



Moses and the Basket

(based on Exodus 1:8–2:10)

In the time of Joseph, the Hebrew people moved to Egypt to escape famine. They were welcomed and learned to live in their new home.

Years later, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, decided to build cities and great monuments. He forced the Hebrew people to do the work; he made them his slaves. It was a sad and bitter time.

One day, Pharaoh noticed that Hebrew people were having many babies and growing into a large community. Pharaoh worried:

“If they keep having babies, one day there will be more Hebrews than Egyptians. If that happens, I won’t be able to tell them what to do. Who will build my cities then?”

Pharaoh decided to reduce the number of Hebrew people. He gave a terrible order: All the baby boys born to the Hebrew women would be killed. He ordered Shiphrah (SHIP-rah) and Puah (POO-ah), the two women who helped birth the Hebrew babies, to do this dreadful thing.

The two women refused to kill the baby boys, so Pharaoh sent his soldiers to kill the babies. It was a horrible, terrible time.

About that time, a Hebrew woman named Jochebed (JOK-uh-bed) gave birth to a strong baby boy. The brave mother kept her baby hidden from the soldiers, but it is hard to hide a baby for long.

Finally, the mother made a special basket from reeds. She placed her baby into the basket and hid it in the tall rushes at the edge of the river so the soldiers wouldn’t find it. Her daughter Miriam (MIHR-ih-uhm) stayed close by to see what would happen.

Pharaoh’s daughter came down to the river for a bath. She saw the basket in the reeds and sent one of her servants to get it. She opened the basket and saw the baby.

“This must be one of the Hebrew babies,” she said. “Look at him. He is crying. We must look after him.”

Immediately Miriam came out of her hiding place and stood before the princess.

“Would you like me to find someone to look after the baby for you?” Miriam asked. “I know a woman who could feed and care for him.”

“Yes,” replied the princess.

So Miriam ran and fetched her mother. The princess paid her to look after the baby. The baby boy was safe from the soldiers.

The princess adopted the baby boy as her son. She called him Moses.



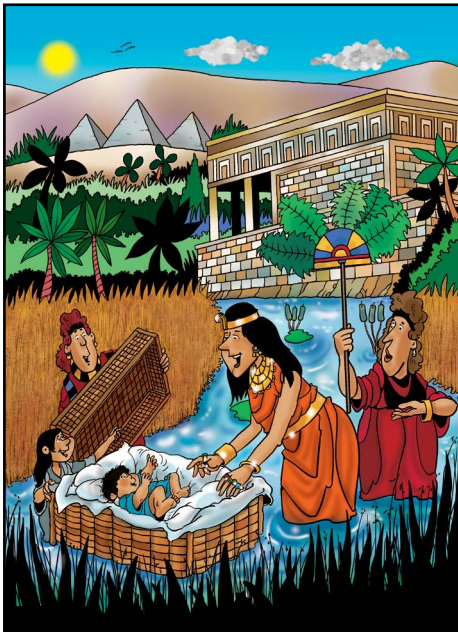
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- On slips of paper, write the names of the five women in the story: Shiphrah and Puah (the midwives), Jochebed (Moses' mother), Miriam (Moses' sister), and Pharaoh's daughter. Each person selects a slip and acts out the woman's role in the story. Guess which woman each person is portraying.
- Talk about how parents may feel about having their children in danger. Consider what a parent might do to protect their child. Share, in an age-appropriate way, what might be real-life situations in the news. Wonder where God's grace may be in these situations. Wonder who are the people who care for the children.



Responding to God's Grace

- Together recall some of the caring things that people did in today's story (for example, Miriam watched over Moses, the princess took Moses out of the water and adopted him). Name some of the things you do to help others. List these on paper. Play a game about how to care for others. Say the words "Moses, Moses, tell me true. What caring things should I do?" Name one of the caring things you have written down and act out that caring activity. Start again.
- Using a children's Bible or Bible storybook, read the story of baby Moses. Then read more stories about Moses, such as Moses and the burning bush, Moses and Pharaoh, and the story of the exodus. Moses being saved in the basket was just the beginning of his story. God had great things in store for him.
- Share the baby stories of your children. Invite them to tell a story about how God has watched over them thus far in their lives.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Make a woven paper basket using the instructions at bit.ly/PaperBasketInstructions. After the basket is made, write notes or draw pictures of thanks for the way someone in your family cares for you. Put their name on the note and place it in the basket. Each day, read one note together. Keep filling the basket with notes!
- What local organizations help children? Consider collecting suitable items for those children. This can be an ongoing project for your family.
- Pray this prayer this week:

Thank you, God, for helping us grow. And thank you for people who take care of us. Amen.

Note: bit.ly web addresses are case sensitive.