

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

Kindergarten

Sunday Morning

Study 14

The Birth of Moses

The Birth of Moses

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To continue the story of the Old Testament and to introduce the character of Moses.

Key Verses

Exodus 1:1-2:10—Main Teaching Passage
Hebrew 11:23

Memory Verse - Proverbs 29:25 (December Memory Verse)

"The fear of man brings a snare,
But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe."

Hook

Have a volunteer come to the front. Tell them that you and another teacher are going to give them a series of commands that they should obey. Have the other teacher's commands directly contradict yours. After, ask them what they did when one teacher told them to do something the other teacher told them not to do.

Sometimes people tell us to do things that go against what God says. We will see an example of this in today's story. When man's word goes against God, we must always obey God.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

After the death of Joseph, the Israelites became fruitful and filled the land of Egypt. They became so great in number that when a new Pharaoh arose, he became afraid that they might take over the nation of Egypt. Pharaoh enslaved the children of Israel and commanded that all Hebrew boy children be killed.

The Hebrews refused to do this and place their children in hiding. One family from the tribe of Levi became so desperate to save their son that they committed him to the Lord's care and sent him down the Nile river in a makeshift raft. The Lord intervened in this child's life and put him before Pharaoh's daughter, who had mercy on the child and decided to raise him as her own. Moses' sister, who watched these events take place, then convinced the princess to unknowingly allow Moses' own mother to nurse him and raise him until he was older.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

Sometimes life can be boiled down to a simple choice: are we going to do things God's way, or are we going to do things man's way? Pharaoh was the king, the ruler of the nation of Egypt, and he had made a new law. He had decreed that all Hebrew boy children were supposed to be killed as soon as they were born. This was clearly and obviously wrong and went against God's plan for the Hebrew people.

Now for any parent, this is an easy decision to make. No parent is going to willingly allow their newborn child to be murdered. However, the choice wasn't as easy as simply ignoring the law. Anyone who disobeyed Pharaoh would be punished, maybe by being killed themselves. To choose to do the right thing, in this case by breaking the law, meant risking your own freedom, and even your own life.

Exodus 1-2 present to us four people that showed great faith in God by doing the right thing even though they might get punished for it. These four people are two midwives named Shiphrah and Puah, and also Moses' mother and father. Shiphrah and Puah would be present at the births of Hebrew babies. Even though they had been directly commanded by Pharaoh to make sure these boy babies were taken and killed, they refused to do it and actually helped the Hebrew women to hide their children. Exodus 1:17 tells us that Shiphrah and Puah "feared the Lord."

LOOK (Continued)

They were not afraid of Pharaoh and what he would do to them. They wanted to please God and do what they knew He would want them to do. Proverbs 29:25 tells us, “The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts the Lord shall be safe.” Shiphrah and Puah would even go back and lie to Pharaoh about what they had done, once again risking their own lives to protect the people of God.

The other two examples of great faith in Exodus 1-2 are Moses’ parents. They showed an incredible faith in God. Hebrews 11:23 tells us that by faith they hid their son, refusing to do what Pharaoh had commanded, and even by faith sent him down the river, trusting that God would provide for and protect their son. Of course we know that God did far more than they could have ever imagined, not only protecting the baby, but also allowing him to return home and be raised and nursed by his own mother.

There might be times when people try and persuade you to do things that you know God would disapprove of. It might even be risky to reject those people. You might lose friendships or worse. In those times, we need to remember that God is in charge, and that His ways are to be trusted and followed. We need to be like Shiphrah, Puah, and Moses’ parents, trusting God’s goodness and faithfulness even when it is hard.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Discussion question: Can you think of an example where you might need to break the law (like Moses’ parents) in order to obey God? Example: In North Korea, it is illegal to own a Bible.

Pray: Pray for people around the world who daily choose to honor God over man in countries with severe persecution of Christians.

