

General Church Education



# Moses' Birth and Childhood

Exodus 2:1-15

## Lesson 3

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 3: The Lord Is Our Lawgiver

For ages 8-9 years

# Moses' Birth and Childhood

Exodus 2:1-15

## For Parents and Teachers

This lesson is the story of Moses' early life as an infant and child. He was chosen by the Lord to lead the Children of Israel out of Egypt, where they were slaves, and take them to the Promised Land. In order to prepare him for this great task, Moses was saved from the Pharaoh's order to kill all the male Hebrews that were born. Then he was educated in Pharaoh's court so that he could read and write and have access to all the learning of the Egyptians. However, he was nursed by his birth mother and acquainted with Hebrew traditions so he felt a connection with the Hebrews.

## Ideas for Children

- The Lord saves the good from evil.
- The Lord saved and prepared Moses to lead the Hebrews out of slavery.
- Slavery is wrong because people need to be free.
- The Lord is always helping people even when they have forgotten about Him.

## From the Writings

The understanding and will of people ought not to be in the least compelled by another, since all compulsion by another takes away freedom, but one ought to compel oneself; for to compel oneself is to act from freedom.

It is of the Divine Omnipotence to protect people from the hells, so far as it can be done without injury to their freedom and reason. *Apocalypse Explained* 1136 and 689

The Lord guards freedom in a person as a person does the pupil of his eye.

The Lord continually withdraws a person from evils by means of his freedom; and as far as He can withdraw him by means of freedom He implants by means of freedom what is good. Thus in the place of infernal freedom the Lord gradually endows a person with heavenly freedom. *Divine Providence* 97

# Moses' Birth and Childhood

## Exodus 2:1-15

### Words to Understand

- Pharaoh**—the title of the kings of ancient Egypt  
**bondage**—slavery, captivity  
**slave**—someone who is owned by another person and made to serve  
**Hebrews**—another name for the Israelites  
**midwife**—a person whose work is assisting women in childbirth  
**ark**—a container or chest to hold something  
**bulrushes**—tall, slender plants living near the water

### The Children of Israel Become Slaves

Do you remember how the Children of Israel moved to Egypt because of the great famine? The “Children of Israel” does not mean little children, does it? It means all the grown-ups and children in Jacob, or Israel’s family, the people who are also called Hebrews or Israelites. When Jacob’s family first moved to Egypt, there were seventy people altogether. They lived happily in the land of Goshen, the best part of Egypt where the Pharaoh had invited them to stay because they were Joseph’s family. As time went on, Jacob died. Later Joseph and his brothers died. There were great changes in the life of the Hebrews and a sad thing happened. Egypt became a land of slavery for the Hebrews and was no longer a happy home for them.

Several hundred years had passed. The Hebrew families had kept on growing in size. The Children of Israel had grown into a big nation. There were many thousands of them and they

were still living in Egypt. Now there was a new Pharaoh in Egypt. He was not kind and good like the Pharaoh of Joseph’s time. In fact, this new Pharaoh was cruel. He was afraid that if there was a war, the Israelites would join with their enemy to defeat the Egyptians. This wicked Pharaoh made



all the Hebrews slaves. Slaves are people who are owned by someone else and are made to work for them. Pharaoh made the Hebrews work hard. The Hebrew slaves were forced to make bricks by mixing mud with chopped straw and baking them in the hot sun. Then these bricks were used to build magnificent cities for Pharaoh.

### **The Lord Saved a Very Special Boy Baby**

A certain family from the tribe of Levi had a beautiful baby boy. They hid him for several months hoping to keep him safe from Pharaoh's cruel command. When the baby grew and they could no longer hide him, the mother made an ark or container by weaving the strong river reeds, or bulrushes, together into a basket. She daubed it with pitch, a black sticky substance, to keep the water out and then put her precious baby into the basket and floated it on the river. The baby's older sister stood back a bit and watched to see what would become of him. Read the story from the Word and see what happened to the baby.

