



God Prepares Israel for Deliverance

Exodus 1–2



LESSON GOAL

Students will trust God when bad things happen.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- God made Jacob's family a great people.
- Pharaoh made the Israelites slaves and killed their baby boys.
- God protected Moses and prepared him to be Israel's leader.
- God heard Israel's groaning and was ready to help them.
- Israel finally saw that they needed God's help.

KEY VERSE

"So God heard [Israel's] groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob" (Exodus 2:24).

APPLICATION

- Trust God during times of trouble. He does not forget His people.
- Cry out to God for help in times of trouble.

NEXT WEEK

God Raises Moses to Lead Israel
Read Exodus 3–4.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

Genesis is about the genesis, or the beginnings, of the universe, man, sin, nations, and the people of Israel. The title perfectly matches the book’s content. But the book of Exodus is about more than the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. Exodus also tells how God made Israel into “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex. 19:6). God not only freed Israel from slavery, but He also redeemed them to be His people. The exodus itself was only one step in Israel’s becoming God’s nation. Even more central to the book (and the whole Bible) is how God established Israel as His nation through the Mosaic Covenant.

But before Israel could become God’s nation, they had to be delivered. Israel needed to know their need for deliverance, and they needed to have a deliverer raised up.

Need for Deliverance: Exodus 1

Before Egypt became the place of Israel’s slavery, it was the place of her deliverance. At just the right time, God raised up Joseph so that the nation of Israel would be saved from famine (Gen. 47:4). God not only saved Israel but also planned for Israel to live in “the best of the land” (Gen. 47:6). God assured Jacob that Israel would become a great nation while in Egypt (Gen. 46:3).

Jacob was allowed to see some of that blessing. Although he lived in Egypt only 17 years (Gen. 47:28), Jacob saw that his descendants “grew and multiplied exceedingly” (Gen. 47:27). After Joseph and his brothers died, “the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them” (Ex. 1:7). God was faithful in His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! Israel was quickly becoming as numerous as the stars.

Egypt was the ideal location for the gestation of the nation of Israel. But it was not the Promised Land. Before his death, Joseph said to his brothers, “God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob” (Gen. 50:24). God had promised the same thing to Abraham: “Your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions” (Gen. 15:13–14). Egypt was the womb for Israel, but it was not their destination.

The same faithful God who had given the Promised Land to Abraham also had declared 400 years of affliction for Israel. In His sovereign plan, God would use this affliction to make Israel cry out to Him for deliverance. A new king took the throne of Egypt. He was intimidated by the number of Israelites living there (Ex. 1:10). The Israelites, who were more numerous than the Egyptians (Ex. 1:9), could have joined the king’s enemies, fought against the king, and then left Egypt. The Israelite workforce was too important to expel and too numerous to be set free. The king tried to

Additional Reference Materials

*Moses and the Gods of
Egypt: Studies in Exodus*
by John J. Davis

*The MacArthur Study
Bible* by John MacArthur

prevent both Israel's growth and their return to the Promised Land. Little did he know that God had decreed both of those blessings for Israel. It was impossible to suppress God's plan, and the king ultimately fulfilled God's plan by afflicting Israel, just as God had promised Abraham would happen! God's will always is accomplished, even through the cruelty of pagan kings.

Exodus 1 records four attempts to suppress Israel's growth. First, the king "set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens" (Ex. 1:11). The Israelites built two cities during this period: Pithon and Raamses. (The location of both cities remains uncertain.) But in God's providence, the more the Israelites were afflicted, the more they multiplied (Ex. 1:12).

In the second attempt, the Egyptians responded by increasing the oppression. They "made the children of Israel serve with rigor" (Ex. 1:13). Although the Israelites' lives were "bitter with hard bondage" (Ex. 1:13–14), the Egyptian plan failed.

The third show of force was even more brutal; the Hebrew midwives were commanded to kill newborn boys. But the midwives feared God and disobeyed the king (Ex. 1:18). According to the midwives, the Hebrew women gave birth before the midwives arrived (1:19). God protected the midwives. They disobeyed the king and yet escaped his wrath. God not only blessed the Israelites, who "multiplied and grew very mighty," but also "dealt well with the midwives," granting them households as well (1:20). God's plans are unstoppable! Israel, including the midwives' descendants, continued to grow.

