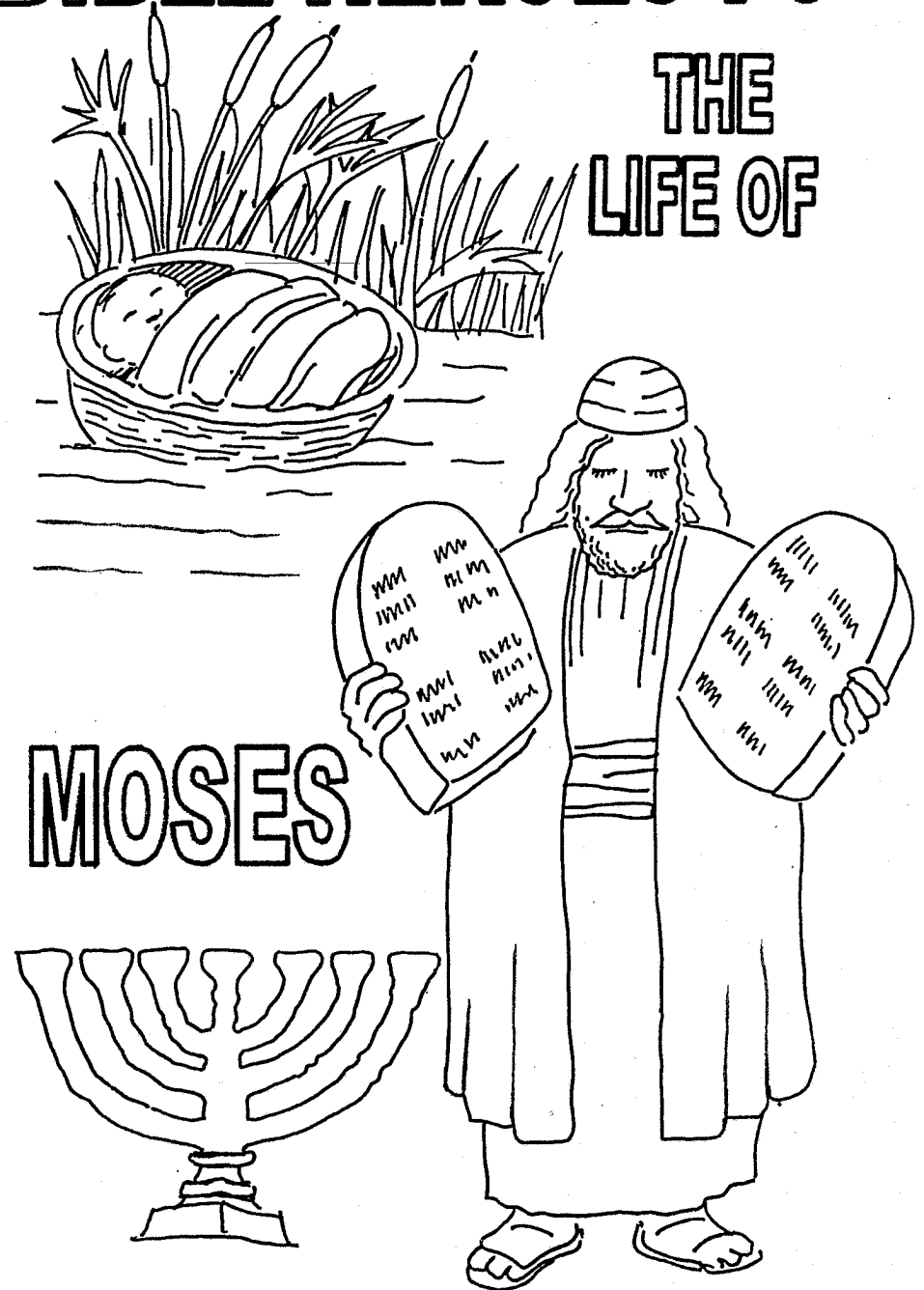


lamb and be fully dressed and ready to leave. At midnight every firstborn of the Egyptians and of their cattle died, but because of the lamb's blood, God never harmed the Israelites. At last, Pharaoh let them go. God was looking after them and appeared in a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire during the night. In this way God led the Israelites out of Egypt and its slavery. However, they were not delivered from Pharaoh yet. He and his army chased after them. With the Red Sea ahead and Egyptian armies racing in their chariots toward them, the Israelites appeared trapped. God told Moses to stretch his rod over the Sea. The Sea parted and the Israelites went through on dry land, chased by Pharaoh and his army. The wall of water then closed in upon the Egyptians and Pharaoh and all his army drowned.

