



Moses and the Basket

Goal: To explore how it feels to be loved and safe with people who care for us.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Exodus 1:8–2:10

An African proverb says, “It takes a village to raise a child.” We could say, “It took five women to save baby Moses.”

When the people of Israel were in slavery in Egypt, the king ordered midwives to kill boy babies born to Hebrew women. But two midwives resisted: Shiphrah (SHIF-ruh) and Puah (POO-uh). They let baby boys live.

Two more women who saved Moses were his mother and sister. Jochebed (JOH-kee-buhd), his mother, hid him for three months. Then she put Moses in a papyrus basket and hid him by the bank of the river. Moses' sister Miriam (MEER-ee-uhm) watched to see what would happen.

The fifth important woman was the daughter of Pharaoh. She discovered the basket and asked Moses' sister to get a nurse for the child. Miriam got Moses' mother to raise Moses before giving him to Pharaoh's daughter when he grew up.

Five women were important in the life of Moses, the person God called to lead the people of Israel. God graciously gives people to love and care for us in different ways throughout our lives. We can remember these important people and be thankful to God for them. We can also thank them for loving us.

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

Moses, who became God's faithful leader because of the wise actions of five women in his life, would not have become the leader he was without them. So, too, are the children you are leading affected by loving and caring adults in their lives. As they move into the world, meeting new teachers, coaches, and mentors, they experience the ways that they are surrounded by wise and loving people who want them to grow in gracious and healthy ways. And they are surrounded by the village, their church.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Your commitment to be with the children means you are enacting God's graceful presence in their lives. In welcoming and listening to them, you are both caring and helping them grow in their life of faith. When asked what they remember about church, it's rarely the content of the curriculum, it's always the loving adults. The energy you bring, the faith that you live, and the Bible stories you tell work together in passing on faith. Be aware of each child and the particular gifts, abilities, and needs she or he brings. God's grace abounds and will surround you and your young friends.

*O God, thank you for the story of Moses and the people who cared for him.
Give me the same heart for the children. Amen.*



Supplies

Music & Melodies
(MM) 2022–2023

Stories, Colors & More
(SCM) i–iv, 1, 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d,
15, 22

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

story audio (see p. vii)

candle

green cloth

blue cloth

baby doll and basket

plant (optional)

Grace Notes (GN) 1

Responding

Claiming

two cardboard boxes
and/or laundry baskets
large enough for a child
to sit in

Offering

card-stock copies of
GN 2, two hangers

Extra

copies of **GN 3** or **GN 4**

Some SCMs are used throughout the quarter. It is a good idea to keep them in an envelope or folder for further use.

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Before the children arrive, post **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule.” Cut out and glue the arrow marker on a clothespin. Use the schedule to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

“Claiming God’s Grace” and “Offering God’s Grace” require more prep.

Welcoming and Preparing

LG **A** **B** **MS**

Play “God Is So Good”—**MM 5**—as children arrive. Welcome each child with “Grace and peace be with you, (*Name*).” Prompt the children to respond, “And also with you.”

Invite the children to help prepare the setting as they arrive. Create a worship area with a candle, a Bible, and a green cloth. Explain that green is the church color for the time between Pentecost (last Sunday) and Advent (at the end of November). Green represents growth as we learn more about God and follow God’s ways. Have the children add **SCM 1a**, **1b**, and **1c** (scenes of Egypt), a blue cloth (representing water), a doll in a basket, and a plant, if you have one.

Ask a few children to help prepare any “Responding in Gratitude” activities you may be doing today. Suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing. Today’s Scripture passage is lengthy. Decide if you will have volunteers read it or use **SCM 1**. Ask for several volunteers to practice the reading. Ask one or two children to prepare to teach the group the American Sign Language message on **GN 1** for the end of the session.

T *For children who struggle with transitions, consider a quick physical activity—such as doing chair push-ups and stretching.*

Singing

MS **A** **B**

Gather children around the worship center. Play, listen to, clap, and dance to “Bim Bam”—**MM 3**; **SCM 15**. Stand in a circle and dance to the music. Take turns dancing from one side of the circle through the middle to the other side. Have everybody change sides at least once.

