

A Good Shepherd Sacred Story

Baby Moses

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BABY MOSES MATERIALS

- medium wicker basket to hold:
 - wooden bulrushes
 - wooden Miriam figure
 - wooden J ochebed figure
 - wooden princess figure
 - wooden baby figure in small woven basket



Miriam



Jochebed



Princess

ACTIONS

After speaking, stand and go to the shelf holding this story. Take the basket back to the circle with you and place it in front of you as you sit down.

After speaking, allow 10-15 seconds of silence as you reverently touch one of the wooden figures to center yourself and the children.

Nod your head and smile.

Close your eyes and move shoulders down.

Open hands and move them gradually apart.

Move your hand and arm in a sweeping motion as though getting rid of everyone.

WORDS

Watch very carefully where I go to get this story so you will always know where to find it if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

All of the words to my story are inside me. Will you please make silence with me so I can find all of the words to my story?

Joseph's family and all the other people of God had come to Egypt when there was not enough food in Canaan.

The Pharaoh then was very kind to the people of God.

After Joseph died there was a new Pharaoh who was unkind to the people of God.

He made them slaves and forced them to work making all the buildings he wanted.

They worked so very hard and were so tired.

But God was with them. They were the people of God.

Because God was with them they grew and grew. Soon there were many, many people of God.

The Pharaoh was afraid that the people of God would become more powerful than he and the Egyptians.

So he commanded that all the boy babies of the people of God be killed.

Place Jochebed figure in the center of the storytelling area.

Take bulrushes from basket and set in front of you to one side of Jochebed.

Take small woven basket with baby Moses in it from larger basket and place next to Jochebed.

Carefully pat the inside of the woven basket.

Wrap an imaginary baby in an imaginary blanket and place him in basket.

Put woven basket in front of bulrushes in the "water".

Place Miriam figure near baby.

Move princess figure to water.

Move woven basket to princess.

Slowly shake your head.

Move Miriam figure to princess.

One mother of a new baby wouldn't let them hurt her baby. Her name was Jochebed.

She knew that every day the Egyptian princess came to the river to take a bath. The princess was the daughter of the Pharaoh.

So Jochebed made a basket from reeds.

Then she put a special kind of sticky tar inside to keep the water out.

Wrapping her baby boy carefully she laid him in the basket.

Then she went down to the river and floated the basket in the water.

To be sure that the baby would be all right the mother sent the baby's sister, Miriam, down to the river to watch him in the basket.

Soon the princess came to take a bath in the river.

She saw the little basket in the water. The princess asked her servants to bring the basket to her. When she saw the baby, the princess felt kind. She decided she would keep the baby.

But she didn't know how to care for the baby when he was so little.

Miriam, the baby's sister, came out from her hiding place and said, "I know a woman who will take care of the baby." The princess told her to go find the woman.

Move Miriam figure away. Then bring Miriam and Jochebed figures close to the princess.

Motion as though removing something from water.

Miriam left and came back quickly with her mother.

The princess named the baby, "Moses" which means taken out of water.

The baby went home and lived with his family for several years. Later, Moses grew up in the palace with the princess and was treated like her son.

WONDERING QUESTIONS:

I wonder if the sister was afraid to stay with her little brother?

I wonder if the baby cried?

I wonder how the mother felt when she got to take her baby back home?

Return the wooden figures, woven basket and bulrushes to the basket carefully.

After speaking, stand and walk back to the shelf with the basket. Return to the circle.

Dismiss the children after EVERYONE has had a chance to choose their work.

Watch very carefully how I put these materials away so you will know how to handle them if you choose this story for your work today or another day.

Watch very carefully where I return this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

Today our activity choices are __ ,
and __ Let's go around the circle and decide.

BABY MOSES TEACHER HELPS

This has long been a favorite story of children, but it must be told with care. Young children tend to personalize stories they hear. It's easy for them to put themselves in the situation of the person in the story. This is especially true when the story is about a child. So

the emphasis of the baby Moses story is how carefully the mother prepared a place for her child, how she sent the baby's sister, Miriam, along to keep watch. It's also about the princess who could have destroyed the child, but did not. So we tell the story with the care of the baby being primary. We do not dwell on Moses leaving his mother later in life to become an Egyptian. The overwhelming emphasis of the story must be that the child was so very safe because of his mother, sister, the princess and Yahweh (God).

This story sets the stage for what will be the pivotal event in Israelite history. Moses is set afloat in an "ark". The word in Hebrew is the same as that which Noah was in during the flood. ~rdman's Handbook to the Bible, edited by David and Pat Alexander, Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdman's Publishing Co., 1973, p.155) With that understanding we have an even stronger idea of how Moses was in God's hand even as a young child. We also have a deeper appreciation of the resourceful and strong mother and daughter who were determined that the boy child would survive.

Eerdman's Handbook to the Bible further states, "It was not unusual for 'foreigners' to be brought up in this way, and trained for responsible posts in the army, priesthood or civil service." The princess would have taken Moses back to the harem and had him taught to read and write as well as learn other skills. So Moses had the advantage of an education as well as a chance to grow in the culture of the Egyptians. In the story of the Exodus we find how important it becomes that Moses has the ear of the Pharaoh.

The wondering questions for this story center on the feelings of the mother, sister and baby boy. In the first question we wonder if Miriam was afraid as she waited. She may have been concerned that someone else would come along and see the baby. She may have worried that the basket wouldn't hold or that when the princess found the baby she would obey her father's order and have the child killed.

The second question wonders if the baby cried. The children will have different answers, but it's a very real possibility for them. They, as three year olds and up, still may feel like crying when their mother is gone. Some will believe the baby was scared or hungry and cried for his mother. Other children may feel that the movement of the water rocked the baby to sleep.

The final question is about how Jochebed, the mother, felt when she got to take her baby home safe and sound. Without a doubt the responses will be happy or relieved. We finish the story with positives; the baby being safe, going to his mother and having a great future in the land of Egypt.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN:

Moses didn't grow up knowing his true heritage. What did he miss out on as a child?

When do you think Moses realized he wasn't really an Egyptian? How do you think he felt, finding out that he was really a Hebrew like the slaves?

The princess raised Moses as though he was her son. Adopted children are loved by their parents as much as biological children. How does that help us understand God's love for us?

Miriam, Moses' sister, carried the secret of Moses' identity with her for a long time. Imagine you are Miriam and you are a slave. Your brother is living in the Pharaoh's palace. What would you want to do?