Desperate to thwart Israel's increase, Pharaoh no longer left the destruction of the Israelite boys to the midwives. Now he commanded "all his people" to cast every Israelite son into the water (Ex. 1:22). It no longer was the burden of taskmasters or midwives, but now all Egypt was called to dam the flood of Israelites, which was threatening to drown Egypt. But Israel had not yet cried out under their oppression. Although clearly in need of deliverance, they had not yet pleaded for God to release them from the yoke of slavery.

Raising a Deliverer: Exodus 2

Even before Israel cried for deliverance, God was raising up a deliverer for them. A beautiful baby boy was born to a Levite couple. Hebrews 11:23 says that "by faith Moses...was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command." Acts 7:20 speaks of the baby being "well pleasing to God." From birth, God had set apart Moses for delivering Egypt. Whether Moses' parents knew about God's plan for their son is indiscernible, but clearly they had faith that God would take care of him. They hid the boy as long as they could, but after three months, a new plan was necessary. Moses' mother built a basket and placed the baby in the reeds along the riverbank. Her action showed her desperation, but it also showed her faith. She did not abandon the baby. Miriam, her daughter, was waiting nearby to see how God would rescue the child.

God's providence shone brilliantly in the events that followed. How incredible that the daughter of Pharaoh was the one who found the baby! How amazing that God allowed her heart to have such compassion on Moses that she denied her own father's command concerning the destruction of the Hebrews! How God's hand moved the princess's heart so that Moses' own mother was paid to nurse him! In God's sovereign plan, the deliverer of Israel became grandson to the pharaoh. God was perfectly guiding all events as He prepared to deliver His people.

The New Testament reveals some of what had happened to Moses between his adoption and his murder of the Egyptian who was beating the Hebrew (Ex. 2:11–12). Growing up, he "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and

was mighty in words and deeds” (Acts 7:22). But when he was 40, “it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel” (Acts 7:23). It would be interesting to know what prompted this visit—surely it was God who moved Moses’ heart. During that visit, the events of Exodus 2:11–12 occurred, and Moses killed the oppressive Egyptian. Acts 7:24–25 reveals some of Moses’ motivation: seeing his fellow Israelite suffer, Moses defended and avenged him. Moses expected the Israelites to have “understood that God would deliver them by his hand” (Acts 7:24). Moses’ defense of a Hebrew was an irrevocable demonstration of allegiance to Israel. He “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin” (Heb. 11:24–25). But what Moses was not prepared for was Israel’s rejection of him. The next day, Moses learned not only that the Hebrews did not desire him to be their deliverer, but also that they knew about his murder! Moses was not prepared to have both Pharaoh seeking his life and the Israelites rejecting his leadership. Having burned all bridges, Moses fled into the land of the Midianites, located in the Arabian Peninsula.

But Moses was a deliverer. While in Midian, he came to the rescue, not of Israel, but of the seven daughters of a Midianite priest named Reuel (Ex. 2:16–17). As they tried to water their father’s flocks, the women were being oppressed by shepherds. Unlike Israel, they were ready for a deliverer! God rewarded Moses with a place to live with Reuel and his family; with a wife named Zipporah, one of Reuel’s daughters; and with his first son, Gershom. God rewarded Moses’ faithfulness by directing him to a home in the desert!

Cry for Deliverance: Exodus 2

Moses’ time in Midian was necessary. Israel was not yet ready for God to deliver them, but in Exodus 2:23, after the king died, “the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out.” The oppression finally was to the point that the weight of desperation drove their hearts to cry to God. God heard their groaning, remembered His covenant, looked upon the Israelites, and acknowledged them (Ex. 2:24–25). God waited for the 400 years of affliction, which he had told Abraham about, to pass before deliverance (Gen. 15:13). It was time for Israel to grow, multiply, and become a strong nation. It was a time of God’s patience in which both Egypt and the inhabitants of the Promised Land ignored their knowledge of the true God (Rom. 1:19–23) and continued in depravity. When God did deliver Israel, both the Egyptians and the Amorites (as well as other Canaanites) would be judged (Gen. 15:14–16). It was a time of God raising up the perfect instrument for His deliverance.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth"
(Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Sink or Float

Provide a dishpan partially filled with water. Drop various objects into the water to see whether they would float on a river. Some materials could be cork, wood, rocks, feathers, sponges, plastic lids, baskets, and fruit. Moses' mother made a basket from things that she knew would float on top of the water. She wanted baby Moses to stay safely on top of the water while he was hiding from the Egyptians.



