



THE PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER

LEADER GUIDE

Introduction: In a modern version of Aladdin, he desires life in a palace — with servants and abundant food — while the Princess laments the lack of choices and feels trapped. Their actions surprise us. In this study, we see several people taking steps that are unexpected and extraordinary.

Opening Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank you for the gift of Your Word from which we learn and which brings us and others closer to You. Bless the lives of those who have aided us in our understanding of Your love and mercy. Help us not to shy away from opportunities to do Your will. In Your holy Name we pray. Amen.

First Search: Read **Exodus 2:1–10**.

¹Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. ²The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. ³When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. ⁴And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. ⁵Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. ⁶When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." ⁷Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" ⁸And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. ⁹And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him **Moses**, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

In this text, there are five people mentioned, but only one is given a name at the very end. Why do you think that is? _____ **Answers will vary.**

When do we tell stories without using names? _____

Examples: recounting a story heard on the news but we can't remember names or telling bedtime stories that start with "Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess..."

Encourage other suggestions.

Before looking deeply into this event, let's review the circumstances immediately preceding. Read **Exodus 1:15–22**.

¹⁵Then the king of Egypt said to the **Hebrew midwives**, one of whom was named **Shiphrah** and the other **Puah**, ¹⁶"When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live." ¹⁷But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live. ¹⁸So the **king**

of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and let the male children live?”¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.”²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong.²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live.”

It’s interesting that the midwives are given names, but the king, or Pharaoh, is not. Please discuss. _____ Discussion will vary. (For a hint, see **Luke 1:52**.) _____

⁵² he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;
Comments will vary.

Now there is a royal decree that all Hebrew male children must be killed at birth. Returning to **Chapter 2**, we see a Hebrew woman who already has a girl and a boy. This is her third child. Does that seem to make a difference in how she treats the baby? _____

Answers will vary.

What do we learn about the family in **verse 1**?

¹Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman.

The family is of the house of Levi.

In Exodus 6:20? _____

²⁰ Amram took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses, the years of the life of Amram being 137 years.

The parents are Amram and Jochebed. Aaron and Moses are brothers.

2:21–22? _____

²¹And Moses was content to dwell with the man [Reuel of Midian], and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah. ²²She gave birth to a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, “I have been a sojourner^[a] in a foreign land.”

Moses married Zipporah and had a son named Gershom.

4:13–14a? _____

¹³But he said, “Oh, my Lord, please send someone else. ^{14a}Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said, “Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well.

Aaron, of the house of Levi, is the better speaker.

7:7? _____

⁷Now Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke to Pharaoh. Aaron is three years older than Moses.

15:20? ²⁰ Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing.

Miriam is the sister of Aaron and Moses (probably the eldest who was keeping watch over the basket) and a prophetess.

28:1–2? _____

¹“Then bring near to you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests—Aaron and Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ² And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. The holy garments for Aaron are those described for the first high priest.

Hebrews 11:23? _____

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

Amram is part of the hiding process, which lasts three months. Moses is a beautiful child. His parents do not fear the edict.

Read **verses 3 and 4 of Chapter 2** again. What are her next steps? _____

She takes great care to make sure the basket is safe and leaves his sister to watch him.

Do you think the mother is counting on his being found by Pharaoh's daughter? _____

Answers will vary.

What does this say about her as a mother? _____ Comments will vary.

What impresses you most about this baby's parents? _____

They hide the child to save his life. They fear and trust in God more than the Pharaoh's decree. They do not leave the child completely unattended.

Infant exposure — leaving children out in the open without care — was not uncommon at the time and practiced by many ancient cultures. Pharaoh's ruling forces a version upon the Israelites. What other options might this mother have? _____

Examples: Go to another land not under Pharaoh's rule or find another way to keep the baby hidden. Encourage other suggestions.

The daughter of the Pharaoh comes to the river to bathe and finds a baby in a basket. Do you think she knows about her father's decree to kill all male Hebrew babies? _____

⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, “This is one of the Hebrews' children.” ¹⁰ When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son.

Yes, she does.

Realizing this is a male Hebrew child, what thoughts do you suppose go through her head? _____ Answers will vary, but may include risk and/or intrigue.

Is she in any personal danger from a three-month old baby? _____

Yes; daughter or not, she could be killed for not destroying him under her father's orders.

Who is the true hero in this story? _____

Answers will vary, but may include: the parents; the sister; the Pharaoh's daughter; the baby; God.

Looking Deeper: Exodus 2:1–10

The baby, the mother, and Pharaoh's daughter all had needs that were met in the end. What was the most important need that God met in this account? _____

He provided a deliverer for His people.

Moses' sister jumped in right away when he was found and offered a wet nurse. The Pharaoh's daughter unknowingly paid Moses' mother to care for him. What does this say about how God answers prayers? _____

He gives above and beyond what we ask.

Through a combined effort, Moses was given the opportunity to learn, reach out to help, and lead others to faith. Who gave you that same opportunity? _____ Have you made use of this opportunity? _____ Why or why not? _____

Answers will vary.

Closing Hymn: Sing or say together one or more verses of "'Tis Good, Lord, to Be Here" (*LSB* #414; *LW* #89; *TLH* #135).

Closing Prayer: Lord, equip us through Your Word, Spirit, and Sacraments that we may confess You without wavering. Grant us courage that we faithfully serve you in the face of all opposition. Amen.