Parent Question: Who are Shiphrah and Puah, and how did they show their faith in God?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Exodus 1:1-2:10 by David Guzik

Exodus 1 - Israel Multiplies in Egypt

3. (8-11) Afraid of their growing presence, the Egyptians oppress the Israelites.

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and *so* go up out of the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses.

a. **Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them:** The ancient Egyptians were famous - or infamous - for their proud sense of racial superiority towards all other people. It isn't surprising to see them afraid and discriminating against this strong minority group in their midst, which looked as if it would not be a minority very long.

b. **In the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us:** At the time, the Egyptians feared invasion from the Hittites of the north. If the Hebrews among them joined with the Hittites, it posed a significant threat to their security.

c. **They set taskmasters over them...they built for Pharaoh supply cities:** When the children of Israel were set to slave labor they built many of the great cities and monuments in Egypt - though not the pyramids, which were built much earlier. Since we don't know exactly when this forced labor began, we don't know how long it lasted. Some estimate the slavery lasted 284 years, others 134 years.

i. There is a famous wall painting on an ancient tomb from Thebes, Egypt (modern Luxor) - the tomb of the overseer of brick-making slaves during the reign of Thutmose III. "The painting shows such overseers armed with heavy whips. Their rank is denoted by the long staff held in their hands and the Egyptian hieroglyphic determinative of the head and neck of a giraffe." (Kaiser)

4. (12-14) Israel prospers and grows despite the hard bondage of the Egyptians.

But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage; in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them servewas with rigor.

a. **The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew:** This was God's purpose for Israel's time in Egypt. Egypt served as a mother's womb for Israel, a place where they rapidly grew from a large clan to a mighty nation.

i. The nation could not grow this way in Canaan, because it was practically impossible to avoid intermarriage with the pagan and wicked inhabitants of Canaan. Egypt was so racially biased and had such an entrenched system of racial separation that Israel could grow there over several centuries without being assimilated.

ii. This growth in the face of affliction has consistently been the story of God's people, throughout all ages - the more they are afflicted, the more they grow. As the ancient Christian writer Tertullian said, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

iii. Suffering and persecution are like a great wave that comes upon a ship and looks as if it will destroy it; but the ship catches the wave and just uses it to speed along.

b. **They made their lives bitter with hard bondage:** Because God's purpose was to bless Israel, and fulfill His role for them in His eternal plan, no amount of affliction could defeat His purpose. The Egyptians tried their best through cruel slavery; but it did not work. The principle of Isaiah 54:17 proved true: *No weapon formed against you shall prosper*. The wickedness of the Egyptians could *hurt* the children of Israel, but could never *defeat* God's plan for them.

i. Pharaoh thought it best to not kill them; but he did want them to be slaves.

ii. In the midst of their cruel and harsh service, life must have seemed hopeless to the children of Israel, and the idea that God was working out His plan must have seemed very far away - yet it was true nonetheless.

B. The Hebrew midwives obey God.

1. (15-16) The king of Egypt tries to destroy Israel by ordering the death of all male babies.

Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one *was* Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see *them* on the birthstools, if it *is* a son, then you shall kill him; but if it *is* a daughter, then she shall live."

a. **Of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah:** We shouldn't expect that these two women were the only midwives for all the children of Israel. They were probably the leaders of some association of midwives.

i. "*Shiphrah* and *Puah* are two good Semitic names, of an archaic type....meaning something like 'beauty' and 'splendour' respectively." (Cole)

b. **If it is a son, then you shall kill him:** The king of Egypt commanded them to kill all the male babies, to utterly weaken and practically destroy the people of Israel within a generation.

i. We may see the command of Pharaoh as consistent with Satan's plan of Jew-hatred through the centuries, as an attack against God's Messiah and ultimate plan for Israel in His plan of redemption. Satan knew that the Messiah - the Seed of the Woman, the One who would crush his head (Genesis 3:15) - would come from the children of Israel. Therefore he tried to destroy the whole nation in one generation by ordering all the male children killed.