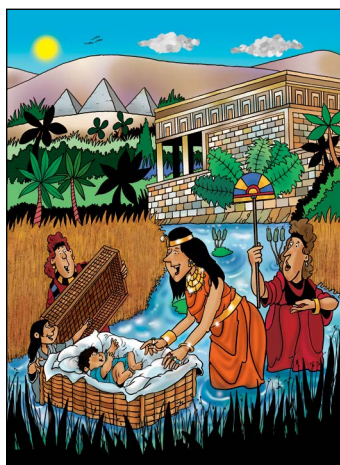
Praying

Turn on the candle. Invite the children to share one glad thing (a happy moment) and one sad thing (a concern or worry) from their week. Prompt the children to respond to each share with “Hear our prayer, gracious God.”

Affirm each child’s response and respect those who do not wish to share.



If children wonder about the dashed line on the map, explain that it is the path that the Hebrew people took when Moses, as an adult, led them out of slavery from Egypt.



Today's story can be found in *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), www.pcusastore.com.

People who kept Moses safe:

Shiphrah and Puah,
midwives

Jochebed, Moses' mother

Miriam, Moses' sister

Pharaoh's daughter

Preparing to Hear the Story

L

Wonder if any of the children have ever been to a river, what it was like, what dangers were there, and so on. Then ask if any children faced a danger recently, how they were kept safe, and who kept them safe. Suggest that when they look at the blue cloth in front of them they can think of it as the river in the story.

On **SCM 1d**, point out Egypt, the Nile River, and the surrounding desert region. Tell the children that Egypt depended on the Nile River for water. Invite the children to listen for the people in the story who care for baby Moses and keep him safe.

Hearing the Story

L C LD

Invite a child to find Exodus 1 in the Bible. Ask for several volunteers to read Exodus 1:8–2:10 or **SCM 1**. Conclude the reading by saying, “Word of wisdom, Word of grace,” and prompt the children to say, “Thanks be to God.” Place the open Bible in the worship area.

Distribute paper and crayons, and invite the children to draw pictures of how they imagine the story as you read the story again. Read **SCM 1**. Use your voice, your expressions, your feelings, and your body to make the story more lively. Vary the tone, speed, and pitch of your voice to indicate changes in mood.

C Give children time to respond and to share; for some children, listening and speaking may take longer.

Reflecting on God's Grace

SD

Invite the children to show their artwork and encourage them to retell the part(s) of the story they drew.

Ask the children what they wonder about in the story.

Name the people in the story who kept Moses safe. On a sheet of newsprint, invite volunteers to trace their hands with different colored crayons. Print the names (see sidebar) in five handprints. Wonder together who looks after the children and keeps them safe. Add their names to handprints. Set aside for “Loving and Serving God.”

Express appreciation for all people who have cared for others and kept them safe. Refer to these people as gifts from God, one way God shows grace to us.

Singing

Play, listen to, or sing “God Hears Our Prayers”—**MM 20**; **SCM 22**—and celebrate how God's grace is always with us. Ask the children if the tune is familiar. It should be! They heard another version of the song as they entered.

Turn off the candle.



RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.



Claiming God's Grace

F LG MS

Play a game to remember how caring people cared for baby Moses and kept him safe.

Ask the children to set up a course with five stations, representing the five women who kept Moses safe. Encourage their creativity about what would be at each station. Perhaps at the first station representing the midwives, there could be a baby doll and a blanket and children have to wrap the baby in the blanket; at Moses' mother's station, children would need to sing a lullaby.

Form two groups (if necessary), not for competition but so that everyone gets a turn being Moses in the basket and the helper. Provide a cardboard box or laundry basket for each group. Have the children take turns being Moses sitting inside the basket and being the helper. Have a helper move the basket along the course while keeping Moses safe from harm. Stagger the two groups so children aren't reaching the stations at the same time.