Cardboard Bricks

Build walls and towers with large cardboard bricks. Today's Bible lesson tells about God's people being slaves in Egypt. They were forced to make bricks from clay and straw to build great houses for the Egyptians. It was hard work, and God's people were treated harshly.



Jumping the Nile

Lay two ropes parallel on the floor, about a foot apart. Have the students line up along one rope, and then tell them to jump across the "river." Move the ropes a bit farther apart, and have the students jump across again. Continue to widen the river as the students try to jump across without "getting wet." Tell the students to listen to what will happen in the Nile River in the Bible lesson today.



Multiply Exceedingly

Start with seven big balls of clay to represent Jacob's 70 descendants. Have the students divide the dough into smaller bits and roll them into balls. Collect the balls in a clear plastic container. Talk about how Jacob's family started out in Egypt as 70 and multiplied to more than 600,000.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Reading of the Text

Read portions of Exodus 1–2.

For many weeks, God has been teaching us from the book of Genesis. Genesis is the book of beginnings. We have learned about the beginning of many things. God promised to make Abraham’s family a great nation. He promised to bless the whole world through Abraham. This week we start a new book—the book of Exodus. Say “Exodus.” [Have the students repeat it several times.] Exodus is the next part of God’s plan. In Exodus, God makes His own special nation.

Say the word *nation*. [Have the students repeat it several times.] A nation has many, many families. They live in the same place. They all share the same rules, and they share the same leaders. Israel was not just 12 families anymore. God was making Israel into a great nation.

In our last Bible lesson, we learned that God made Joseph a great ruler in Egypt. Even though Joseph’s brothers were very mean, Joseph forgave them. When the food ran out in his father’s country, Joseph invited his brothers and his father, Jacob, to live in Egypt. When they moved, there were 70 people who came with Jacob. Over time, Jacob, Joseph, and all Joseph’s brothers died, but their families got bigger and bigger. These people were called Hebrews or Israelites. Exodus 1:7 says that the Israelites had more and more and more children. There were so many families that the land was filled with them. In fact, there were now nearly 600,000 men. That was a miracle.

But the people in Egypt were not happy. A long, long time had passed since Joseph lived, and the new pharaoh—the king of Egypt—did not remember what Joseph had done for the country. Pharaoh was afraid that Israel would join their enemies and destroy Egypt. So Pharaoh decided to do something awful. He decided to make all the Israelites do very hard work, and he did not pay them. He made the Israelites his slaves. Pharaoh made the work very, very hard. But God still wanted His nation to grow. The harder Pharaoh made the Israelites work, the more children they had.

So Pharaoh did something even worse. He told the Israelite ladies who helped the mummies give birth to kill the baby boys. That way, the nation would stop getting bigger. But the Israelite ladies loved and feared God, and they would not kill the baby boys.

Then Pharaoh did something even more terrible. He told all the people of Egypt to find the baby boys and throw them into the Nile River to kill them. Only the girls were allowed to live. Pharaoh was a bad, bad man.

But there were a mommy and a daddy who had a boy. He was a beautiful boy.

His mommy hid him as long as she could. For three months she hid him. But she could not hide him anymore. She made a little basket for him. She put it in the river where Pharaoh's daughter took her bath. When Pharaoh's daughter saw the basket, she opened it and saw that the baby was crying. She knew it was an Israelite baby. But she felt sad for the baby and decided to keep him. She called him Moses, and she raised him as one of her own children.

While Moses grew up, he knew that he was an Israelite. One day, he saw an Egyptian hurting an Israelite. The Israelites were still slaves. Moses got mad at the Egyptian and killed him. He thought no one saw. The next day, he tried to stop two Israelites from fighting each other. But one of them said, "Are you going to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Moses was afraid. He knew that someone had seen him. When Pharaoh found out, he wanted to kill Moses. Moses had to run away. He went far away to the land of Midian and stayed there for 40 years.

Many, many years went by. The Egyptians were still very mean to the Israelites. They kept making them work very, very hard. The Israelites finally cried out to God for help. God heard their prayers and thought again about His promise to Abraham. God was now ready to do something to help Israel.