2. (17) The midwives bravely obey God rather than men.

But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.

a. **But the midwives feared God:** They probably feared Pharaoh and his power; but they **feared God** more. For them, the choice was clear. The civil government commanded something that was clearly against God's command. The midwives did the only right thing: they obeyed God rather than men.

b. **Saved the male children alive:** They acted on the same principle as did the persecuted apostles in Acts 4:19, when Peter asked the civil authorities: *Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge.*

i. Though generally we are called to obey the government and honor civic rulers (Romans 13:1-5), we are never called to put government in the place of God. Therefore if the government tells us to do something against God's will, we are to obey God first.

3. (18-22) God blesses the efforts of the midwives.

So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?" And the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women *are* not like the Egyptian women; for they *are* lively and give birth before the midwives come to them." Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them. So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive."

a. **Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women:** Many people assume that the Hebrew midwives lied to Pharaoh when they said this. However, this may not be the case. The midwives may have told the truth, - perhaps indeed the **Hebrew women** were heartier than the Egyptian women, yet the midwives did not explain *all* the reasons why the babies were spared.

i. "This might be no lie, as many suppose, but a truth concerning many of them, and they do not affirm it to be so with all...So here was nothing but truth, though they did not speak the whole truth, which they were not obliged to do." (Poole)

ii. "We are not told whether the midwives were lying, or whether the quick delivery of 'Hebrew' babies was a biological fact...Even if they lied, it is not for their deceit that they are commended, but for their refusal to take infant lives." (Cole)

b. **Therefore God dealt well with the midwives:** Even if the midwives deceived Pharaoh, that was not what God blessed; He blessed their godly bravery in obeying God before man.

c. **The people multiplied and grew very mightily:** The worse the persecution against God's plan to multiply the children of Israel in Egypt, the more God made sure the plan succeeded. This is a wonderful example of the goodness and the power of God. Pharaoh said, "less" and God said, "more." Pharaoh said, "stop" and God said, "go."

i. If the battle were just between Pharaoh and the people of Israel, Pharaoh would have clearly won. But the real battle included God in the equation, and that changed everything.

ii. God obviously won this battle; but He won His victory through some courageous individuals who were willing to stand up to the power of Pharaoh and do what was right.

d. **He provided households for them:** This was God's blessing on the midwives - He enabled them to have children of their own. Usually, midwives held their occupation because they had no children of their own.

e. **Every son who is born you shall cast into the river:** Seeing that his plan did not work, Pharaoh made a far more radical command, that *all* male children should be killed - apparently even Egyptian boys (**Pharaoh commanded all his people**).

i. The method Pharaoh commanded for the death of the male children of Israel became the divine provision

for training the deliverer of Israel.

Exodus 2 - Moses' Birth and Early Career

A. Moses' birth and childhood.

1. (1-2) Moses is born - a beautiful child, of the tribe of Levi.

And a man of the house of Levi went and took *as wife* a daughter of Levi. So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he *was* a beautiful *child*, she hid him three months.

a. **So the woman conceived and bore a son:** The baby Moses opened his eyes to an unfriendly world. He was born in a powerful nation, but was of a foreign, oppressed race during a time when all babies such as himself were under a royal death sentence. Nevertheless, Moses had something special in his favor: he was the child of believing parents.

i. Moses was not the firstborn in his family. He had at least an older brother (Aaron) and an older sister (Miriam).

b. **A man of the house of Levi went and took as wife a daughter of Levi:** Exodus 6:20 tells us the names of Moses' parents: *Amram* and *Jochebed*. Fanciful Jewish legends say that Moses' birth was painless to his mother, that at his birth his face was so beautiful that the room was filled with light equal to the sun and moon combined, that he walked and spoke when he was a day old, and that he refused to nurse, eating solid food from birth.

c. **She hid him three months:** The parents of Moses did not do this only because of the natural parental instinct; they did it also out of faith in God. Hebrews 11:23 describes the faith of Moses' parents: *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.*

2. (3-6) Pharaoh's daughter finds Moses.

