



THE HEBREWS SUFFER



AS MOSES IS BORN

Do you remember the names of Israel's sons who brought their families to Egypt? They were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali and Benjamin. Joseph and his family were already in Egypt. Remember, Israel's descendants in Egypt totaled seventy people in all. With the passing of time, Joseph died, all his brothers died, and everyone that went to Egypt with them died. As God promised, the children of Israel were fruitful and their numbers greatly multiplied.



A new Pharaoh ruled over Egypt, one who did not know anything about Joseph or his contribution to Egypt. Joseph died about three-hundred years earlier. Pharaoh said to his people, "Look, these children of Israel outnumber us and are mightier than us. We are going to have to deal with them, before they multiply more, and in the event of war, they decide to join our enemies and fight against us and leave our land. Set taskmasters over them to trouble them and make their work harder." The Hebrews were ordered to build Pharaoh two new supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. Pharaoh thought making them work harder would slow their increasing number. However, the more the Egyptians troubled them, the more the Hebrew tribes multiplied. The Egyptians were increasingly fearful of the children of Israel. The Egyptians made the children of Israel serve them and they were very mean to them. The Egyptians made their lives bitter and hard. The Hebrews were working with mortar, with brick, and in all the hard jobs in the field. All their work was hard.



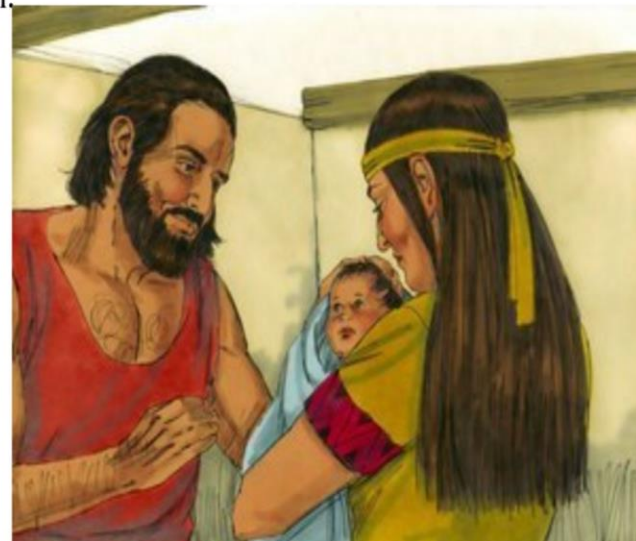
Pharaoh thought of another way to slow the number of Hebrews. He spoke to the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah saying, "When the Hebrew call you to help deliver their babies and you see them on the birthstools, if the child that is born is a son, then kill him. Let the daughters live." When Pharaoh didn't hear of any baby deaths, he called for the midwives and asked them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children?"

The midwives told Pharaoh, "The Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women. They are very strong and give birth before the midwives arrive."

For this reason, God dealt well with the midwives, and the Hebrews continued to multiply. Since the midwives feared God, He provided households for them. Since Pharaoh's plan didn't work, he made a public decree, a command to all the people, saying, "Every son of the Hebrews who is born shall be cast into the river, and every daughter you shall keep alive."

A man of the house of Levi took a wife from the daughters of Levi.

The woman conceived and bore a son. When she saw how beautiful a child he was, she hid him for three months. When she could no longer hide him, she took a basket made of bulrushes, smeared it with clay and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river bank. His sister stood far off to see what would happen to him.

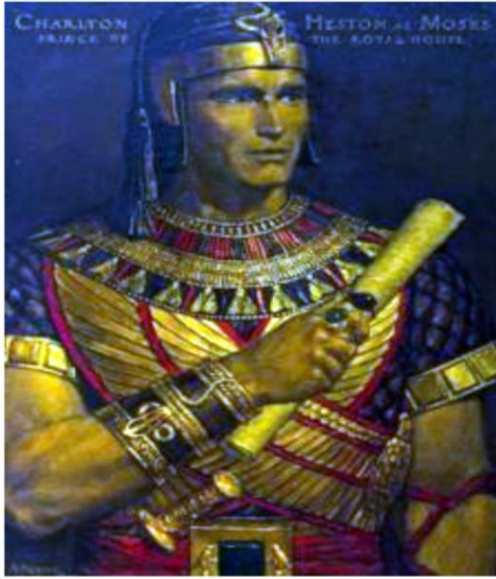


The Pharaoh's daughter went down to bathe in the Nile river. She and her maidens walked along the riverside. When she saw the basket among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. When she opened it, she saw the boy child. The baby started to cry. Pharaoh's daughter felt sorry for him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

Then the child's sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, so she may feed the child for you?"

Pharaoh's daughter said, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will pay you wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. The child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. Pharaoh's daughter named him Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water





Moses grew up with all of the advantages of the Egyptians. When Moses had grown, he went out to his Hebrew brothers and looked at their burdens, how they were treated. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew man. He looked around and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand. When he went out the second day, two Hebrew men were fighting, and he said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why are you hitting your companion?"



The man said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?"

Moses became afraid and said, "Surely what I have done is widely known!" When Pharaoh heard of this, he decided to kill Moses. Before anyone found Moses, he fled from Egypt and traveled to the land of Midian. Once there, he sat down near a well to rest.

There was a priest in Midian who had seven daughters. The daughters came and drew water from the well, and they filled the troughs to water their father's flock. Then shepherds came and drove the daughters and their flock away from the water. Seeing this, Moses stood up and rushed to help the daughters and water their flock.

When they returned to Jethro their father, a friend of God, he said, "How is it that you have finished so soon today?"

The daughters said, "An Egyptian delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and he also drew enough water for us and watered the flock."

Jethro said to his daughters, "Where is this man? Why is it that you have left the man on his own? Call him, so he may eat with us today."

After spending time with Moses that evening, Jethro asked Moses to stay with them if he was tired of traveling and had no place special to go. Moses was content to live with them. After spending some time with them, Moses fell in love and married Zipporah, Jethro's oldest daughter. After a while, Zipporah conceived and bore him a son. Moses called his name Gershom, for he said, "I have been a stranger in a foreign land."



A few years later, the Pharaoh of Egypt died. By this time, the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.