Most of the people of Israel were not really following God. They had forgotten Him and did not love Him. God let them go through such bad times so the people would know they needed Him. Only after many years of being treated badly did they pray to God for help. God was kind, compassionate, and ready and able to help them.

In today's Bible lesson, we learned how God was making a great nation and caused the Israelites to have very big families. But the Egyptians were not happy. They tried to kill all the baby boys. God protected one boy who would one day be the leader of Israel. When bad things happen to you, remember what we learned in this story. God's plans cannot be stopped. He always does what He promises. Sometimes He lets bad things happen to us so that we will remember that we need Him.

Next week, we will learn about what God planned to do for the Israelites. We will learn about God's plan for Moses and for the people of Israel.



Lesson Questions

What does the book of Exodus tell us?

Exodus tells us about God making His own special nation.

What is a nation?

A large group of people who share the same land, the same rules, and the same ruler.

Did God make Israel into a large group of people?

Yes; they grew from 70 to 600,000.

What did the new pharaoh do?

He had all the newborn baby boys killed.

Whom did God protect?

Moses.

What did the Israelites finally do?

They cried out to God for help.

Did God hear them?
Yes; He already had a plan to help them.

Does God do what He says?
Yes. He always fulfills His promises.

Does God hear our prayers?
Yes. When we cry out to God, He hears us.

Can we trust Him when bad things happen?
Yes. He always has a good plan.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces to present with the lesson.



Treasure-Box Object

Use a treasure box as a theme for the book of Exodus. For the treasure box to be an integral part of the Bible lesson time, show the students the decorated treasure box before the lesson. Tell them that there are two treasures in this pretty box and that they are very special. One of the treasures (the Bible) will be taken out before the Bible lesson, and one of the treasures will be taken out after the Bible lesson. This first week of Exodus, speak lovingly of God's words in the Bible. This is the most important book in the whole world, and every story in the Bible is true. Tell the students that each week you will look in the box to discover that week's "treasure" from God's Word in the book of Exodus. Each week, the curriculum will provide an object idea to put in the treasure box. For this lesson, put a basket containing a small doll in the box. Each week, take the Bible out of the treasure box and let the students help you open it to the book of Exodus.



A Mother's Sorrow Turned to Joy

Try telling the Bible lesson from the perspective of Jochabed, the mother of Moses, who put Moses in the basket and set him on the Nile.



Baby or Wedding Scrapbook

Share a few pages of pictures with the students and talk about how a scrapbook helps you to remember special things that happened in your life. Explain that today you will start teaching about Moses and some of the special things that happened early in his life. Make a scrapbook for the book of Exodus. Each week, place coloring pictures in it before the story. Use it as a review each week.



Memorizing Moses

Explain to the students that Moses wrote five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Help them begin to memorize the names of the books.

Praise and Worship

God Is So Good (God Answers Prayer)

I Will Call upon the Lord

Trust and Obey



God Protects Moses

In Egypt, Israel did not have fun.

(Form pyramid with hands and arms; shake head back and forth.)

They labored in the scorching sun.

(Pretend to shovel; wipe brow with hand.)

Pharaoh ordered, "Kill their sons,"

(Cross arms in front of chest with stern look on face.)

But Moses' mom loved her little one.

(Hug self tight.)

She built him a basket, and, when she was done,

(Weave hand up and down.)

The baby was saved from the wrath to come.

(Pretend to rock baby in arms.)

Moses grew up as the princess's son,

(Start with hand low by side; then bring them up in intervals.)

But he killed an Egyptian and decided to run.

(Bring hands to face; then pump arms.)

In the desert, God called Moses again.

(Hold hands at sides of mouth.)

It was just the beginning of God's grand plan.

(Point up.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



God’s Miraculous Growth of Israel

Materials: ink pads and washable ink, tan construction paper, yellow construction paper, copies of “God’s Miraculous Growth of Israel,” glue, pencils

Directions: Before class, cut tan construction paper into hilly landscape scenes. Cut yellow construction paper into circles for the sun. During class, have the children glue the tan landscape onto the bottom half of the “God’s Miraculous Growth of Israel” page. Be sure not to cover the key verse at the bottom. Then allow the students to put their thumbs onto the ink pad and fill the “land” with thumbprints. After the landscape is full, have them glue the “sun” onto the page. Last, have them draw faces on all the thumbprints. During the activity, talk about how God helped Israel to grow from one family into an entire nation.