### **Read Exodus 2:1-15.**

Who came down to the river to bathe? The daughter of Pharaoh came to the water and saw the little basket. She sent her maid to get it. Pharaoh's daughter opened the basket and saw the little baby who was crying. She felt sorry for him because she knew he was one of the Hebrew children.

When the baby's sister saw that Pharaoh's daughter wanted to help, she asked if she wanted a nurse for the baby. Pharaoh's daughter said, "Go." So the sister went and got her own mother, the baby's own mother, to care for him until he was old enough to go to live with Pharaoh's daughter and become her son. She called him Moses. Moses means "being drawn out" and she had drawn him out of the water.

### **Moses Grows Up in Pharaoh's House**

Moses lived with Pharaoh's daughter and grew up as a prince of Egypt. He learned to read



and write and was well educated in the knowledge of the Egyptians. But Moses did not forget his own people, and was sad to see how badly the Hebrews were treated as slaves to the Egyptians. One day when Moses was grown up, he saw an Egyptian cruelly beating a Hebrew. What did Moses do when he thought no one was looking? He killed the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand. But someone had seen what happened. When Pharaoh heard about it, he wanted to kill Moses. So Moses ran far away to Midian, where he would begin the next part of his life.

### **Under the Lord's Protection**

All through his life, the Lord was protecting and preparing Moses to serve his people. It was really the Lord who saved Moses by bringing Pharaoh's daughter to the river. The Lord prepared Moses so that he could become a great leader. The things that happened to Moses helped him become wise. He was to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt where they were slaves and take them back to the promised land of Canaan. We will learn more about how the Lord prepared Moses in our next lesson. As the Lord cared for Moses, He protects and prepares each of us from the time we are born. By doing what He teaches in His Word, each of us is being prepared to serve our neighbor and the Lord in the best way possible.



### **Discussion Ideas**

- How does it feel when there is no choice about what to do. When and why is freedom important?
- Are first reactions to situations we face always the best? How can we judge the best way to react to things that happen in our lives?

# Activity Overview | Moses' Birth and Childhood

## Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

I will lift up my eyes to the hills—  
From whence comes my help?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
Who made heaven and earth.     Psalm 121:1-2

## Songs

### *The Lord in His Righteousness*

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-the-lord-in-his-righteousness-judges-the-people/>

### *Moses in the Bulrushes*

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-moses-in-the-bulrushes/>

## Projects

Choose one or two activities.

- Activity 1 | Write your name in Hieroglyphs
- Activity 2 | Moses' birth and childhood True or False?
- Picture to color—Moses is Rescued (Exodus 2)

## Additional Activity Ideas

- Watch *Moses in the Bulrushes* video at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-moses-in-the-bulrushes-song/>
- Practice helping someone who needs help—for example a younger child, an older person or someone who has a disability.
- Practice giving others the freedom to choose. Next time you work in a group give each person the opportunity to speak and be listened to, especially if you are making a decision.
- Try making bricks out of mud and straw. Let them dry in the sun. Bricks are still made this way in many parts of the world, such as rural Kenya.

## Activity 1 | Write Your Name in Hieroglyphs

The New Church teaches that Moses represents the Word. Moses helped write the first five books of the Word. Moses was brought up in Egypt, one of the places where writing was first developed so that we could have the Word in written form. Children will learn about hieroglyphs and then write their names in hieroglyphs.

1. Pharaoh's daughter found Moses in an ark among the reeds at the edge of the Nile River. The reeds were papyrus reeds that were used to make the first paper people used. Egypt was one of the first places to develop a written language. The Egyptian language was written in pictures that we call hieroglyphs. Moses may have learned hieroglyphs when he was brought up in Pharaoh's house.
2. Hieroglyphs started as a picture language. Each picture represented a word or an idea. Over time, some of the hieroglyphs also came to be used like the letters in our alphabet, which stand for sounds. We are going to write our names in hieroglyphs.
3. Look at the *Hieroglyphic Alphabet*, and *Cartouche* pages. The *Cartouche* page shows what papyrus looked like. The oval shape is a cartouche. The names of Pharaohs and other royalty were written in cartouches. Ancient Egyptians believed that having an oval around a name helped protect a person from evil spirits.
4. Write your name inside a cartouche. Think about how the Lord protects you, just as He protected Moses. Look at the *Hieroglyphic Alphabet* page. Find the symbols for the letters of your first name. Practice writing them on scrap paper before writing in the cartouche! If you want, write your last name as well.



