

THE BIRTH OF MOSES - HIS YOUTH IN EGYPT

BIBLE TEXT : Exodus 2:1-25

LESSON 46 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents" (Hebrews 11:23).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Exodus 2:1-25 (KJV)

^{2:1} And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took *to wife* a daughter of Levi.
² And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he *was a goodly child*, she hid him three months.
³ And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid *it* in the flags by the river's brink.
⁴ And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.
⁵ And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.
⁶ And when she had opened *it*, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This *is one* of the Hebrews' children.
⁷ Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?
⁸ And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.
⁹ And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.
¹⁰ And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him

NOTES:

God's Chosen People

Many years had passed since the death of Joseph. The Pharaoh who had been good to the Children of Israel had also died, and the new king had forgotten that the Egyptians had been spared from starvation by one of the Jews. We may think they forgot very soon, but if we look back *less* than two hundred years to the time of the Revolutionary War we notice that we do not show much interest in what happened then.

We remember that when Jacob's family moved into Egypt they numbered but 70 (66 came from Canaan, and Joseph, his wife and two sons add up to 70) ; but during the hundreds of years they had lived here their population had increased so greatly that the king of Egypt feared they would become stronger than the Egyptians, and would overthrow the government. He made them work very hard, and hoped by the oppression to keep them in slavery. But they were God's chosen people; and down through history we notice that the judgments of God always come upon the nations that were cruel to the Israelites. The Egyptians were going to suffer for being such hard taskmasters, forcing the Children of Israel to build cities, and to work hard in the fields, and finally to make bricks without having straw provided with which to make them.

The Scriptures say that God heard their groanings as they suffered under the hands of the wicked slave drivers, and He sent a deliverer. However, they had to wait a long time before they were actually released.

The King's Decree

The greatest catastrophe that came upon the Children of Israel was the slaying of all their baby boys. Just imagine how sad the parents would feel when the soldiers would come and take their infant boys and throw them into the river! The Egyptians hoped in this way to reduce the population of the Israelites.

When Moses was born, his mother saw that he was an exceptional child, and she hid him for three months. She probably endangered her own life by doing so, but together with her mother love, she must have had faith in God that her son had a work to do for the Lord, and she would rather displease the king than God.

The Ark of Bulrushes

By the time the baby was three months old it was impossible to hide him any longer, so the mother made a little ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with pitch so it would not leak water. She then put Moses into it, and placed the ark in the water. She must have prayed hard as she gave up her wonderful little boy, consecrating him to God. The Lord alone could take care of him now.

Miriam, the sister of Moses, watched on the river's bank to see what would happen to the little boat out there that looked so lonesome. What would happen if an Egyptian

out of the water.

11 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.

12 And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

14 And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew *water*, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

17 And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

18 And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How *is it that* ye are come so soon to day?

19 And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew *water* enough for us, and watered the flock.

20 And he said unto his daughters, And where *is* he? why *is it that* ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread.

21 And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses

soldier found it? But God's hand was over His own, and He arranged it so that Pharaoh's daughter should come with her maidens to bathe right at the spot where Moses' little ark was floating. When she saw the ark she sent her maid to bring it to her; and when she opened it and found Moses crying, she loved him. She knew he was one of the children that should have been put to death, but he was such a good-looking little boy that she wanted to keep him for herself.

Pharaoh's daughter needed a nurse for the baby, and Miriam was right there to suggest Moses' own mother. How wonderfully God works out things when we trust everything into His care. In addition to having the pleasure of bringing up her own child, the mother of Moses was even paid for doing it.

Moses' Choice

After Moses grew older he went to live in the palace of the king, where he was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians. Archaeologists have dug up many evidences of the high civilization of that time which Moses enjoyed. However, the Egyptians worshiped many gods; and although Moses was taught the strange wisdom of their priests, he remained true to the real God; and when he grew up he chose rather "to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Hebrews 11:25, 26). He would much rather live to please God than to live to please himself; and he knew that the reward God would give him would be greater than anything the king could give him here.

The Taskmasters

One day he visited the Hebrew children and saw how hard they had to work. He felt sorry that they should suffer so, and he wanted to help them. However, God's time had not come yet, and Moses got into trouble by running ahead of the Spirit of God. An Egyptian taskmaster was mistreating one of the Israelites, so Moses came to his defense and killed the Egyptian. He was sure no one had seen him do it, and he hid the body in the sand.

However, the following day when he tried to make peace between two quarreling Hebrews, one said, "Who made thee . . . a judge over us?" They let Moses know that they knew of his crime of the day before. They may have thought he was an Egyptian; or if they knew he was one of their own people they may have been jealous because he had grown up in such luxurious surroundings while they had to toil as slaves. Whatever the case was, they did not want Moses to tell them what to do.

God had really planned for Moses to deliver His people, but the time was not yet; and we see that Moses gained nothing by running ahead of God's leading and trying to bring help in his own strength. God does not always work as fast as we think He should, but His ways are higher than our ways and we can trust Him to do what is best, at the time it should be done.

Besides bringing the displeasure of the Israelites upon himself, Moses also felt the wrath of Pharaoh, who wanted to punish him; so he fled to Midian where he lived for forty years.

QUESTIONS

- 1 How did Pharaoh try to reduce the population of the Israelites?
- 2 What does the Book of Hebrews say about Moses being

Zipporah his daughter.

²² And she bare *him* a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.

²³ And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.

²⁴ And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

²⁵ And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto *them*.

hidden three months?

3 Who stood guard nearby when Moses was placed in the little ark?

4 Did God see the heavy burdens which were placed upon the Children of Israel?

5 Did Moses choose to be with his own people in preference to the Egyptian advantages he was offered?