

Moses in the Bulrushes (Miriam)

Teacher Pep Talk: Not the most auspicious of beginnings... being placed in a basket and then deposited in a river... But, that is exactly what happened to baby Moses. In order to save him from Pharaoh's edict that all of the Hebrew male infants were to be killed, Moses' mother placed him in a basket of reeds, which she had covered with tar and pitch. With Moses' sister Miriam standing watch, she carefully placed the basket among the bulrushes at the bank of the river. When Pharaoh's daughter came to bathe, she found the basket and adopted Moses as her own son. The faithful Miriam then helped the princess find a nurse for Moses; happily, it was his own mother!

You will need: Bible
Other items depending on the activities chosen

Major Points: Israel's Family (the Hebrews) Lived in Egypt
Pharaoh Ordered the Hebrew Baby Boys Killed
In Faith, Moses' Parents Hid Him
Moses' Mother made a Basket for Him
Miriam Watched over Moses in the Basket in the River
Pharaoh's Daughter found the Baby
Moses' Mother Took Care of Him

Scripture Ref: Exodus 1 and 2:1-10, and Hebrews 11:23

Memory Verse: Hebrews 11:23 *By faith Moses parents hid him...*

Lesson: **Israel's Family (the Hebrews) Lived in Egypt**

- *[Be sure to start with your Bible sitting on your lap.]*
- *[Review the Timeline in the classroom, if available – See series lessons instructions. The Genesis series ended with the story of Jacob/Israel being reunited with Joseph, his son, in Egypt.]*
- Jacob/Israel and his family had come to Egypt to escape the famine. It was a large family. They called them the Hebrews.
- They had stayed there for a long time (400 years!) That's a really long time! *(If we all held our fingers up it would be WAY more years than that! Let's count by hundreds to get to 400.)*
- In that long amount of time they had gone from being honored guests in Egypt to being full-time slaves in Egypt!
- The king (or Pharaoh) who had known them and liked them was gone... and now the new Pharaoh treated them as slaves.
- Not only that, but Pharaoh was just plain scared of the Hebrews. He thought there were too many of them!

Pharaoh Ordered the Hebrew Baby Boys Killed

- Pharaoh wanted to get rid of the Hebrews, or at least to slow them down a little, so he ordered all their little baby boys killed.
- *What a terrible thing! Poor little Hebrew baby boys. What do you think? Should Pharaoh have done that? Why/ Why not?*
- During this time one special Hebrew family had a very special baby boy, his name was Moses. *(Repeat “Moses”)*

By Faith, Moses’ Parents Hid Him

- Moses had a mom and a dad, and a sister named Miriam
- The Bible says that **by faith** Moses’ parents hid him from Pharaoh’s order. *(Hebrews 11:23)*
- They didn’t want to see their fine baby boy killed.
- *What do you think? Was that a good thing or a bad thing? It was a good thing. Even though Pharaoh had ordered the baby boys to be killed, the parents knew that was wrong.*
- They decided to do what was right because they believed in God. They didn’t do the wrong thing that Pharaoh had ordered. Instead they hid their son and kept him safe.
- They trusted in God for his future *(and for theirs.)*

Moses’ Mother made a Basket for Him

- When the baby was 3 months old they realized they couldn’t keep him hidden anymore. After all, he was getting pretty big!
- *[For this next part you will need a volunteer from the audience. ☺ Ask one child, preferably one who has a baby sister or brother at home, to come up and make crying noises like an infant. The child should get louder as you go along, trying to talk over them. Have fun... You may want to warn neighboring teachers about potential noise. ☺]*
- How many of you have ever heard a baby cry? *(Cover your ears and talk more loudly.)* How loud are they? *(Talk even more loudly.)* They can be pretty LOUD, can’t they?! Especially if they are HUNGRY! Or MAD about something! It’s pretty hard to hide a baby who is that LOUD! *(OK... thank you... that’s enough crying for now!)*
- So, Moses’ parents realized that they couldn’t hide him forever.
- Moses’ mother got a special basket made out of reeds and then covered the outside of it with tar so that it would float and be watertight. Then she put baby Moses in the basket and placed it carefully in the reeds next to the bank in the river.

Miriam Watched over Moses in the Basket in the River

- Moses had an older sister, named Miriam
- Miriam stayed and watched over the basket in the river to see what would happen to baby Moses.

Pharaoh's Daughter found the Baby

- About that time, Pharaoh's daughter came to the river to bathe
- As she was walking along the river, she saw the basket and she heard a baby crying (*Have someone make crying sounds.* ☺)
- She sent her servant girl to get the basket and bring it to her
- They opened the basket and found baby Moses inside!
- Pharaoh's daughter knew it was one of the Hebrew babies
- She felt sorry for him. (*Awwwwww!*)

Moses' Mother Took Care of Him

- Miriam, who was still watching all of this, came and asked Pharaoh's daughter "Would you like for me to find one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"
- Pharaoh's daughter thought that was a great idea
- So Miriam went and found one of the Hebrew women. GUESS which of the Hebrew women she went and found! (*Wait for some guesses.*)
- She went and found HER MOTHER... who of course was ALSO Moses' mother!
- Moses' mother came to the river to talk to Pharaoh's daughter
- Pharaoh's daughter asked Moses' mother to take care of the baby for her, and she said that she would PAY her to do so! (*Wow, so she got to keep her baby, and feed him, and she got paid for it too!*)
- So, Moses' mother took care of him until he was older, then she took him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son.
- She named him Moses because she "drew him out of the water." (*Moses sounds like the Hebrew word for "draw out."*)
- So, Moses' parents trusted God and God provided for Moses and for their safety. Moses became the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and grew up in the palace. Later God would use Moses to bring the Hebrew people out of Egypt.

