

Bible Heroes

Miriam

Teachers Story notes



Essential Teachers notes:

Miriam is a lovely character to explore at this young age and a thread that continues through the Exodus storyline. The stories in the bible about youth are always welcome and this one in particular where it's not only a child, but such a young one and a girl, can be really inspiring for youngsters to hear. The age of 5 is not explicit in the text but generally agreed upon by extrapolation from other passages. If you have a very young group you may want to rephrase the paragraph about the Pharaoh killing the baby boys.

Main Passage : Exodus 2

Often the bible hero's we talk about are old, they do brave and daring things, but today's hero is just 5 years old. Her name is Miriam and her job was to play a game.

Miriam and her mummy loved to play by the river, mummy would gather up the long reeds or wash some clothes while Miriam splashed around. The game would begin when her mummy dropped something in the water and called out chase! Miriam would run along the bank until her legs hurt trying to see where the dropped item went. Miriam was good at chasing things.

Suddenly, one day, Miriam couldn't go to the water anymore, she had to stay at home with her big brother Aaron, her mummy went alone. Miriam missed the water. The pharaoh had decided that there were too many Israelites like Miriam and her family. He decided the best way to cut down the numbers was to kill all the new baby boys. He's tried to get the midwives to help him but that failed, so he ordered that every new Israelite boy should be thrown in the middle of the deep river and left to drown in the waters. The river became a place mothers would cry for their lost sons. Miriam's mummy was protecting her.

Soon mummy stopped going to the river too, because her mummy was going to have a baby. When the baby was born her mummy kept it hidden. "is it a sister for me to play with" Miriam would ask and her mummy would shake her head sadly then make Miriam promise not to tell anyone. For 3 months the baby was hidden in the house while Miriam's mummy tried to decide what to do.

One afternoon Miriam's was told her they were going to the river. She was so excited. Her mummy got out a big basket that was covered in sticky black tar and placed the baby inside. When they got to the river, the basket was gently placed in the water and they watched as it started to drift away. Miriam didn't wait for her mum to say chase she just went running.

Along the river bank she ran and ran, the sun was hot and the mud hard below her feet. She didn't notice how far she had run, she didn't notice the palace guard, she just kept her eyes on the basket. It rose and fell with the ripples of the water, moving fast then slow and bumping off any obstacle it met.

Just as Miriam thought she could run no more the basket floated straight into a big bank of tall reeds and disappeared. When Miriam got to the reeds she started searching. Could hear a baby was crying over there, or there? She pushed through the more and more reeds, she was so busy looking she didn't hear the other people. There it was, and it was open and a Egyptian lady was holding her brother.

Miriam stopped and started at the group of ladies. The one in the middle wore makeup and a huge gold neck collar, she must be really important thought Miriam. Eventually one of them turned and noticed standing there.

"Did you see the basket in the river" the lady asked, Miriam nodded, "it's got a baby inside" the lady said as if Miriam didn't know that already.

"It must be one of the Israelite babies!" another lady said, "shall we keep it?"

"What a wonderful idea, yes lets" said the important lady, "but we will need someone to look after it.

And it was then Miriam realised how clever her mummy was. In a big loud voice she said "Shall I go and get one of the Israelite women for you?"

Her brother was safe and her mummy would see her son again. The Egyptian lady, who had been down by the river taking a cool bath was the Pharaoh's daughter - She names the little baby Moses and he grew up in the palace. The tiny baby Moses would become a very important man when he was older.

Today's hero is Miriam because she shows us the gift of chasing