

## The Call of Moses: Pyramid Workshop

Written for Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Olympia, WA in 2002 by Beth Tobin. Updated in 2006 by Jill Esbeck, and again January 2010, and December 2017 by Beth Tobin. Copyright 2010 Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Olympia, WA. Permission to copy materials granted for non-commercial use provided credit is given and all cited references remain with this material.

**Bible Text:** Exodus 1-4

### Memory Verse:

*"Pray without ceasing."* 1 Thessalonians 5:17  
NRSV

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."* Philippians 4:13 NRSV



### Objectives:

Students will become familiar with the oppression of the Israelites in Exodus Chapter 1 by making bricks out of mud and straw.

### Materials:

- Bibles
- Map of Egypt showing location of pyramids by the Nile
- Pictures of pyramids and how bricks were moved
- Pyramid worksheet and handout
- Scissors and Pencils
- Faith Journal Sheets
- Brick materials: clay/mud (We use clay/mud from local hills.) and straw, hard plastic kiddie pool, wooden brick molds, cleaning supplies (towels and paper towels), and buckets of warm water.

### Preparation:

- Read Exodus 1-4 and Background Information
- Watch the Bible Study Video: [www.GloriaDeiKids.org](http://www.GloriaDeiKids.org)
- Construct a paper pyramid ahead of time to use as an example.
- Read Background information on Pyramids. Here is one website:

[http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://static.howstuffworks.com/gif/pyramid-17.jpg&imgrefurl=http://science.howstuffworks.com/pyramid.htm/printable&usg=\\_\\_0\\_A3wOU1fI2inYzAIA\\_1l8wHJQY=&h=400&w=400&sz=38&hl=en&start=18&um=1&tbnid=dlrIGvjheSpBDyM:&tbnh=124&tbnw=124&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dpyramids%26hl%3Den%26client%3Dsafari%26rls%3Den%26sa%3DN%26um%3D1](http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://static.howstuffworks.com/gif/pyramid-17.jpg&imgrefurl=http://science.howstuffworks.com/pyramid.htm/printable&usg=__0_A3wOU1fI2inYzAIA_1l8wHJQY=&h=400&w=400&sz=38&hl=en&start=18&um=1&tbnid=dlrIGvjheSpBDyM:&tbnh=124&tbnw=124&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dpyramids%26hl%3Den%26client%3Dsafari%26rls%3Den%26sa%3DN%26um%3D1)

- Here is another website on how pyramids were constructed:

<http://www.touregypt.net/construction/>

- Construct wooden clay molds.
- Fill kiddie pool with mud/clay have straw nearby. Make sure you have an area to dry the bricks. The molds can be reused each week.

## Opening:

Introduce yourself and welcome students. **Setting the stage:** (Find out what they know.) How does it make you feel when someone tells you what to do or orders you around? Accept answers.

Today, we will be learning more about the Israelites and how they were treated by the Egyptians. Moses was born as an Israelite, but raised by an Egyptian Princess. What do you know about the Israelites? Accept answers.

## Bible Lesson:

Place this story: Exodus is the second book in the Old Testament. The story of the Exodus begins 400 years after Joseph (coat of many colors) has died, and a new king is in power who did not know about Joseph. Read Exodus 1:1-14. There were many more Israelites than Egyptians. Why were the Egyptians so scared? (The Israelites might side with Egyptian enemies and overthrow them in time of war.) What do you think will happen?

Read Exodus 1:15-20. Explain that a midwife is like a doctor who helps a baby be born and that the midwives tricked the Pharaoh (king) so they wouldn't be in trouble for not killing the boys. This made God very happy. How did God show God's happiness? (The Israelites had even more babies!) Pharaoh's plan wasn't working. There were still more Israelites. What will he do next? Why does the pharaoh want all of the boys to be killed? How do the Egyptians treat the Israelites?

## Activity 1: What is a Pyramid?

What is a pyramid? What was it made of? Show the map of Egypt and how the pyramids are located next to the Nile River. Show the pictures of the pyramids, and how bricks were made and ideas about how they were moved from the quarry to the pyramid sites. *The photo below shows the Giza Pyramids behind the city of Cairo in Egypt.*



[http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.sacredsites.com/africa/egypt/images/giza-pyramids-soaring-above-500.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.sacredsites.com/africa/egypt/great\\_pyramid.html&usg=\\_\\_08l4ifRvt6vo1Jl9JDuYwCAK1ms=&h=333&w=500&sz=41&hl=en&start=23&um=1&tbid=o8qAYWW5onHIYM:&tbnh=87&tbnw=130&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dpyramids%26ndsp%3D17%26hl%3Den%26client%3Dsa\\_fari%26rls%3Den%26sa%3DN%26start%3D17%26um%3D1](http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.sacredsites.com/africa/egypt/images/giza-pyramids-soaring-above-500.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.sacredsites.com/africa/egypt/great_pyramid.html&usg=__08l4ifRvt6vo1Jl9JDuYwCAK1ms=&h=333&w=500&sz=41&hl=en&start=23&um=1&tbid=o8qAYWW5onHIYM:&tbnh=87&tbnw=130&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dpyramids%26ndsp%3D17%26hl%3Den%26client%3Dsa_fari%26rls%3Den%26sa%3DN%26start%3D17%26um%3D1)

Hand out the pyramid worksheet and assist students in cutting and folding their own pyramid to take home.

## **Activity 2: Bricks from Mud and Straw**

Invite students to remove socks and shoes etc. so they are barefoot. Have students experience making their own bricks from mud and straw by stomping in the mud/clay in the pool to mix in the straw. Add straw as needed to make the desired consistency and then scoop the mixture into the molds to form the bricks.

Many bricks can be dated because they had the mark of the ruling king stamped into them. How long will these bricks take to dry? (Several days depending up on the weather.) A brick maker could make a 1,000 bricks a day. Have students mix bricks and form them into a brick mold. Have them mark their name in their brick.

Later on in this story, one punishment from the pharaoh was for the Israelites to have to make bricks without using straw. Why do you think this would make it harder to make the same number of bricks in one day?

Students may wash up when they have finished making their bricks.

## **Closing:**

Hand out the Faith Journal Sheet. If there is time, work through it. If not, please ask students to take it with them to work on at home.

Thank the students for coming. Read Exodus 2:24-25. Remind students that just as God heard the Israelites, He hears us when we pray, and he cares for us.

*Close with prayer* and have students assist with cleaning up the work site.

Please note: These bricks will be used in an upcoming rotation to build a well.