

Playtime

The baby in the basket

The story of baby Moses



Storybook for
toddler groups



THE STORY OF BABY MOSES

Here are some ways to explore the story of baby Moses and the idea that God is always taking care of us. Other themes relevant to this story might include a new baby in the family.

Items needed for the story:

- Little girl doll to represent Miriam
- Baby doll to represent Moses
- Baby basket
- Long blue scarf to represent the river
- Toy frog

Items needed for the opening activity:

- Blue card/paper
- Green card/paper
- Brown paint
- Green paint
- Paintbrushes
- Empty toilet roll cylinders
- Small paper plates
- Googly eyes (and glue, if googly eyes do not have a sticky side)
- (optional) baby dolls, baby clothes and toys for alternative opener

READY

- As the children arrive, they could help you make a riverbank collage on blue paper by:
 - painting long triangular pieces of card or paper green to create reeds
 - cutting toilet rolls in half and painting them brown to create bulrushes
 - painting small paper plates (cut in half) green and sticking googly eyes on top to create peeping frogs.
- Alternatively, have free play with baby dolls, baby clothes and toys, cradles, etc. as you chat about looking after a baby.

TEDDY

Dress Teddy in some children's wellies, a rain hat and give him a fishing net. Be ready with a simple story about Teddy going fishing along the riverbank.

Chat about the wellies keeping his feet dry and have fun imagining what he might see, hear or catch in his net. Perhaps he meets his friend the frog.



GO

Your aim is to help families understand that God is always with them, concerned for their safety and wellbeing. Even if these are anxious times, we are all in God's hands.

STORYTELLING TIP



If possible, ask three adults to read the words of Moses' mum, the king and the princess.

As a 'way in' to the story, use up some excess energy by asking everyone to jump about like frogs, perhaps from mat to mat (lily pads!), with lots of croaking! The children could also 'swim' like fish (lie on their bellies and wave their arms and legs), or wave their arms like dragonflies' wings or tall reeds.

THE STORY:

THE BABY IN THE BASKET



Leader:

(sit with the girl doll on your lap) There was once a girl whose name was Miriam. She lived with her family by the River Nile. The river was very, very long.

(slowly pull the blue material from the basket and lay it out)

And Miriam loved to walk along the riverbank and 'I-spy' fish swimming in the water ... *(mime swimming)*

She loved to sit quietly – sssh! – and listen to the frogs croaking *(bring out frog)*.

All:

Croak, croak!

Leader:

And she loved to watch the tall plants, the reeds and bulrushes, waving in the wind ...

All:

(waving their arms) Swish, swish!

Leader:

It was so beautiful and peaceful – sssh! It was Miriam's favourite place to be. If only she had a baby brother or sister to share it with!

Then one day, as Miriam was sitting by the river, she heard a new sound. Listen!

Adults:

(softly) Maa-maa! Maa-maa!

Leader:

What do you think it was? Miriam thought it sounded like a baby crying!

She hurried back to her house *(Moses' mum fetches baby doll)* and saw her mum rocking a small bundle in her arms. Her mum said:

Moses' mum:

(showing the baby to the children) Look, Miriam! You've got a new baby brother!

Leader:

How lovely! I wonder how Miriam felt?

Her new baby brother was tiny, with waving hands and feet and plump pink cheeks. Miriam bent over to give him a kiss. He felt warm and smelled so sweet.

Well, the new baby spent a lot of time feeding and sleeping and keeping her mum busy. No wonder Miriam couldn't wait for him to get bigger and play with her.

But that was the sad thing. At that time there was a very cross and bad-tempered king. He didn't like baby boys. He was afraid that they might grow up and fight him. So he said:

King:

(not too scary) No baby boys allowed! If you have a baby boy, then you can't keep him. No baby boys!

Leader:

Oh no! Poor Miriam! Of course, she and her mummy wanted to keep the new baby, because they loved him.

At first, it was easy to hide him in the house. But as the weeks went by, the baby grew bigger and bigger, and his cry got louder and louder ...

All:

Maa-maa!

Leader:

... until Miriam and her mum were afraid that someone would hear him. How could they keep him safe?

Well, Miriam's mum had an idea. She fetched a basket *(bring out the basket)*, and she painted the bottom with some black sticky stuff to keep the water out. Then she put the baby in the basket *(Moses' mum does so)*.

Miriam followed her mum as she took the basket to the river. What was she going to do? She watched as her mum hid the basket in the tall reeds and bulrushes. *(Moses' mum places the basket on the blue scarf)* Her mum knew that God would look after the baby.

Miriam wondered what would happen to the baby. So she stayed on the riverbank, among the reeds.

