

Moses in the Nile

Moses is one of the most well-known men in the history of the world. He is the second most central figure in 136 chapters in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy in the Old Testament. God is the number one most important figure in the Bible.

In Exodus chapter 2 we learn one of the most famous stories of all time. Pharaoh, the King of Egypt ordered all male babies to be killed because he feared the growth in numbers of the Jewish people. He thought they would go to war and overthrow this kingdom.

One family from the tribe of Levi had a son. The mother, Jochabed, was afraid that her son would be killed under Pharaoh's orders. She kept him hidden for three months and then knowing she could not keep him hidden any longer, she took him down to the Nile River. She put black tar called pitch, on a wicker basket and put it in the reeds in the river.

Pharaoh's daughter who some think was named Queen Hapshepsut found Moses in the reeds and decided to raise him as her son. She asked her maidservants, one of whom happened to be Moses sister, to go find a young mother who could nurse the boy. They selected Jochabed who was actually Moses real mother. Pharaoh's daughter named him Moses, which means "I drew him out of the water." In Acts 7:22 Luke tells us that "Moses was educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action."

So, Moses, who was a Jew, was raised just like a royal Egyptian and had great knowledge in all things. God had a plan for Moses and this was just the beginning of the plan.

An interesting fact about rivers. Do you know which river is the longest in the world and which river has the greatest volume of water? The Amazon is ranked as the second longest river, winding through 4000 miles of territory. This puts it just behind the Nile which comes in at 4049 miles and ahead of the Chang Jiang (Yangtze) river in China at 3917 miles and the Mississippi River in the United States at 3870 miles. The Russian river Yenisey finishes out the top five longest rivers at 3434 miles. The Amazon has the greatest volume of water. It is not as long as the Nile, but it is wider and deeper and so it has more water flowing in it.

Question Time:

1. Why did Pharaoh want to kill all the Jewish male babies?
2. What does the name Moses mean?
3. Who was Pharaoh's daughter?
4. What was Moses' mother's name?

Scripture: Exodus 2:1-10 New International Version (NIV)

The Birth of Moses

2 Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, ²and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. ³But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket 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. ⁴His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

⁵Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. ⁶She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.

⁷Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"

⁸"Yes, go," she answered. So, the girl went and got the baby's mother. ⁹Pharaoh'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. ¹⁰When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water."

Next Steps: Ask your mother if you can use a basket to float in the bathtub. Before you try this, ask her for some Saran Wrap and take one solid piece to cover the entire bottom and sides of the basket so that it won't leak. Place a baby doll in the basket and then place it in the tub of water. It should float. Think about a baby placed in a basket in the Nile River.