Encourage the children to look for ways they can help keep others—people or pets—safe and cared for during the coming week. Remind them that, when they care for others, they are God's helpers.

LG *It's important to help children understand the need to care, share, act generously, and give freely. They learn that they are responsible for their part in creating a caring community. Kindness and generosity are contagious.*

Celebrating God's Grace

D C

Play a game similar to Telephone. There are two rounds.

Comment that five women helped to save Moses. Wonder together how they knew what God wanted them to do and what the messages from God might have been.

Post a sheet of newsprint. Ask a volunteer to be a scribe. Have the children stand in a circle. Start round 1:

- ▼ Whisper the first message (see sidebar) into the ear of the person on your right, who whispers the message to the right, and so on.
- ▼ Pass the message around the circle in the same manner until it returns to you. Make sure the scribe writes the message as you speak it.
- ▼ Repeat for the other four messages. For each new message, have the children change places to add variety.

Messages for Round 1

1. "Don't kill the baby boys born to the Hebrew women."
2. "Save the baby boys from the mean Pharaoh."
3. "Make a basket to keep Moses safe and put it in the river."
4. "Watch your brother and keep him safe."
5. "Save the baby and name him Moses."

Messages for Round 2

6. "Child of God, help those who are in need."
7. "Child of God, be kind to one another."
8. "Child of God, show God's love to everyone."
9. "Child of God, reach out in love to those who are lonely."
10. "Child of God, look for ways to show others that you love God."



- ▼ When all five messages have been written, read them aloud to see if they make sense. Ask the children to name which of the five women the messages were meant for.

Comment that, like the women, we can help God. Ask the children how we know what God wants us to do. Suggest that we can listen for God's voice through Scripture. Wonder together what are some things that God tells us to do. Play round 2. After the game, challenge the children to do one of the things named as something God wants us to do.

Praying God's Grace

Invite the children to help you retell the story. Have the children imagine that they are baby Moses. Ask them to name things for which they would want to thank God. For an active option, encourage the children to pantomime their responses for the others to guess. Then ask them to name people who cared for them when they were babies. Wonder what they would thank God for about these people. Use their responses in a prayer of thanks.

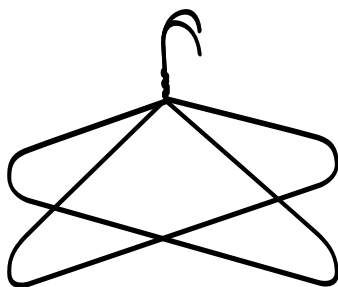


Offering God's Grace

FM LG

Invite the children to make a Moses mobile for your church nursery to share the story of baby Moses with them and how he was loved and cared for by those around him. Cut out the figures from a card-stock copy of **GN 2** and distribute them to the children. If you have more than six children, make more than one mobile and hang it in your space as well. Encourage the children to color the figures. When they are finished coloring, have them turn the card over and decorate the side with their name so they know that they care for others as well. Help the children punch a hole in the designated spot on each figure.

For each mobile, form an X with two hangers and secure with tape at the intersecting points. Use colorful ribbons to hang the shapes from the hangers.



Extra Activity

LD

Provide copies of **GN 3** for younger children or **GN 4** for older children and pencils. Tell them that the words are from the Bible story of Moses.

- LD *Word puzzles can be difficult for non-readers. Help these children feel confident by helping them recognize letter shapes and encouraging them to match the shapes of the surrounding letters. Older children often enjoy helping younger children.*



LOVING AND SERVING GOD

D

Ask the children to help clean the space.

