

MOSES.....1

(Exodus 1:1-----5:23)

Hundreds of years elapsed between the end of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus. The children of Israel had multiplied rapidly---so much that the king feared them. He not only enslaved them in hard labor, but tried to slow their growth by having all their baby boys killed. One Hebrew mother hid her son for 3 months and then placed him in a basket among the reeds of the Nile River where he was watched by his sister, Miriam.

In a familiar story, the baby was found by the daughter of Pharaoh who felt sorry for him. Miriam's quick thinking led to the baby's own mother being chosen to be his nurse until he was old enough to move into the home of Pharaoh's daughter, who named him Moses.

But Moses, being raised by his mother, knew who he was---that he was a Hebrew. One day, after he was grown he became angry when he saw another Hebrew being beaten by an Egyptian, so much so that he killed the Egyptian and hid his body. But the next day he learned that he had been seen, and decided that he needed to flee as his life was in danger.

So at age 40 Moses fled to the land of Midian where he met Reuel (also called Jethro), a priest, and his family. Moses married Zipporah, a daughter of Jethro, by whom he had a son, Gershom. Moses worked for his father-in-law, looking after his flock.

Forty years later, one day God appeared to Moses in a burning bush. God had heard the moans of the suffering Israelites and had chosen Moses to go back to Egypt and lead the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. Moses was very reluctant, very skeptical about his ability to do what the Lord wanted. God gave him a couple of miraculous signs to demonstrate his power and presence.

Then Moses offered the excuse that he was not a good speaker. Aaron, Moses' older brother was on his way to meet Moses and God said that Aaron was a good speaker and could help with the speaking.

So Moses took his family to Egypt. He and Aaron talked to the elders of the Israelites, explaining God's plan to deliver their people.

In a familiar series of events, Moses went to Pharaoh, demanding that the Israelites be allowed to take 3-days' journey into the desert to worship. Not only did Pharaoh refuse, but he angrily placed heavier workloads on the Hebrews, often accompanied by severe beatings, making the people angry at Moses.