For forty years the Children of Israel, were to wander in a wilderness land. God fed them daily with a food called Manna which tasted like biscuits and honey. When they came to a mountain called Sinai God gave Moses a set of laws to keep. We know these as the Ten Commandments. Sadly, when Moses was up in the mountain with God, the people forgot God and made a golden calf and worshipped it. When Moses saw this he smashed the stone slabs on which the commandments were written and the people were punished. Moses had to get two more slabs and God gave the people the laws again. This time they were kept in a special tent called The Tabernacle. God had led them out of Egypt and was now leading them into a land He had chosen for them, a Promised Land called Canaan. Spies were sent ahead of the others to report back what Canaan was like. It was such a good land that they described it as "a land flowing with milk and honey". Sadly, Moses never entered this land. There were many battles with different tribes to be won before the Israelites could fully enter into the land, but God gave them the victory. Aaron had died and Moses was an old man. God told him to climb a mountain so that he could see the Promised Land before he died.

BIBLE HEROES : 5

THE LIFE OF



THE LIFE OF MOSES

There are five books of Moses in the Bible. They are the first five books of the Old Testament. Can you name them?

Thousands of years ago, when Egypt was a great nation there lived in that country a people called Hebrews. They had come to live there at the time of a man called Joseph. However, when a new Pharaoh (king) came to the throne he began to worry about the number of the Hebrew people in Egypt. He ordered them to work as slaves all day, under the scorching sun to build two great cities. After this, orders were given that every baby Hebrew boy that was born must be thrown into the river Nile to drown.

A man called Amram and his wife, Jochebed already had a boy, Aaron and a girl, Miriam. Soon after the law was made, Jochebed gave birth to a baby boy and they decided they must try to save him. They kept his birth secret but as he grew they were worried he might be heard.

So one day Jochebed gathered some rushes (tall reed plants) from the water of the Nile and wove a little cradle or ark. She covered the outside to make it waterproof and laid the baby in the ark. Next she took the ark down to the river Nile and laid it there among the tall rushes. Miriam was told to watch and see what happened. Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river. One of her female servants found the cradle and baby. Pharaoh's daughter decided to keep the baby and Miriam offered to find a nurse. She came back with her mother Jochebed, the baby's own mother! It was decided that the baby should be called Moses, which means "drawn out", because he was taken out of the water. Back with his own parents Moses grew up to believe in the God of the Hebrews. Pharaoh's daughter had not forgotten him and when he was old enough Moses went to live in the Pharaoh's palace. He was now a Prince of Egypt! He learnt the Egyptian form of picture writing and of the strange religion of these people.

One day, when Moses was a man, he saw an Egyptian taskmaster beat one of his own people, a Hebrew slave. Moses in rage struck and killed the Egyptian, afterward burying him in the sand. The next day he saw two Hebrews fighting and went to stop them. One of them turned on Moses and asked if he meant to kill them just as he had killed the Egyptian. Moses knew he had been seen and that if Pharaoh heard he would have him killed. Everyone was whispering about what Moses had done, so Moses decided to run away from Egypt.

For many days and nights Moses travelled until he was beyond the land of Pharaoh and in the desert land of Midian. It was here he came to live with Jethro and his daughters and where he married Zipporah. Moses looked after Jethro's flocks and one day God spoke to him from a burning bush, a bush that was on fire but strangely was not burnt up. God said that Moses was to go back and bring the Hebrew people, the Israelites, out of Egypt. Moses was scared but God told him to put his rod on the ground. At once it became a serpent. God told Moses to hold it by the tail. It turned back into a rod. God said he would show more of these signs and that Aaron, Moses' brother would go back to Pharaoh (there was a new one now) with Moses. Encouraged, Moses did what God had said and met Aaron in the wilderness.

When Moses and Aaron spoke to the Pharaoh he would not let the Israelites go. He said the Hebrews were lazy and made them work even harder. Previously they had been given straw to use in making bricks but now they had to find their own. Moses did the show of turning his rod into a serpent but Pharaoh's magicians did the same. God showed His judgment upon Egypt by bringing plagues upon them - ten different ones one after another. These were 1) water turned to blood 2) frogs, 3) lice; 4) flies, 5) murrain (death) of animals 6) boils 7) hail, 8) locusts, 9) darkness and 10) death of the first born baby in families. Before the tenth plague God told Moses that each Hebrew household must kill a lamb and put the blood on the door posts and the lintel (above the door). Inside they were to roast the lamb upon fire and eat it with bitter herbs. God promised that He would not slay their first born children as when He saw the blood He would pass over that household. They were to eat the