# Hieroglyphic Alphabet



vulture



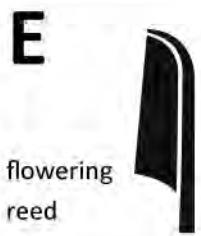
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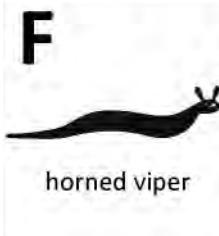
basket with handle



hand



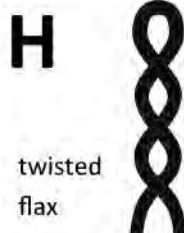
flowering  
reed



horned viper



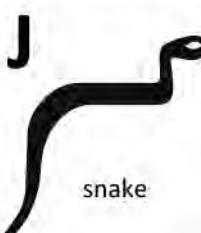
jar  
stand



twisted  
flax



flowering  
reed



snake



basket with handle



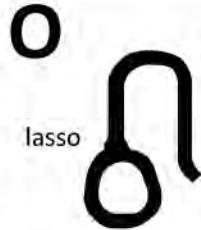
lion



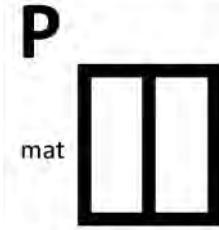
owl



ripple of water



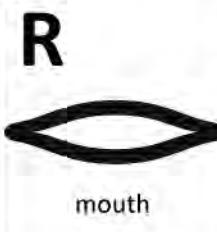
lasso



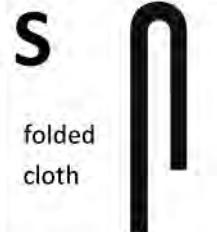
mat



hill



mouth



folded  
cloth



loaf of bread



quail  
chick



horned viper



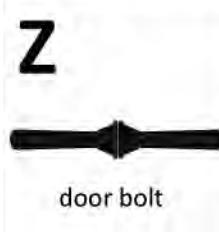
quail  
chick



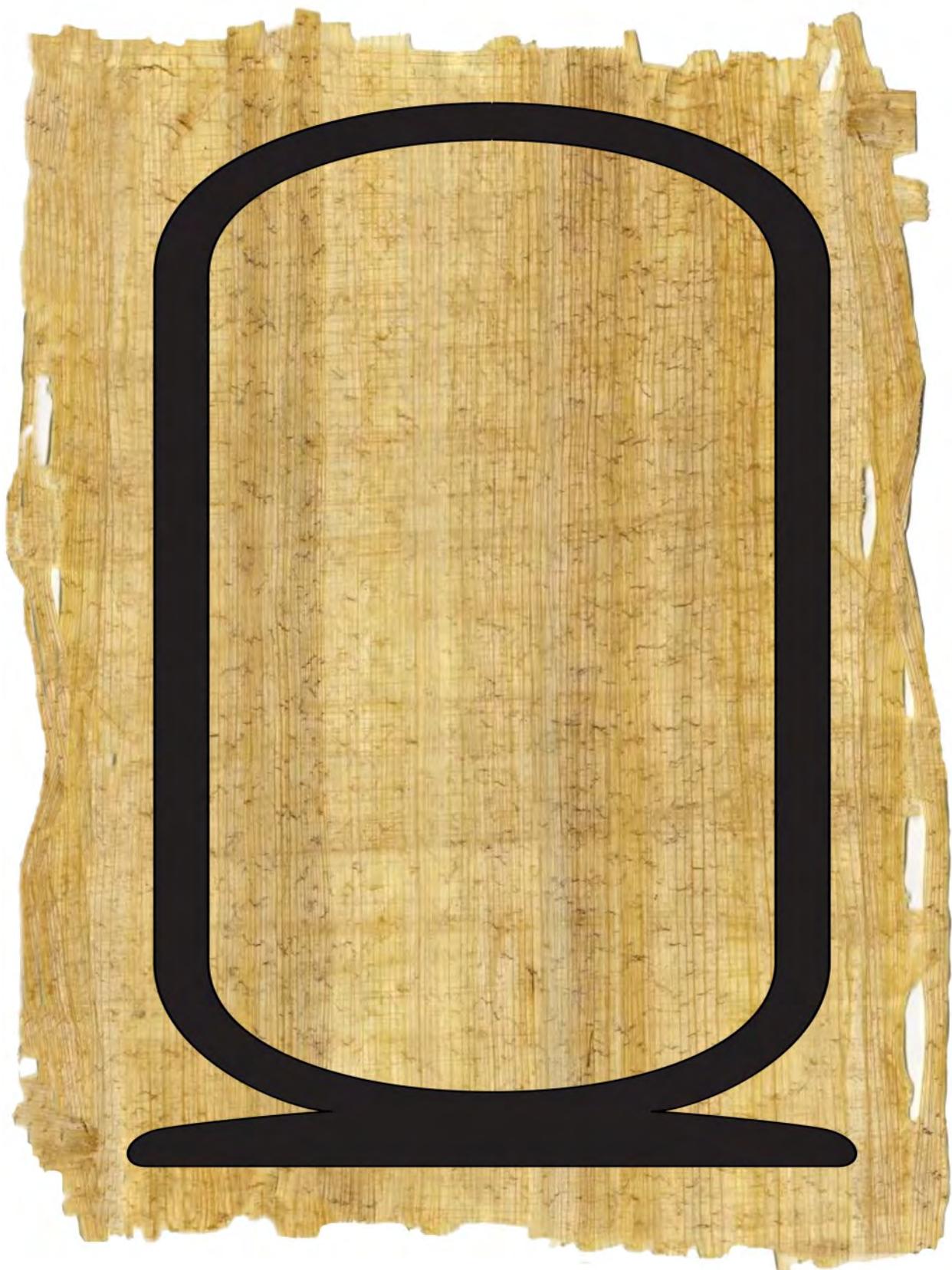
basket with handle



flowering  
reed



door bolt



## Activity 2 | Moses' Birth and Childhood True or False?

Read each statement. Decide if the statement is true or false. Put “T” for True or “F” for False on the line before each statement.

- \_\_\_ 1. The wicked Pharaoh said all the Hebrew boy babies were to be drowned in the Nile River.
- \_\_\_ 2. A couple from the tribe of Levi hid their baby boy for six months.
- \_\_\_ 3. The baby's mother made a little ark and put it among the reeds by the edge of the water.
- \_\_\_ 4. The Pharaoh's daughter came down to the river to get a drink.
- \_\_\_ 5. When the baby cried, Pharaoh's daughter felt sorry for him.
- \_\_\_ 6. The baby's sister became his nurse.
- \_\_\_ 7. Later, the baby became a son to Pharaoh's daughter, and she named him Moses.
- \_\_\_ 8. One day Moses saw an Egyptian being nice to a Hebrew.
- \_\_\_ 9. Moses ran away from Egypt because Pharaoh knew Moses had killed an Egyptian.
- \_\_\_ 10. Moses went to Midian, a far away land.
- \_\_\_ 11. The Lord was getting Moses ready for the great work of leading the Hebrews out of Egypt.
- \_\_\_ 12. The Lord prepares everyone for the job they are to do in life.

Answers  
1. T  
2. F  
3. T  
4. F  
5. T  
6. F  
7. T  
8. F  
9. T  
10. T  
11. T  
12. T

