



## S2.Lesson 10: Birth Stories – Moses

Middle School Lesson Plans

**Supplies Needed:** Journals; Handout; tv or laptop to show movie clip (movie clip link is available at [rfour.org/curriculum.html](http://rfour.org/curriculum.html)); easel/whiteboard/blackboard.

### OPENING PRAYER

**READ** Exodus 1:8-14, 22; 2:1 - 10

8 400 years after Joseph, a new king arose over Egypt, one who did not even know the stories of Joseph. 9 This Pharaoh said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. 10 Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." 11 Therefore the Egyptians set taskmasters over the Israelites to oppress them with forced labor. 12 But the more the Israelites were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. 13 The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, 14 and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

22 But because the Israelites continued to multiply and grow strong, Pharaoh then commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live."

2:1 Now a man from the house of Levi (a grand-grand child of one of the twelve brothers who was named Levi) went and married a Levite woman. 2 The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. 3 When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. 4 His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

5 The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. 6 When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. 7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" 8 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. 9 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you wages to do so." So the woman took the child and nursed it. 10 When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

### ASK

- Why were the Egyptians afraid of the Hebrew people? (verse 9; 22 – Hebrew people were more numerous and powerful than them)
- How did the Egyptians, then, try to control the Hebrew people? (verse 11: Oppress them with labor. Then, when that didn't work, Verse 22: Kill the baby boys by throwing them into the river)
- When Moses is born, his parents do not follow the rules, right? They hide the baby. Eventually, where/how does Moses' mother hide him? (verse 3 - in a basket in the river)
- Once Moses is in the basket, who finds him? (daughter of the Pharaoh)
- What does she do with Moses (hires Moses' real mom to care for him and then adopts him when he's older)
- If we think of Pharaoh as a king, what are the daughters of a king called (princess; princesses)
- And what are the children of princesses called? (prince and princess)

### TELL

- So this boy, Moses, who is born of an oppressed people and is supposed to be killed is instead hidden in a basket and then found AND *adopted* by the daughter of the biggest enemy of the Hebrew people, thus making the poor, supposed-to-be-killed Moses into *Prince* Moses.
- Let's brainstorm advantages Moses received as a prince and the disadvantages Moses would've faced if he'd survived as a slave (write on flip chart. Some hints: education; well-fed; not as hard-worked; political relationships; learning how to talk to authority; how to think as someone who is in charge; other ideas?)
- Now, let's brainstorm/name all the characters in the story (Pharaoh; Egyptians; daughter of Pharaoh; Israelites; Moses' mother; Moses' aunt)
- As a class, we're going to judge the characters.
- We will assign a level of responsibility (4 being the highest level, 1 being the lowest) to each character in their role of creating the conditions that the Israelites found themselves in at the point of Moses' birth. Discussion will be needed in order for us to reach a consensus.

### DO "You be the Judge"

### TELL

- Ok, so now that we've established who's at fault, let's fast forward to see how the situation that the Israelites are in might be changed.
- We're going to watch a clip now of a later part of the Moses story.
- Between his birth story and this movie clip, Moses has left Egypt and lived in the desert where he heard/understood God's call to tell Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go.
- We'll watch a clip, now, of that first conversation between Moses and Pharaoh.

### WATCH Movie Clip

### ASK

- Pharaoh calls Moses a fraud and a coward. He uses his personnel to mimic what Moses does. If you were to stand before a police officer or judge who said and did these things to you in a

courtroom, what do you think your response would be? What if it was the President of the USA saying these things to you?

- So does Pharaoh listen to Moses? (no)
- If Moses was a slave, do you think Pharaoh would've met with him (not a chance)
- If Moses was a slave, do you think Moses would've known how to talk to Pharaoh (very unlikely – would've been overwhelmed by the new setting, cowed by authority, etc).

## **TELL**

- So we see this development of Moses, who we judged to be #\_\_\_ responsible for his situation at his birth, become a prince who then stands up to the Pharaoh, who we judged to be #\_\_\_ responsible for the Israelites condition, to let the Israelites go.
- As we'll be seeing throughout this session, how we start, where we start doesn't matter (it can help, but it doesn't ultimately matter).
- What *does* matter is that when we pay attention to God (and later in the year, we'll look at the story of Moses and God talking in the desert), we are empowered.
- It doesn't matter where we start out at. It doesn't matter what our birth story is.
- Moses was a slave. He was considered by the people who were in charge to be expendable/killable.
- But Moses, with God's leading and help, becomes the leader (a prince) of a new people – the Israelites.
- So how we start out doesn't matter to God, but what does matter to God is that we pay attention to God. Because when we do, then God can lead us to great things that are good for you, me and for all of those around us.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**