

Moses and Miriam

We finished studying about the two first children in the Bible -- Isaac & Ishmael.

The next children in the Bible are Isaac's twin sons. In their mother's womb they didn't get along. Mom felt them struggling a lot. They continued struggling all their lives. And that struggle between their descendents continues today.

When the first baby was born, the women were surprised to see the second boy coming out right behind him, holding on to the first baby's heel.

So Mom and Dad named the second baby **JACOB**. That means "he grabs the heel." In the Hebrew language that was a phrase that meant "deceiver."

That is the only story we have about Jacob and his twin brother Esau when they were children.

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The next story is about Jacob's son **JOSEPH**.

His story in the Bible begins when he was 17 years old -- not a kid.

So we will skip him for now. Maybe we will come back to him later.

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The next children we meet are baby Moses
and his older sister.

Their story begins in Exodus, chapter 1.
Jacob's family moved to Egypt.
There they could get food during a long dry time.

During the next 400 years their family grew
larger... and larger... and larger,

The Egyptian leaders became afraid.
So they forced the Jews to become their slaves,
for building their cities,
and maybe their pyramids.

That hard work made the Jewish people stronger.
And the Egyptian king became more afraid.

So the king ordered all Egyptians, "If you see any Jewish baby
boys, you must throw them into the river."

Now this Jewish woman is pregnant, and gives-birth.
It's a boy! Oh, no! What should she do?

Mother has a clever idea:
Hide her baby in that place no one would think to look.
In the NILE river!

She made a basket using river grass, called PAPHYRUS,
and covered it with TAR, so the basket will stay dry and float.

Interesting -- the Hebrew word the Bible uses here for "basket"
is exactly the same word the Bible used in a previous story
that described the boat, the ARK, that saved NOAH and his family
in the flood.

Now that basket became Moses' ARK that saved his life.

Mother sent the baby's older sister to watch the basket.

Why not Mother, herself stay watch the basket?

If someone saw a slave woman watching the river,
they maybe will become curious and suspicious.

But a kid...? No one will think that is strange.

How many brothers and sisters did Moses have?

The Bible names two:

1. The oldest sister, name MIRIAM.

In the New Testament, that name becomes translated
to "MARIA" in the Greek language,
and we translate that to English as "MARY."

1. Miriam

2. Brother AARON.

then 3. Baby Moses.

?Did they have other brothers and sisters?

We don't know. The Bible doesn't say.

So we guess that this older sister watching the baby is Miriam.

Then it happened!

The King's daughter came down to the river.

The Bible says that she came to bathe.

What does that mean?

?Take a bath in the to become clean?

I doubt that.

The woman is a princess, living in the king's house.
They have private tubs, with clean water for washing.

Remember that Egyptian people worshipped the Nile River.
They had many gods, and the Nile River was one of their gods.
So bathing in that river had religious purposes
[same as Hindu people in India do today in the Ganges River].

And there the princess saw the basket.
She was curious, so she told her servant to get the basket.
She opened it and saw a Jewish baby boy.

What should she do?
Her father ordered that she must kill that boy,
 throw him in the river.

But she can't. That baby touched her heart.
So the Egyptian princess saved the Jewish boy's life.

His older sister saw all that happening.
What should she do!!??
 ?Stay in hiding?
 ?Run and tell her Mother?
 What!?

Now we see Miriam become the HERO for this story.
And we see how God plans everything perfectly.

God gave Miriam a smart idea.
She ran to the Egyptian princess...

If an adult slave tried to do that, that person would get punished.
But Miriam is a kid, so that's fine.

She asked the princess:

"Do you want me to go and find a Hebrew woman who can breast-feed that baby for you?"

Remember, back in those days, that was the only way they could feed babies. They didn't have baby bottles and FORMULA.

The king's daughter answered, "Yes, Go!"

So the girl went and got her mother!

The princess paid the baby's mother to take care of her own baby.

And Mother didn't need to hide her baby any more.
She didn't need to be afraid about the king's command.

The Bible does not say how long the mother could keep her baby.
The Bible only says:

When the boy grew older, the mother brought him to the king's daughter, and she adopted the boy.

Was that hard for Mother to do -- give up her son?

Maybe... and maybe not.

Remember, Mom and Dad were slaves.

Their son can grow-up as a free man in the family of the king.

We can guess that mother took care of her baby past breast-feeding ended, and after toilet-training.

In that short time, how much can that young boy learn about his language and culture? and about His God?

We don't know.

But we know that God gave him powerful lessons later.