At first, it was very quiet – sssh! All she could hear were the frogs croaking.

All:

Croak, croak!

Leader:

But then she heard laughing and talking. Someone was coming down to the river to bathe. Oh no! It was the princess, and her dad was that cross, bad-tempered king!

Miriam held her breath. Would the princess see the basket? Yes, she did! And she asked one of her servants to fetch it for her. *(Ask someone to hand the basket to the princess.)*

Princess:

Oh, it's a beautiful baby boy! Poor little thing – don't cry!

Leader:

Miriam could see that the princess was kind and not like the grumpy old king. She was smiling at the baby and rocking him in her arms.

Suddenly, God helped Miriam to do something very brave. She stepped out of her hiding place and spoke to the princess.

'Would you like me to find you a nurse for the baby?' she asked. The princess nodded. So Miriam went to find a nurse. Who do you think that was?

Yes, it was the baby's own mum – and Miriam's mum, too.

Princess:

Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you. *(Moses' mum collects the baby in the basket)*

Leader:

So Miriam and her mum took the baby home. They didn't have to hide him anymore. When he grew older, they took him to the princess and she said that he could live in the palace like a real prince! She gave him the name Moses because it means 'I pulled him out of the water'.

God was looking after baby Moses and all his family – just like he looks after us and all our families. Yay!

SONGS AND RHYMES

He's got the whole world in his hands (*sing the last verse as 'He's got the little tiny babies ...'*).

Five Little Speckled Frogs.

Play lullaby music and mime rocking a baby to sleep.

GOD LOOKS AFTER ME!

Let the children and parents/carers have fun together colouring the picture and putting baby Moses in the basket.

PRAYER

Before you pray, ask everyone to put their palms together, then thread their fingers through each other and turn hands upside down to make a basket shape.

Dear God, thank you for the story about how you looked after baby Moses.

Help me to remember that you are always looking after me and my family, wherever we go and whatever we are doing. Thank you that we are safe in your hands. Amen.

PARTY BAG

You might like to hand out the activity sheet for families to use at home.

ACTIVITY SHEET: THE BABY IN THE BASKET



JUST FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

The story of baby Moses shows us that whatever is going on, God is in ultimate control and holds our family safe in his hands. He has plans for us to thrive and not to harm us.

God can see the big picture. He knew that Moses would one day lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. So his birth into an ordinary Israelite family and his unexpected royal upbringing gave him the perfect skills for the job God had in mind.

Can you think of anything bad or disappointing that has happened to you that God has turned into an advantage later on?

STORY TIME

Retell or 'play' the story of baby Moses together using whatever toys or props you have. At bathtime, pretend the water is the river (use any bath ducks) and float a Duplo figure in an empty margarine carton.

Explore the story with your child through 'wondering' questions, like those below:

- ➡ I wonder why Miriam loved walking by the river. What is your favourite place to be?
- ➡ I wonder how Miriam felt when she saw her new baby brother?
- ➡ I wonder what fun games Miriam was hoping to play with the baby when he grew up a bit?
- ➡ I wonder what noise a baby makes?

- ➔ I wonder how Miriam and her mum felt when the grumpy king said that no baby boys were allowed?
 - ➔ They hid him in a very strange place, didn't they? I wonder why they did that?
 - ➔ Can you make your hands into a basket shape?
 - ➔ Do you remember who found the baby?
 - ➔ Do you think Miriam was brave to speak to the princess? I wonder who helped her to be brave?
 - ➔ God was looking after Miriam and her family, wasn't he? I wonder if he is looking after us? (Yes, all the time!)
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NATURE I-SPY

Getting out into nature is good for our mental health and can help your child develop an early love for the outdoors. If possible, go for a walk by a river or pond and look out for wildlife. Sit quietly outside. What can you see, hear and smell?

LEAPING FROGS

Scatter some cushions on the floor and pretend to be frogs leaping from lily-pad to lily-pad. You could tell the story of Moses from the frog's point of view. What did the frog see?

A NEW BABY?

It can be difficult for a toddler to understand that their mum now seems preoccupied with a new baby. Make a point of spending time with your toddler as soon as the baby goes to sleep in the same way that you did before, to show that your love for them has not changed. Chat about what a baby needs, why you are busy and try to include them. Ask them what games they would like to play with the baby when he or she is older.

BABY NAMES

Look up family names in a baby names book. Look up 'Moses' and chat about why the princess gave him this name.

What are your favourite names?