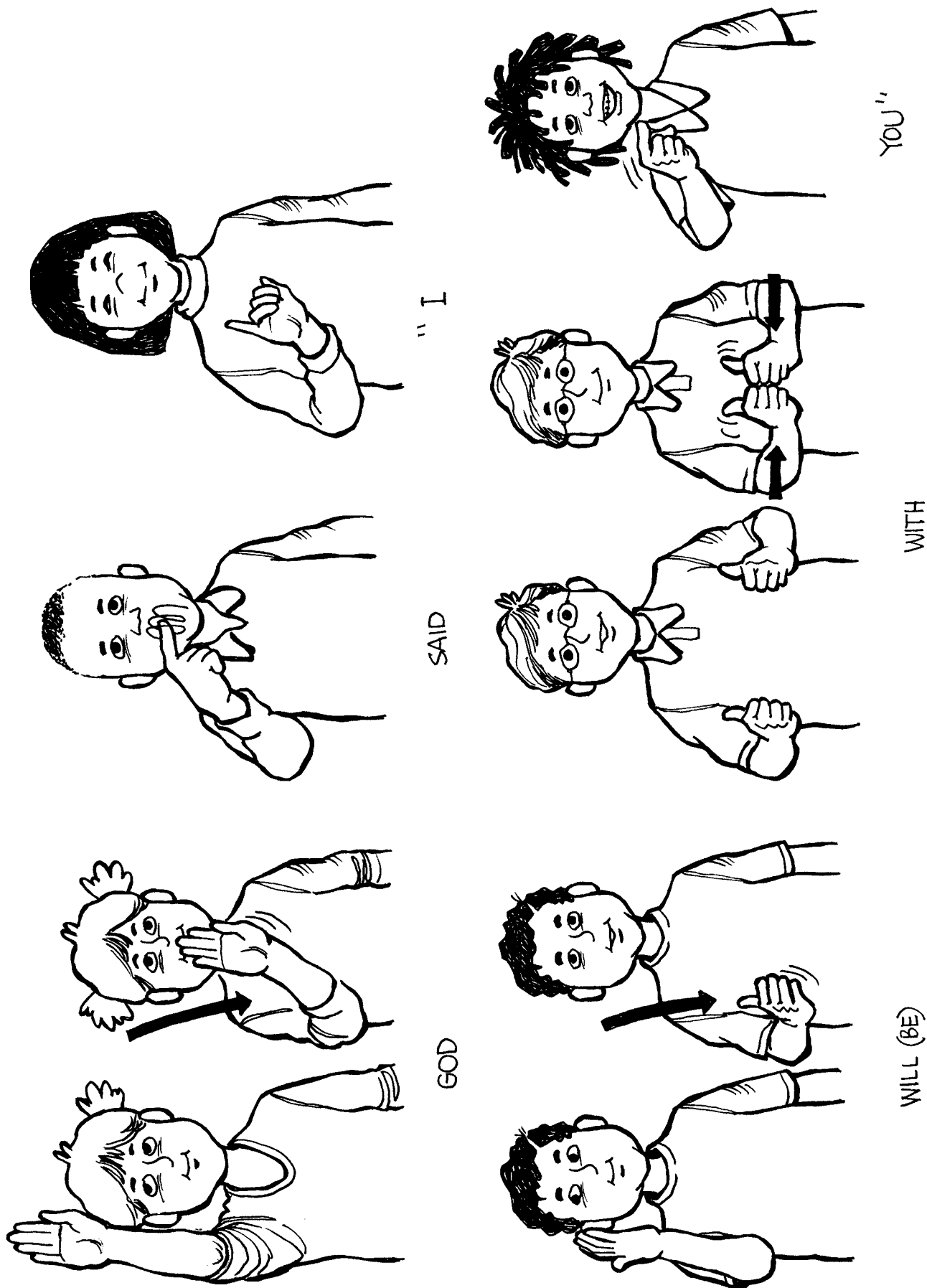
Place the newsprint from “Reflecting on God’s Grace” on the floor. Gather in a circle around it. Talk about all the caring hands that touched the life of baby Moses. Invite them to think about some of the caring hands that protect and care for them. Comment that, just as God’s hand was at work in the midwives, Moses’ mother, his sister, and Pharaoh’s daughter, God’s hand is also at work in all those who care for us today.

