Moses

A Baby in a Basket

Joseph’s family moved to Egypt. They lived there for hundreds of years. As they grew, Joseph’s family became known as the Israelites, or Hebrews.

Four hundred years after Joseph brought his family to Egypt, a mean king ruled the land. He did not like the Israelites. He made them all be slaves, and he ordered that every Hebrew baby boy be killed!

One mother of a beautiful baby boy tried everything to keep her son alive. For three months she managed to keep the baby hidden. But she knew time was running out.

“There must be something we can do to save him,” she cried to her husband. Night after night they prayed for an idea. Their children, Miriam and Aaron, prayed with them too. Then they had an idea. The mother wove a basket together out of reeds. The basket became a little boat. They took the baby, wrapped him in soft blankets, and laid him in the basket.

Miriam and her mother brought the basket down to the river. They gently placed it in the water. “Watch him, Miriam,” the mother said.

Saved by a Princess

God had heard the prayers of the baby’s family. He had very special plans for that boy. The basket floated down the river. Then one of the king’s daughters, a princess, chose just that moment to go to the river.

The princess and her servants went into the water. Suddenly, one of the servants saw the basket. “Princess, come look what the river has brought us,” she called. She carried the basket up to the shore and placed it on the sand.

There, inside the basket, was a precious baby. “He must be a Hebrew boy,” the princess said. She knew about her father’s order to kill the Hebrew boys. “He’s so hungry, isn’t there anything we can give him?”

Miriam had been watching and praying. She wanted the princess to save her little brother. Now she ran up to the princess. “I know a Hebrew woman who could feed him. Do you want me to get her?”

The princess agreed. “Yes, once he’s old enough to eat on his own, you can bring him back to me,” she said.

So the baby went back to his family. There, his parents, brother and sister all loved and took care of him. They thanked God for answering their prayers.

When the baby was about three years old, his family brought him back to the princess. “This boy will be my very own son,” she said.

As Moses grew older, he learned that he was Hebrew, not Egyptian. Whenever he saw how the Hebrew people were treated like slaves, he felt angry. “It’s not fair,” he cried to the princess.

Moses Strikes a Blow for Freedom

The years went by and Moses became a grown man. At age forty, he was walking in the streets when he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew slave. “No!” he yelled. He hit the Egyptian hard, pushing his head against a wall. The Egyptian fell dead in the sand where Moses hid him.

The next day Moses saw two Hebrews fighting. “Don’t,” he said to one of them, “Why are you hitting him?” The Hebrews looked at Moses’ fine clothes. They laughed at him.

“Who are you to tell us not to fight? Didn’t you just kill an Egyptian yesterday?” They knew as soon as the king heard what Moses had done, he’d be killed.

Moses grew afraid. If these two slaves know I killed that Egyptian, who else might know? I must leave Egypt, and quickly!

The king did find out that Moses killed an Egyptian. His guards chased Moses into the desert, but did not find him. During the next forty years, Moses got married and raised his family in the desert.