Acting Review

Act out various parts of the lesson without using any words, and have the students guess what you are acting out. After discussing the answer, let the students imitate you and then go on and guess the next action.

Pretend to be digging and forming block bricks with your hands.
(The Israelites were slaves and worked very hard making bricks.)

Hold your hands together as if praying, and look up to God while mouthing, “Help!”
(The Israelites groaned and asked God to help them.)

Pretend to hold and rock an imaginary baby.
(The Israelites had babies and loved them very much.)

Hold your index finger to your mouth and say “shh, shh.”
(Moses’ mother hid her baby for three months and kept people from hearing his cries.)

Pretend to weave a basket and place a baby inside.
(Moses’ mother made a basket boat for her baby and put it in the river.)

Make a sad face and pretend to cry.
(The crying baby was found by the princess.)

Run in place.
(Miriam ran back to get Moses’ mother to feed and take care of him.)

Point to heaven while holding and rocking a baby.
(God cared for Moses and made sure that his mother got to feed and care for him.)



Stitch Craft Center

Give each student a copy of the “Baby Moses” craft page located at the back of this lesson. Punch holes through the basket and allow students to weave the basket with yarn. Older students can cut out basket and verse and glue them to a piece of construction paper.



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Making Moses Memories

Reduce one of this week’s coloring sheets to approximately 4 x 6 inches. Have seven sheets of construction paper ready for each student; fold the paper in half and punch two holes on the folded side. Insert paper fasteners into each hole. Write the student’s name and “My Moses Scrapbook” on the front of the book. Have each student color the 4 x 6-inch picture, cut it out, and attach it to the first page of the scrapbook with photo corners or glue sticks.

This can be an ongoing entrance activity for the rest of the Exodus lessons. Collect the scrapbooks at the end of each class, and bring them back each week. As students enter the classroom, have them color the current week’s coloring page in a reduced size, cut it out, and glue it inside the scrapbook. At the end of the Exodus lessons, students may take home their completed scrapbooks.

Coloring Sheets

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of this lesson. The students can color the pages in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

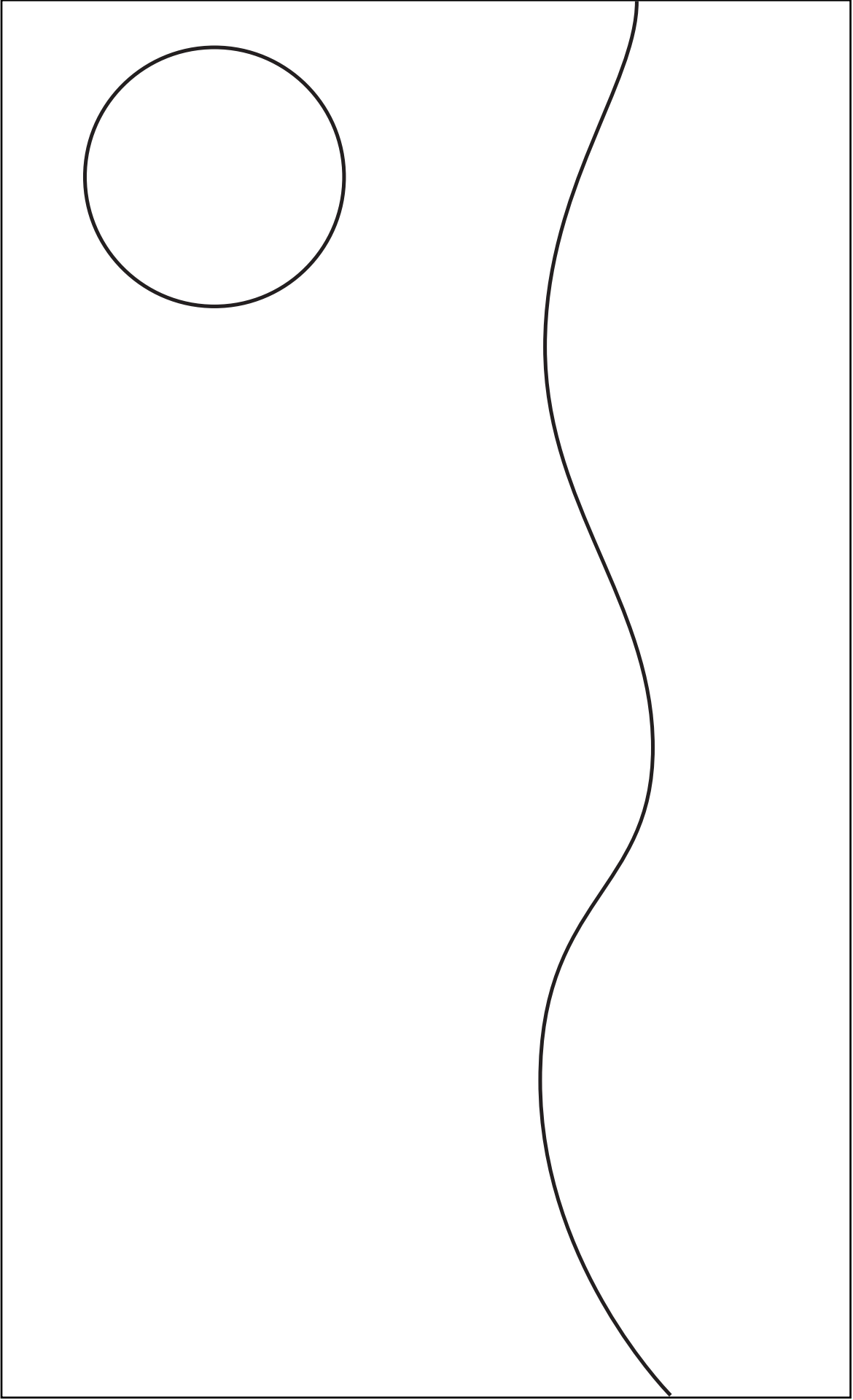
“You shall have no other gods before Me” (Exodus 20:3).