But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid *it* in the reeds by the river's bank. And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. And when she had opened *it*, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

a. **Laid it in the reeds by the river's bank:** In a literal sense, Moses' mother did *exactly* what Pharaoh said to do: put her son into the river (Exodus 1:22). However, she took care to put him in a waterproofed basket and strategically floated him in the river.

i. "The word for 'papyrus basket' is used only here and for Noah's ark." (Kaiser) "The Hebrew would be better translated by 'papyrus basket'; the word is used elsewhere only of Noah's ark." (Cole)

ii. But more so, this was a great example of trusting the child's welfare and future to God alone. When Moses' mother let go of the boat made of bulrushes, she gave up something precious, trusting that God would take care of it, and perhaps find a way to give it back to her.

b. **The baby wept. So she had compassion on him:** In God's guidance, Pharaoh's daughter found baby Mo-

ses. She was conditioned by her culture and upbringing to reject the Hebrews, but the cry of baby Moses melted her heart.

i. God had this beautifully planned for the deliverance of both Moses, and eventually for the people of Israel. He skillfully guided the parents of Moses, the currents of the Nile, and the heart of Pharaoh's daughter to further His plan and purpose.

3. (7-10) Pharaoh's daughter cares for and raises Moses.

Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. Then 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. And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water."

a. **Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages:** Using both the clever initiative of Moses' family and the need of Pharaoh's daughter, God arranged a way for Moses' mother to train him in his early years and be paid for it.

i. God rewarded the faith of Moses' mother, both as she trusted Him in hiding Moses for three months, and also as she trusted God by setting Moses out on the river.

ii. "No doubt it was in these early years that Moses learnt of the 'God of the fathers' (Exodus 3:15) and realized that the Hebrews were his fellow countrymen (Exodus 2:11)." (Cole)

b. **And he became her son:** Being the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses was in the royal family. The ancient Jewish historian Josephus wrote that Moses was heir to the throne of Egypt and that while a young man he led the armies of Egypt in victorious battle against the Ethiopians.

i. Certainly, he was raised with both the science and learning of Egypt. Acts 7:22 says, *Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.* Egypt was one of the most academic and scientific societies among ancient cultures. It is reasonable to think that Moses was instructed in geography, history, grammar, writing, literature, philosophy, and music.

ii. Since he was of the royal family, we expect that as Moses went anywhere, he went in a princely chariot and his guards cried out "bow the knee!" If he floated on the Nile, it was in a magnificent ship with musical accompaniment; he lived the royal life. We also know that Moses' Hebrew mother had an influence on his life, so he was certainly raised in the Hebrew heritage of his mother.

iii. An ancient Christian writer named Origen had a fanciful allegorical way of interpreting the Scriptures, and what he does with this account of Moses and Pharaoh's daughter is a good example of the peril of over-allegorizing the Scriptures. In Origen's take on this passage:

- Pharaoh represents the devil
- The male and female Hebrew children represent the animal and rational aspects of the soul
- The devil wants to kill the rational character of man, but keep alive his animal character
- The two midwives are the Old and New Testaments
- Pharaoh wants to corrupt the midwives so that the rational character of man will be destroyed
- Because the midwives were faithful, God builds houses of prayer all over the earth
- Pharaoh's daughter represents the church, and gives refuge to Moses - who represents the law
- The waters of the Nile represent the waters of baptism

· When we come to the waters of baptism and take the law into our heart - the royal palaces - then the law grows up into spiritual maturity

iv. Clarke rightly says of this kind of interpretation: "Every passage and fact might then be obliged to say *something, any thing, every thing, or nothing*, according to the *fancy, peculiar creed, or caprice* of the interpreter."