

His mother took for him a basket made of bulrushes, and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. (Exodus 2:3)

Almighty God, through your Holy Spirit you gave faith to Moses and his parents to trust in you. Grant us that same faith and courage. Thank you for watching over us. We pray this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Introduction

The opening chapters of the Book of Exodus show the conditions under which the Hebrews lived in Egypt as slaves. The Pharaoh tried to limit the Hebrew population by killing all the baby sons born to them. But Moses' mother and sister had a plan to save him from this fate.

Read: Exodus 1:8 - 2:10

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

The Biblical Context

The first five books of the Bible are known as the Pentateuch, meaning "the five scrolls," but they are often referred to as "the Five Books of Moses." Beginning with Exodus, Moses becomes the chief character in the rest of these books.

The word Exodus means "to leave." For many years, the Israelites had endured a period of forced slavery in Egypt, working to build cities for the Pharaoh. (Many scholars suggest that the Pharaoh described in the Book of Exodus was **Rameses II**, who ruled from 1279-1213 B.C.; other scholars say it may have been **Thutmose III**, who ruled from 1479-1425 B.C.)

But God heard the prayers of his people. With many signs and wonders, God revealed his power through Moses and freed his people from their bondage as slaves to Pharaoh. This important time in history is often referred to in Scripture as a foreshadowing of our deliverance in Christ from our bondage to sin.

Discussion Questions

1. According to verses 8-10, how was this Pharaoh different from the one we read about in Lesson 4? Why did he want the male Hebrew babies killed? What was he afraid of?
2. What is the job of a midwife? What were the names of the Hebrew midwives in this story? Why did they disobey the Pharaoh? Would you have had the courage to do the same?
3. The name of Moses' mother isn't in this text, but you can find her name in Exodus 6:20, along with the names of his father and brother. What are the names of everyone in the family, including Moses' sister?
4. Why did Moses' mother spread tar ("bitumen and pitch") on the basket (v. 2:3)? What was she hoping would happen to the basket and baby?
5. Who found baby Moses in the basket? Where? What was she doing there? And why did she need to find someone to nurse the baby?
6. In Egyptian, the word moses refers to a son being born. Read the note in your Bible for verse 2:10. Who gave Moses his name? How are both the Egyptian and Hebrew meanings appropriate?
7. As Moses grew and became an adult, God used him to lead the Hebrew people to freedom. How did saving Moses lead to the saving of many others? When we Christians trust that we are "saved" by Jesus, how does God then use us to save others?
8. Read Hebrews 11:23-26. According to these verses, what motivated Moses' parents to do what they did? In what ways did Moses choose a hard life, just like Jesus did? What did they all share?