

# Moses in the Bulrushes

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Exodus 1:1–2:10

*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. Exodus 2:5*

After Joseph and all of his generation died in Egypt, a new king came to power. This king forgot what Joseph had done for the Egyptians and saw only that the Israelites were becoming a fruitful and mighty people. (See Exodus 1:7–9.) Pharaoh decided to put the Israelites in bondage so they would not become too strong and help Egypt's enemies. The Israelites continued to multiply, however, even though they had hard work to perform and cruel taskmasters to afflict them. (See Exodus 1:10–14.)

So Pharaoh decided to keep the Israelites from becoming any mightier. He told the midwives to kill the newborn Israelite sons. When the midwives said they could not do it, Pharaoh decreed that all sons born to the house of Israel were to be drowned in the river. (See Exodus 1:16–22.)

At this time Jochebed, a woman of the tribe of Levi, gave birth to Moses. She could not bear to drown her son, so she hid him for three months.

When he became too large to hide, she made a basket of bulrushes and sealed it. She put Moses in the basket in the river, and Miriam, his sister, watched from a distance to see what would happen to the baby. (See Exodus 2:1–4.)

Pharaoh's daughter came to the river to bathe. She saw the basket in the water and sent her maid to get it. When Pharaoh's daughter saw a Hebrew baby in the basket, she had compassion on the child and decided to keep him. Miriam then came forward and offered to find a nurse for the baby. When Miriam brought her mother for a nursemaid, Pharaoh's daughter told her, "Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages" (Exodus 2:9). After "the child grew," his mother brought him back to Pharaoh's daughter so that he could become her son. Pharaoh's daughter called him Moses because she had pulled him from the water. (See Exodus 2:5–10.)

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## Summary

Pharaoh, king of Egypt, worried about the large number of Israelites in his land. Thinking they might become a threat to the Egyptians, he decided to make them slaves. They were made to work hard and were treated harshly. Still their numbers grew. So Pharaoh ordered all the baby Israelite boys killed. An Israelite woman named Jochebed protected her baby son by hiding him for three months. When she could no longer hide him, she put him in a basket made from

bulrushes and placed the basket in the river. The baby's sister, Miriam, kept watch to see what would happen to him. Pharaoh's daughter noticed the basket and sent a maid to get it. When Pharaoh's daughter saw that the basket held an Israelite baby, she decided to keep him as her own. Miriam came forward and offered to find a nurse for the baby. She brought their own mother, Jochebed. Pharaoh's daughter named the boy Moses.

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