

LESSON 2



THE BIRTH OF MOSES

Scripture Text: Exodus 2:1-10

To limit population among the Israelites, Pharaoh had ordered all of their boy babies to be cast into the river. Could God protect His plan against so cruel a ruler and so drastic an order?

The life of Moses was divided into three periods: forty years of preparation in Egypt, forty years as a shepherd in Midian, forty years of leading Israel to Canaan. The period of Moses' life that we study today is while he was an ordinary man living the average life of one given his advantages. With Moses, as with all of us, it took a personal encounter with God and a voluntary yielding to the will of God to life his life from the natural to the spiritual.

MEMORY VERSE: *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* — Romans 8:28

Avoiding the Wicked Order

Exodus 2:1-2. The time for a deliverer had come. The years of Israel's bondage were running out. God was preparing a miraculous deliverance. To two slaves of a despised race a little child was born. The names of these slaves are not even recorded until Exodus 6:20, where we learn that Amram was the father and Jochebed, the mother. They loved their baby, a **goodly child**. Not being able to bear the thought to cast him away, they dared to defy the king's order. His mother **hid him three months**—only a temporary solution. God also saw the babe as a **goodly child**, not physically, but He knew the plan of service that He Himself had wrapped up in that small fleshly body. If His human tools would follow His leading, He had a perfect plan to escape the death determined by Pharaoh. Please keep in mind that Moses is a type of Jesus Christ, as we study these lessons.

A Bold Step

Exodus 2:3-4. The story of Moses' birth and rescue is simple and without glitter, as was that of Jesus. Yet it shows how God uses the weak things of this world to confound the wise and the strong (1 Corinthians 1:27-28). Faced by urgency, Jochebed took a bold step. We are not told that she prayed for guidance, but certainly it must have been God directing her, and she followed in obedience to God. She took a basket, **an ark of bulrushes**, waterproofed it with pitch (look at Noah's ark), put her baby in it and covered it over. Then she took that last, decisive step of faith that makes the difference between success and failure. She put the matter out of her hands and into the hands of God. She obeyed Pharaoh's order, yet not as he meant it. **She laid it in . . . the river's brink**. His sister Miriam lingered near to watch the outcome, no doubt stationed there by her mother.

The Crisis Moment

Exodus 2:5-8. **The daughter of Pharaoh came . . . she saw the ark among the flags, she sent . . . opened . . . saw the child**. The outcome was yet in the balance. But now little and ordinarily insignificant happenings began to move. The baby cried. Natural pity stirred in the heart of the princess. She would either follow her heart or her father's

orders. For she recognized the baby as **one of the Hebrews' children. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse . . . that she may nurse the child for thee?** The sister's offer to call a Hebrew nurse for the child brought a command to **Go**. Gladly, Miriam called her mother, the one person who most desired and was most qualified to nurse that child. The faith of two despised slaves, the cry of a baby in the river, and the words of a little girl all worked together for the miraculous deliverance of Moses. God was hereby serving notice to the world that He was going to deliver Israel. The deliverance of the deliverer was the first step. How often we fail to understand God's methods! We think that certain things are humanly impossible to do, and they are. But with God, all things are possible (Mark 10:27).

The Result

Exodus 2:9-10. **Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.** Just the privilege to be a nurse to her child would have been enough pay, but she received wages for giving him motherly care. So began the first stage in the training of the child for the work he was to do. When he was old enough to leave his mother, **she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son.** She adopted him and named him **Moses**, which meant "drawn or saved from the water." Now he entered upon the second stage of his training, an education in **all the wisdom of the Egyptians** (Acts 7:22). Can anyone doubt the hand of God in all of this?

The outcome of this event depended upon the joining of several simple happenings. Had any of them occurred at a different time or place or involved different people, it could not have turned out as it did. God directed each incident. God knew the future. He knew these people, and they did not fail. If God can use a little girl like Miriam to help carry out His purpose, He can use us. If we yield ourselves to Him with all our weaknesses and frailties, He can use us to His glory. What good plan does He want to carry out by using us?

JUST A THOUGHT

It is less painful to discipline a child than to weep over a spoiled youth.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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