First Commandment

Over the next 10 weeks, encourage the students to memorize the Ten Commandments. Use a piece of poster board to create two stone tablets. Write the Ten Commandments on these tablets, and teach the students one commandment each week. Tell them that in a future lesson they will learn about God giving His people the Ten Commandments. Do the students know some of the commandments? Go over the first commandment, found in Exodus 20:3. Why do you suppose God put this commandment first? In the days of Exodus, the Israelites were tempted to, and often did, worship the false gods of Egypt and other nations around them, especially when they were suffering and God seemed to be doing nothing. What are the temptations we must resist today in order to keep this commandment? What are some of today’s false gods? Can idols do the things God can do? The Egyptians worshiped the moon, the sun, the air, the earth, crocodiles, cats, and many other things. Is there anything on earth or in the sky that is god? No; there is only the one true God, “I AM.”

God's Miraculous Growth of Israel



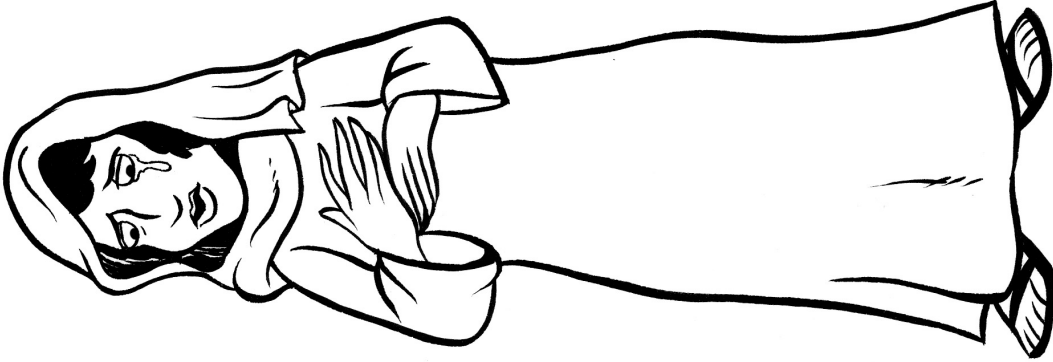
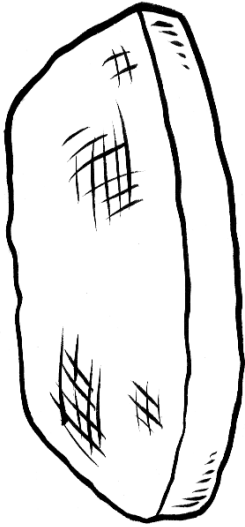
“But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them” (Exodus 1:7).

