the river, where she placed him among the bulrushes. Miriam, the baby's older sister, stood afar off, to see what would happen to him.

By and by, Pharaoh's own daughter came to the river to wash. Her maids walked alongside the river. When she saw the little ark in the water, she sent one of her maids to get it. When the ark was opened, the baby cried, and Pharaoh's daughter felt sorry for the child. She said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

About then, Miriam came out from her hiding place. She had seen what had happened. Miriam asked Pharaoh's daughter if she should get a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby and care for him. Pharaoh's daughter told her, "Go." Where do you think Miriam went to find a nurse? She went and got her mother—the mother of the little baby—Jochebed.

Pharaoh's daughter told Jochebed to care for the baby, and she would pay her wages. How thankful Jochebed must have been when she learned that her son's life would be spared! Not

only that, but she was going to be paid to take care of him too.

During those few short years that Jochebed was nursing and caring for the child, she had a wonderful opportunity to teach him about the true God. No doubt, while Jochebed had her son in her care, she prayed for him and asked God to protect him and to guide his life.

We do not know just how long the little boy lived with his family. The day came when his mother brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, "and he became



## Primary Education

her son." The Bible does not tell us the name his parents gave him. Pharaoh's daughter called him *Moses*, which means "drawn out," because he was taken out of the water.

God had his hand on Moses from the very beginning of his life. Although Moses was a Hebrew—one of the very people Pharaoh wanted to have killed—he was given the best education, and he had the best that Egypt had to offer. He was taught leadership skills that would greatly help him later on in his life.

God had a plan for Moses. He was preparing him

for a very important future. Moses would one day be called to be the leader of the Hebrew people. He would lead them out of the bondage of Egypt to the Promised Land.

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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"Moses . . . was hid three months of his parents . . . and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."  
—Hebrews 11:23*

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