Let's pray and thank God for taking care of us, like He did for Moses!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that you took care of Baby Moses!
Thank you that you take care of us!
Thank you for loving us!
We love you back!
Amen.

Suggested Activities: (Choose 1-2 that you think will work well with your group.)

Float or Sink? *The children will determine if certain items will float or sink.*

Before Class: Arrange to have a sink or a dishpan of water in class on the day of the lesson. Provide towels to clean up splashes. Also bring several types of items that might float or sink. For example: wooden spoon, metal spoon, broom straw, leaves, a stick, small rocks, and aluminum foil (some shaped like a boat and some like a ball.)

During Class: Tell the children that sometimes object float in water and sometimes they sink in water. Show them the array of items you have provided. Get their opinions on whether things will float or sink. Some will seem easy and some will be hard. Test each item in the pan of water. Decide whether the items float or sink.

Make a Boat (or Basket) *The children will form a “boat” or “basket” shape out of aluminum foil and see if it will stay afloat in water.*

Before Class: Arrange to have a sink or a dishpan of water in class on the day of the lesson. Provide towels to clean up splashes. Also bring a roll of aluminum foil.

During Class: Discuss with the children how boats and baskets are shaped. (Perhaps show a basket or a picture of a boat.) *Basically they need a bottom and some sides.* Pull off pieces of aluminum foil for the children and allow them several minutes to shape their foil into a “boat” or “basket” shape. Bring the boats over to the pan of water, one or two at a time, to see if they will float. Let the children take their boats home.

Basket Weave *The children will learn to do a simple basket weave with paper strips.*

Before Class: Make copies of the activity sheet for each child in class. (You may copy them onto different colors of paper.) For younger children, make the cuts in the paper before class. Provide different colors of paper cut into strips about an inch wide. Also provide colors, tape, and scissors as needed.

During Class: If you would like to do so, have the children color the activity sheet before cutting on the lines. Older children may use scissors to cut the activity sheet on the dotted lines. Demonstrate for the children how to weave the strips of colored paper by alternating up and down through the cuts on the activity sheet. Let the children use different colored strips to make their own designs. Trim and tape the strips in place.

Review the Timeline *The children will review the Timeline that is in class.*

Before Class: Establish a Timeline for the Bible Stories in the Just Us Little Guys Series #6 (Genesis). You can use the activity sheets provided in each lesson to help build your Timeline. Stretch a piece of yarn or string along one of the walls in the classroom. Then use clothespins to attach completed activity pages on the Timeline to show how the people in the stories relate to each other in time.

During Class: Talk about the various people and events on the Timeline. Explain that Jacob/Israel and his family went to be in Egypt during a famine that lasted for 7 years. At that time Joseph (Jacob’s son) was second in command to Pharaoh. But now 400 years had passed. There was a new Pharaoh, who didn’t know Joseph and didn’t care about his people, the Hebrews. Pharaoh treated them badly and even ordered that all the little boy Hebrews should be Killed. Moses, who was a baby at the time, would one day grow up to lead his people out of Egypt and back to the Promised Land!

Act it Out *The children will act out part of the Bible story.*

Before Class: Bring a large basket to class. Also provide a cloth to cover the basket. Consider bringing tape (to mark off the river bank) or sheets to portray the river itself.

During Class: Tell the children that you are going to act out part of the story of Baby Moses in the Bulrushes. Along with the children, set up the room to represent the part of the Bible story that takes place at the bank of the river. Choose a place for the river to run through the classroom. Mark off the bank with tape on the floor or put sheets on the floor to represent the river. To show where the reeds (or bulrushes) were, consider setting up chairs near the bank of the river. Choose actors to represent Miriam, Moses' mother, and Pharaoh's daughter. Other actors could be Pharaoh and Moses' father. Have someone volunteer to make crying noises for Baby Moses! Tell the story or read it from the Bible. Allow the children to act out the parts. Have Moses' mother place the basket in the bulrushes, have Miriam watch, and have Pharaoh's daughter find Moses!

Skit: The Story of Baby Moses in the Bulrushes

Many years ago in Egypt the children of Israel, who were known as the Hebrews, lived in terrible slavery. The ruler of Egypt, called Pharaoh, was afraid of the Hebrews because there were so many of them. So, he ordered that all of the little boy babies should be killed at birth.

About this time a Hebrew man and a woman (from the tribe of Levi) had a baby boy. When his mother saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. But when she could hide him no longer (babies can be noisy...you know) she got a basket of reeds for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. His sister (Miriam) stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the river bank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to get it. She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.

Then Miriam asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to take care of the baby for you?"

"Yes, go," she answered. And the girl went and got the baby's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you."

So the woman took the baby and nursed him. When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. Pharaoh's daughter named him Moses, (which means to draw out) because she said, "I drew him out of the water."

(Based on the Bible verses found in Exodus 2: 1-10.)

