

THE STORY OF MOSES

Aunt Hattie's Bible Stories

by

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There is a free paraphrase of Scripture passages in use quite frequently throughout this book in the interest of youthful minds.

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CHAPTER ONE

ISRAEL IN BONDAGE IN EGYPT

Did you ever go to one of the great world's fairs? Some have been held in Chicago, New York, and an Francisco.

Where do the people who attend such fairs go in?

At the entrance, of course.

Where do they go out?

At the exit. What useless questions!

The stories we have now are written from the second book of the Bible, called Exodus. You have just read that the place where you go out of any fairgrounds is called the exit and that is what the word Exodus means, "*the going out.*"

Before you come out you have to go in. In the Book of Genesis you remember God chose Abraham to be the father of a great nation and promised him many things in the land He had selected for him, he land we call Palestine!

Then, you remember, the story of Joseph and the way his family, the children of Jacob, also called Israelites, came to dwell in the land of Egypt. It this book we have the story of their exit or exodus out of Egypt.

These Hebrews, the children of Israel, were as you may know, chosen of God for His own purposes. God had a special care over them even when they were out of the land He had given to them.

Joseph ruled Egypt under the Pharaohs (the kings of Egypt) for eighty years. For many years after his death and the death of his brothers these Egyptian kings were good to the descendants of Israel for Joseph's sake. Finally a king came to the throne who did not know Joseph. He must have heard of him but he did not honor his name and seemed to have forgotten the blessings that Joseph had brought this country.

Looking over his kingdom he saw that this great family had now grown to be a powerful nation, he said to his leaders, "**Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we . . . Let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also with our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land!**" (Exodus 1:9, 10).

That means that Pharaoh was afraid that Israel would increase to great numbers and join with his enemies and overthrow the government of Egypt.

What was to be done about it? I believe he spent much thought and time on the subject. The kings of that time were very anxious to continue their own names and to do this they sometimes built a city or some great building that would last through long ages so that their children and grandchildren for generations would be reminded of them.

This Pharaoh of the Exodus-time had this kind of an ambition. He saw his opportunity in these Israelites who were causing him so much worry on account of their increasing numbers.

The cunning schemer must have said to himself, "They shall build for me cities which I'll name Pithom and Raamses," for the Bible says they did build cities with those names.

Some of the Hebrew people labored in the fields, though most of them worked in the brick-kilns making brick for the building of the "treasure cities." But wherever they toiled, Pharaoh placed cruel taskmasters over them who worked them very hard. But the harder they worked the Hebrews, the more there were. This angered the overseers who became more cruel and heartless, for the Bible says "**they made their lives bitter with hard bondage.**"

In spite of all of the persecution, there were more Israelites every year and Pharaoh had to think of another way to stop the growth of the nation that so troubled him.

He summoned before him the two head nurses of Israel, Shiphrah and Puah, and told them that when they were called to an Israelitish home to take care of a new baby, if it was a boy they should kill him, but if a girl she should live.

These nurses feared God and would not do as the king commanded them.

Before long Shiphrah and Puah were called again before Pharaoh who asked them why they had not done as he told them, why they had spared the boy babies. They were ready with an answer and a true one, too. They said that the babies were born before they were called to care for them. It was too late then to kill them.

God was pleased with the nurses and with their testimony.

In spite of all that Pharaoh tried to do, the nation of Israel only grew stronger in numbers.

However, Pharaoh would have his way, so he commanded the Egyptians to kill all the Hebrew boy babies and to cast their bodies into the river.

What a terrible time it must have been in those homes where baby boys were born. Every father and mother dreaded to see a new son. And I think very often some Egyptian would come along, find a boy baby, snatch him away and kill him, then throw his body in the river.

~ end of chapter 1 ~

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