The princess named him MOSES.
That name has two meanings:

In the Hebrew language MOSES means "pull out"
because she pulled the baby out of the water.

In the Egyptian language MOSES means "is born."
Many Egyptian kings had that part of their name.
"RAMESES" means "RA, the sun god, is born."
The Egyptian kings called themselves gods!

Now, in the Egyptian king's family, Moses received a high level of
education,
learning languages,
history,
science and engineering,
military (*army*) skills,
and the Egyptian religion.

But the Egyptians can't teach Moses about God.
So, later, God Himself must teach him.

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Every year on July 4, American people celebrate
our country's "birthday,"
that day we became a nation.
We call July 4 "Independence Day."

The story about Moses is also about Israel becoming a nation.
But when Moses led Jewish slaves in Egypt out,
they did not become independent.
No, they became dependent on God.

And we see that is really true in our story today.

God uses humble people in strange situations
for making His great plans succeed.

And His great plan is, what?
Salvation!

For baby Moses, that means God saved his life,
using a basket, the river, and the daughter of the king who
ordered the killing of all Jewish baby boys.

For Israel, God chose a baby in a basket floating in the river, for
special work --
leading slaves to freedom, to become a nation,
and bringing them to their home land.

For us, God sent a baby in an animal feed box
and God chose a rough cross
for saving us sinners,
for forgiving us,
for bringing us to heaven.

When Moses came out of that water-river,
his life was changed, different,
from that time forward.

When we have water-baptism in Christ Jesus,
our lives change, different,
from that time forward.

Everyone in Moses' story had a special job,
but they did not see that God gave them that job.
And they did not see that God really did the work,
managing everything
for making His plan succeed.

Also, God gives us, each one, a special job.
Sometimes we are in a really hard situation,
as Moses' mother had.
as Jesus had.

But we see that God works through really bad situations
for His really good plan.

For Moses, God's plan saved Israel on earth.
For us, God's plan saves us forever.

Old Testament Lesson -- Exodus 2:1-10

Story background: People of Israel are slaves in Egypt. The Egyptian king ordered that when a Jewish woman has a baby boy, the Egyptian must throw all Jewish baby boys in the river, name NILE.

¹ Now a Jewish man from the family of LEVI married a woman who was also from the family of LEVI.

² The wife became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She saw that the baby was wonderful. So she hid the baby for three months.

³ But when the mother can't continue hiding the baby, so she got a basket and covered it with TAR. She put the baby in the basket. Then she put the basket in the Nile River, in the tall grass near the land.

⁴ The baby's older sister stood near, watching.

⁵ Then the daughter of the king of Egypt came to the river for a bath. Her servant girls were walking beside the river. The princess saw the basket in the tall grass. The princess told her slave girl to go get the basket.

⁶ The princess opened the basket and saw the baby boy. He was crying. The princess felt sorry for him and said, "That is one of the Hebrew babies."

⁷ Then the baby's sister asked the princess, "Do you want me to go and find a Hebrew woman who can breast-feed that baby for you?"

⁸ The princess answered, "Yes, Go!" So the girl went to bring the baby's mother.

⁹ The princess told the mother, "Take this baby home and breast-feed him for me. I will pay you." So the mother took her baby and fed him.

¹⁰ When the boy grew older, the mother brought him to the princess, and she adopted the boy. The princess named him Moses, because she had pulled him out of the water.

Epistle Lesson: Hebrews 11:1-2, 23-26

1. Faith is knowing sure about the things we hope, and believing the things we can't see.
2. The people a long time ago received approval for their faith.
23. When Moses was-born, his parents saw that we he was a beautiful baby. By faith they ignored the king's command, and they hid baby Moses during three months.
24. When Moses grew up, by faith he rejected the name: "grandson of the Egyptian King -- his daughter's adopted son."
25. Moses chose suffering with God's people, instead of enjoying sin for a short time -- rejecting that.
26. Moses thought: Suffering for Christ, that is better having all the treasures of Egypt. Why? Moses looked-up for God's gift.

Gospel Lesson: Luke 6:20-23

20. Jesus looked at HIS followers and said, "Blessed are you poor people, you have God's Kingdom.

21. Blessed are you hungry people, you will be-satisfied.
Blessed are you crying people, you will laugh.

22. If people hate you and stick-up-noses at you, mock you, and say you are evil because you believe in the Son of Man, blessed are you

23. If that happens, be-happy and dance because you will have a great gift in heaven. You see that the same way people in the past did to the prophets.