

## Lesson 51

# God Protects Moses

God protected Moses from Pharaoh.

# Overview

## Lesson Focus

God protected Moses from Pharaoh's command to kill all the Hebrew baby boys by having him adopted by Pharaoh's daughter and raised in the palace. But Moses chose to be identified with the Hebrew people. He killed an Egyptian and then fled to Midian to avoid punishment.

## Key Passages

Exodus 2:1–22

## Objectives

Students will be able to:

Describe how God miraculously protected Moses from Pharaoh's command.

Explain why Moses fled from Egypt.

## Memory Verse

Isaiah 41:10 Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

## Prepare to Share

### Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

"Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph" (Exodus 1:8). And so begins this exciting account of God's people, the Israelites, finally making their way out of Egypt after hundreds of years of slavery and bondage. As the Israelites continued to be fruitful and multiply, the new Pharaoh became increasingly fearful and intimidated by them. He enslaved them and purposed to make their lives miserable with hard work—in the hopes he could reduce their growing population (Exodus 1:11–14).

But in spite of the terrible treatment, they continued to grow in numbers—their families were getting larger, not smaller as Pharaoh had hoped. In an even more desperate move to decrease their numbers, Pharaoh ordered the Hebrew midwives to kill all the male children born to the Israelites. But this did not work either because the midwives feared God (Exodus 1:15–21). In one last attempt to reduce the number of Israelites, Pharaoh ordered that all Hebrew male babies should be cast into the river to die (Exodus 1:22).

Into this political climate, Moses was born. A male Hebrew baby—destined for destruction yet preserved by a sovereign God to fulfill a promise of deliverance made hundreds of years earlier. His mother tried desperately to hide him and when she could no longer do so, she placed him in a basket on the river where he was providentially discovered by Pharaoh's daughter. God rewarded the faith of Moses' parents by giving Moses back to his mother. Pharaoh's daughter hired her as Moses' nurse during his early years until he would be officially adopted and brought to court to live as royalty (Exodus 2:1–10).

Moses was raised in Pharaoh's court and lived there until he was 40 years old (Acts 7:23). But Moses had not forgotten his people. When he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren, he took matters into his own hands and killed the Egyptian. When this deed became known, Moses was forced to flee from Egypt for his life. He settled in Midian where he met Reuel, later called Jethro, and took one of his daughters, Zipporah, as his wife (Exodus 2:11–21). Reuel, Moses' father-in-law, is called a priest of Midian (Exodus 2:16). The Midianites were descendants of Abraham by Keturah (Genesis 25:1–2), and Reuel appears to have worshipped the true God. The name Reuel means "friend of God," and his daughter Zipporah's name means "a little bird." Working and living with Reuel's family proved an important training ground for Moses, even though he may have felt like he wasn't accomplishing anything for his people back in Egypt.

The account of Moses in Exodus 2 demonstrates God's providential protection in his people's lives. He accomplishes his purposes through imperfect people—men and women, rulers and slaves.

## Historical/Apologetics Background

After Joseph died, the new king over Egypt was jealous of the Israelites and enslaved them (Exodus 1:8–14). This was no surprise to God. Scripture records that it was more than 400 years earlier when God told Abram that his descendants would one day be strangers in a land where they would serve and be afflicted (Genesis 15:13). God also revealed to Abram that the Israelites would come out of that oppression with great possessions (Genesis 15:14)—which is exactly what happened when the Israelites finally left Egypt (Exodus 12:35–36).

The sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt is often disputed by skeptics who say that there is no evidence for so many slaves in Egypt or a mass exodus of more than two million people. This lack of evidence is based on the standard chronology of Egyptian history, which dates the time of Moses and the Exodus to around 1250 BC. However, the biblical timeline indicates that Moses left Egypt about 1491 BC, nearly 200 years earlier! This discrepancy alone would account for the lack of evidence—as archaeologists and researchers have dismissed newer evidence, saying there couldn't have been remnants of the Hebrews in Egypt because the dates are wrong.

The timeline discrepancy is in part a result of miscounting the reigning years of the Egyptian kings. The kings of Egypt often overlapped in their reigns—much like the kings of Israel and Judah did later (1 Kings). These overlaps have not been taken into consideration with the traditional Egyptian timeline.

Exciting developments by archaeologist David Rohl and others are correcting this error. Rohl has researched and produced a new timeline that shows that the Egyptian kings did, in fact, overlap in their reigns. This, of course, affects the entire Egyptian timeline. Based on this updated research, the biblical dates for the Exodus correspond with the Egyptian dates.

In addition, new evidence is now confirming the biblical account. For example, excavations that began in 1966 from Tell el-Daba in the Egyptian eastern delta indicate that a large Semitic-speaking population, most likely the Hebrews of the Exodus, lived there during the 13th Dynasty. This supports the idea that Moses was born during the reign of Amenemhet III, the last Pharaoh of the 12th Dynasty, who reigned for 46 years. This Pharaoh had no sons to inherit his throne, which could explain why he would accept Moses as his daughter's adopted son and the future heir.

We can be thankful as God allows for more archaeological discoveries to be made, but we must keep in mind that our authority is the Bible. His Word is final. We do not base what we believe on what has been "proven" by men but on what has been "spoken" by God.

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