

THE STORY OF MOSES

Aunt Hattie's Bible Stories

by

Harriet I. Fisher

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There is a free paraphrase of Scripture passages in use quite frequently throughout this book in the interest of youthful minds.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE BIRTH OF MOSES

Living in one of these homes of Israel, away down Egypt, were a man by the name of Amram and wife Jochebed. They had two children, Miriam, about twelve years old and Aaron several years younger. One day another child came to that house, a baby boy, an unusually beautiful baby. Amram and Jochebed were not afraid of the king's command for they had great faith in the God of Israel, their God. They lifted up their prayers to Him and asked Him to protect the child.

For three months Jochebed was able to keep her baby hidden in the house, away from any cruel hand that might take him from her. But babies, in those days grew quickly as they do nowadays and cried just as loudly and made as much fuss.

Jochebed must have asked what to do next to save her baby and God was especially interested in this boy for He had a very great work for him to do. So it was that God led Jochebed to make a little ark or basket out of tall heavy grass which she lined with slime and pitch, something like asphalt, to make it watertight.

When at last it was ready she put the baby into it, but before she closed the cover, I think, Daddy Amram, Miriam and little Aaron took a long, loving look at their darling baby and kissed him good-by.

Then mother Jochebed picked up the precious little bundle and took it down to Egypt's great river Nile. God must have directed her where to go.

I think that she waded out from the shore to some tall rushes or reeds (the Bible calls them flags) and in among them she put the ark with its precious treasure. Her faith that God would care for her baby in this place of death was so strong that she left him and went home.

Miriam, the baby's sister, hadn't quite as much; faith, and I think that she watched her mother until she was out of sight, then she ran up the hill and; perhaps hid in some bushes so that she could see what would happen.

Now, who do you suppose are those lovely women walking along the bank of the river? thought Miriam.

Why that is the Princess, the king's daughter and her maidens coming to take their morning swim!

It was the custom of Pharaoh's daughter to come down with her maids to bathe at this very place. I have often wondered if she went out into the water and took a dip or two, and then, as she brushed the water from her eyes spied the basket over in the reeds.

“What is that over there in the tall flags?” she may have asked her maids in waiting. “Go and get it. It looks interesting.” However they did it, they got hold of the little ark and pulled it to the shore where the princess was waiting for it.

How surprised they all were when they raised the cover to find a lovely baby and the poor little fellow crying. I think he didn't like his new cradle very well and I'm sure he wanted his mother. I know Miriam just couldn't keep away. She ran down the hill as fast as she could and joined the group around the ark just in time to hear the princess say, “This is one of the Hebrew children.”

Then it popped into Miriam's mind that if they thought he was a Hebrew child he would surely need a Hebrew nurse. So, although her heart was thumping so loudly she was afraid they could hear it, she managed to control herself long enough to say in a very careful way, “Shall I go and call a nurse of the Hebrew women to nurse this child for you?” And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, “Go!”

I think Miriam must have run all the way home and breathlessly rushed into the house to tell her mother that the princess had found the baby and had sent her to find a nurse. I am sure she said, “O Mother, hurry, come so that you can be his nurse.”

When Jochebed got there the princess told her to take the child home and nurse him for her. She would pay her wages.

I think Daddy Amram came home from the brick kilns that night with a slow step; he would miss his baby.

But what a surprise! There was his baby boy right out where every passerby could see him. All danger of death to him, by the king's decree, had passed.

What a good time they must have had. Did Jochebed say, “It did seem unusual to put our baby in that place of death, but God said to do it and I did, and now, I am rewarded. I have my baby and I'm being paid for taking care of him”?

And did Amram reply, “God never fails when we trust Him”?

Perhaps Miriam added to the conversation by telling how excited she was when the princess told her to find a nurse for the baby. I think they all sighed a little when they remembered they would have to give him up one day.

Some tell us that Jochebed cared for the child until he was about twelve years old. If that is true she had time to teach him all she knew of the God of Israel and of her own faith in Him. She must have told him of the king's command to slay all the boy babies, of the way God had led her to save his life by building the little ark, of putting him into it, and of sending the princess to rescue and later to adopt him.

I am sure she mentioned many things he must do in the king's palace, and above all he must never forget the God of Israel and his own people. Probably his father, Amram, told him of the cruelties, sufferings and bitter bondage they had to endure from the taskmasters appointed by the king.

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