BEDTIME PRAYER

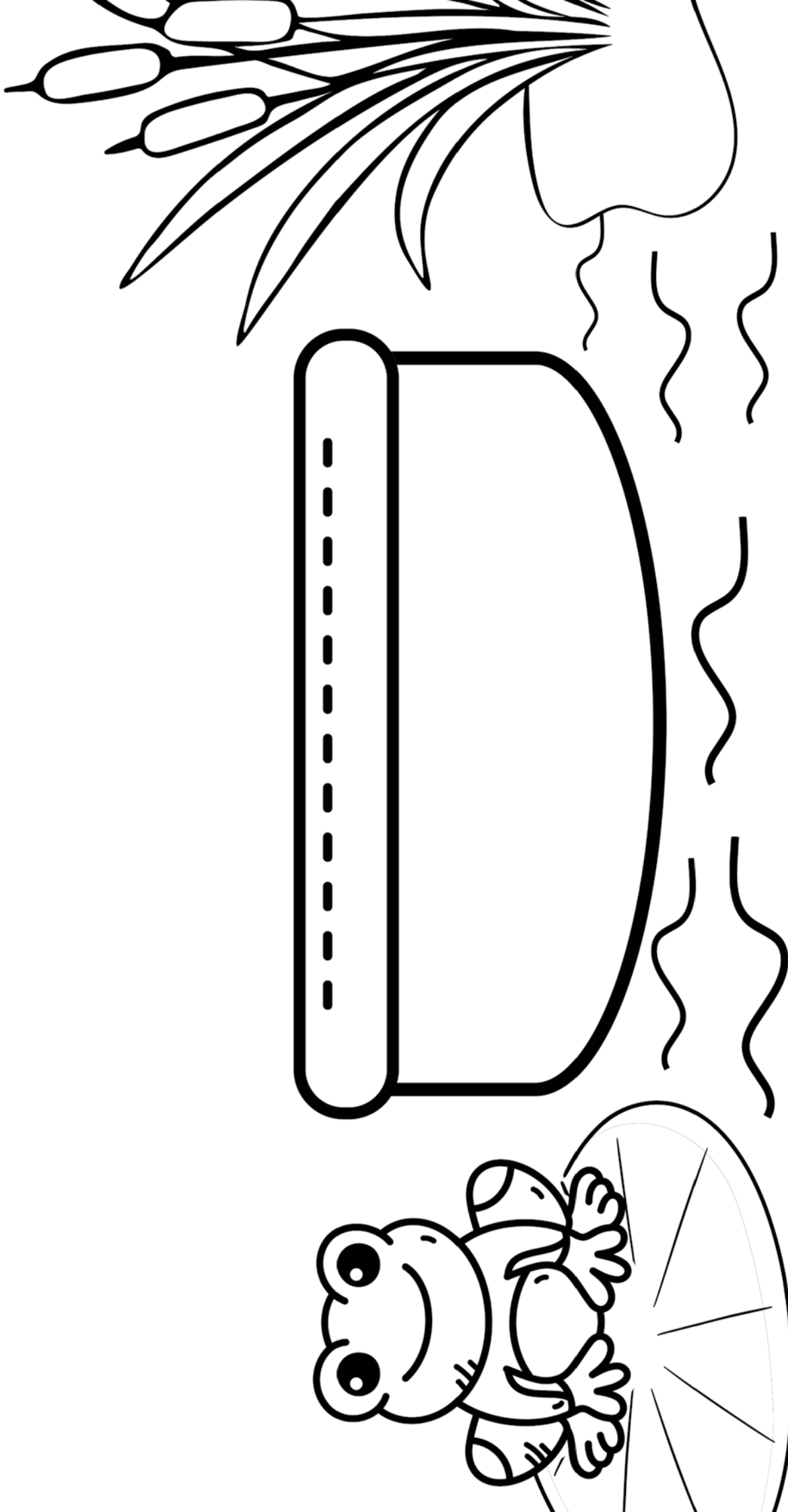
Chat about the day. Take turns thanking God for looking after you at different times and during different activities that day.

Dear God, thank you for looking after us at toddler group, when Matty had her nap, and when Mummy did her work. Please take care of us now as we go to sleep. Amen.

CRAFT SHEET: GOD LOOKS AFTER ME

Instructions

1. Draw around your toddler's fingers along the bottom of the picture to make shapes that represent the reeds growing by the river.
2. Colour the picture, including the baby.
3. Cut along the dotted line on the basket and around the baby on the separate page.
4. Place the baby inside the basket and talk about how God will always take care of us.



GOD LOOKS AFTER ME



About Care for the Family

Established in 1988, Care for the Family is a charity based in the UK, but with an increasing reach internationally. We support parents, couples and those who are bereaved, through events, courses, podcasts, volunteer befrienders, books and other evidence-based, accessible resources.

For more information

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