Baby Moses

Punch holes through the basket, and then weave it with yarn.



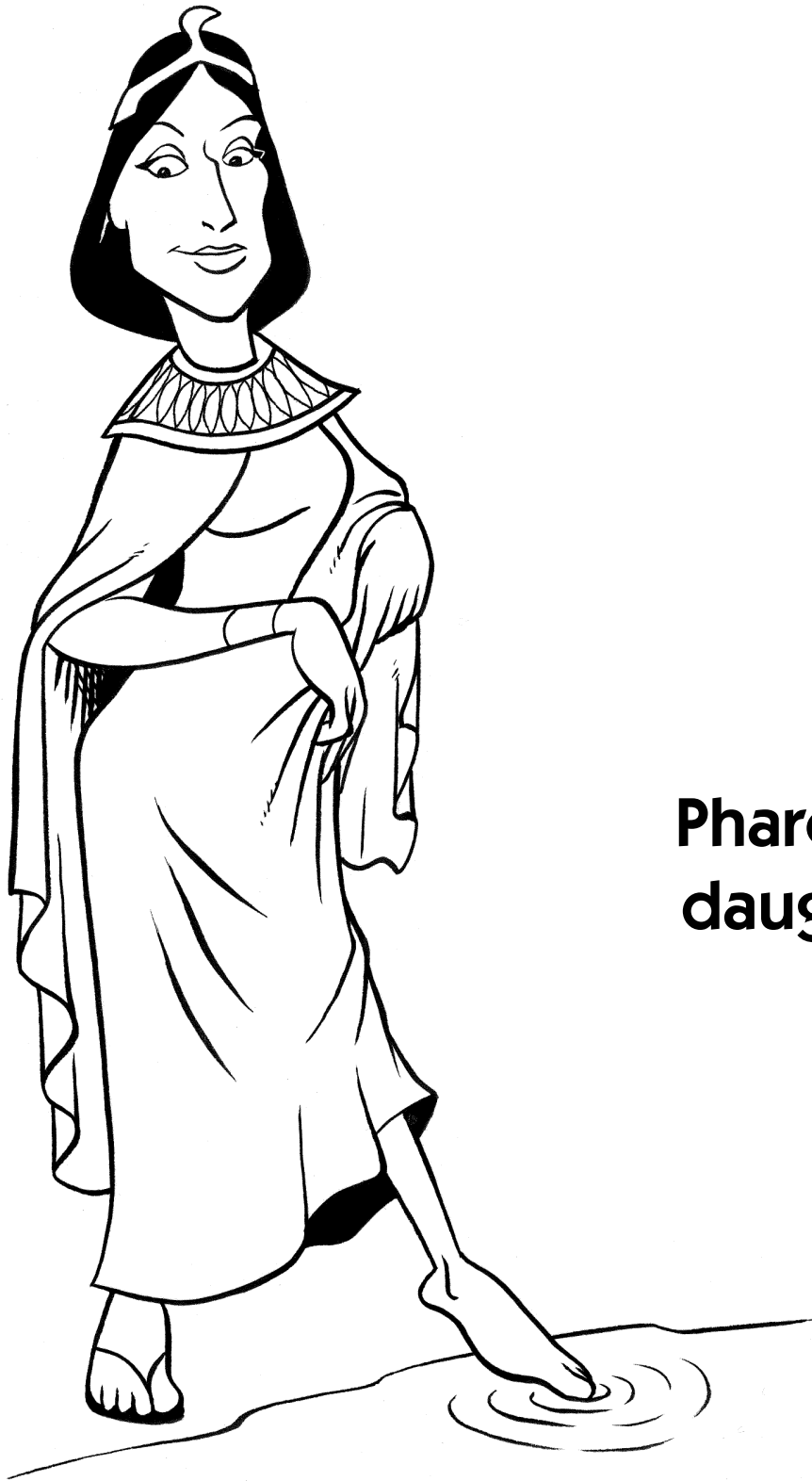
“But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river’s bank” (Exodus 2:3).



Moses

Moses' mother

Moses' sister



Pharoah's daughter



“But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river’s bank” (Exodus 2:3).



**“And when she had opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, ‘This is one of the Hebrews’ children’”
(Exodus 2:6).**