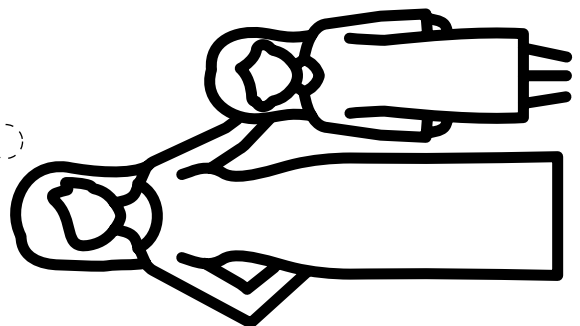
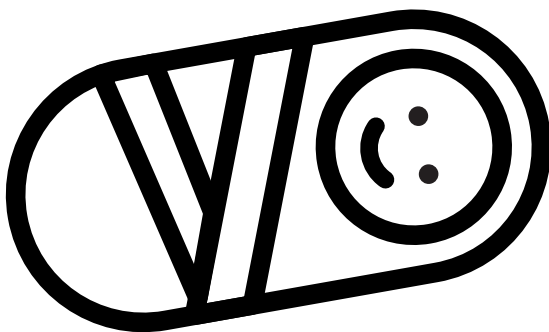
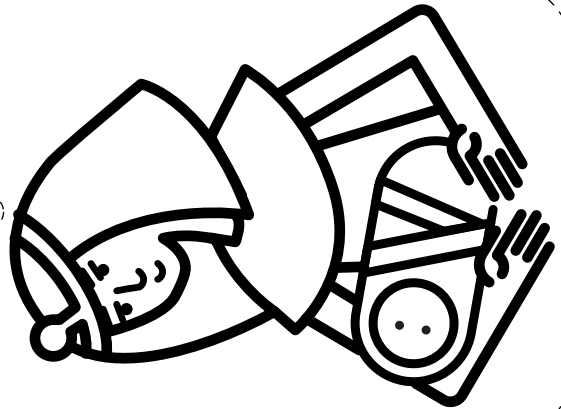
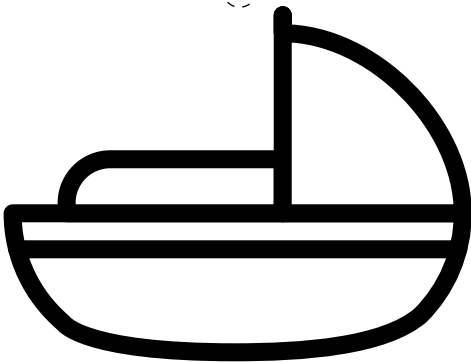
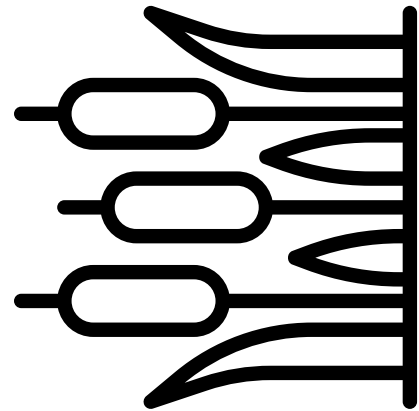
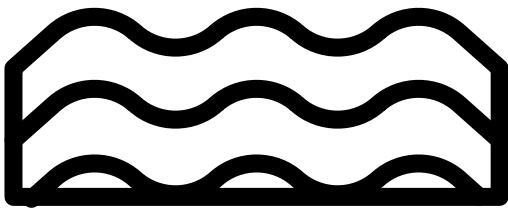
Ask the children who practiced sign language during “Welcoming and Preparing” to teach the signs for “God said, ‘I will be with you’” using **GN 1**. Turn to the child on your left and say their name. Then sign the blessing to that child. Have that person turn to the person on their left, say their name, and sign the blessing. Continue around the circle, blessing one another.

Challenge the children to read the story during the week. Encourage them to offer helping hands to care for someone.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads. Remind the parents and caregivers about the story audio (see p. vii).



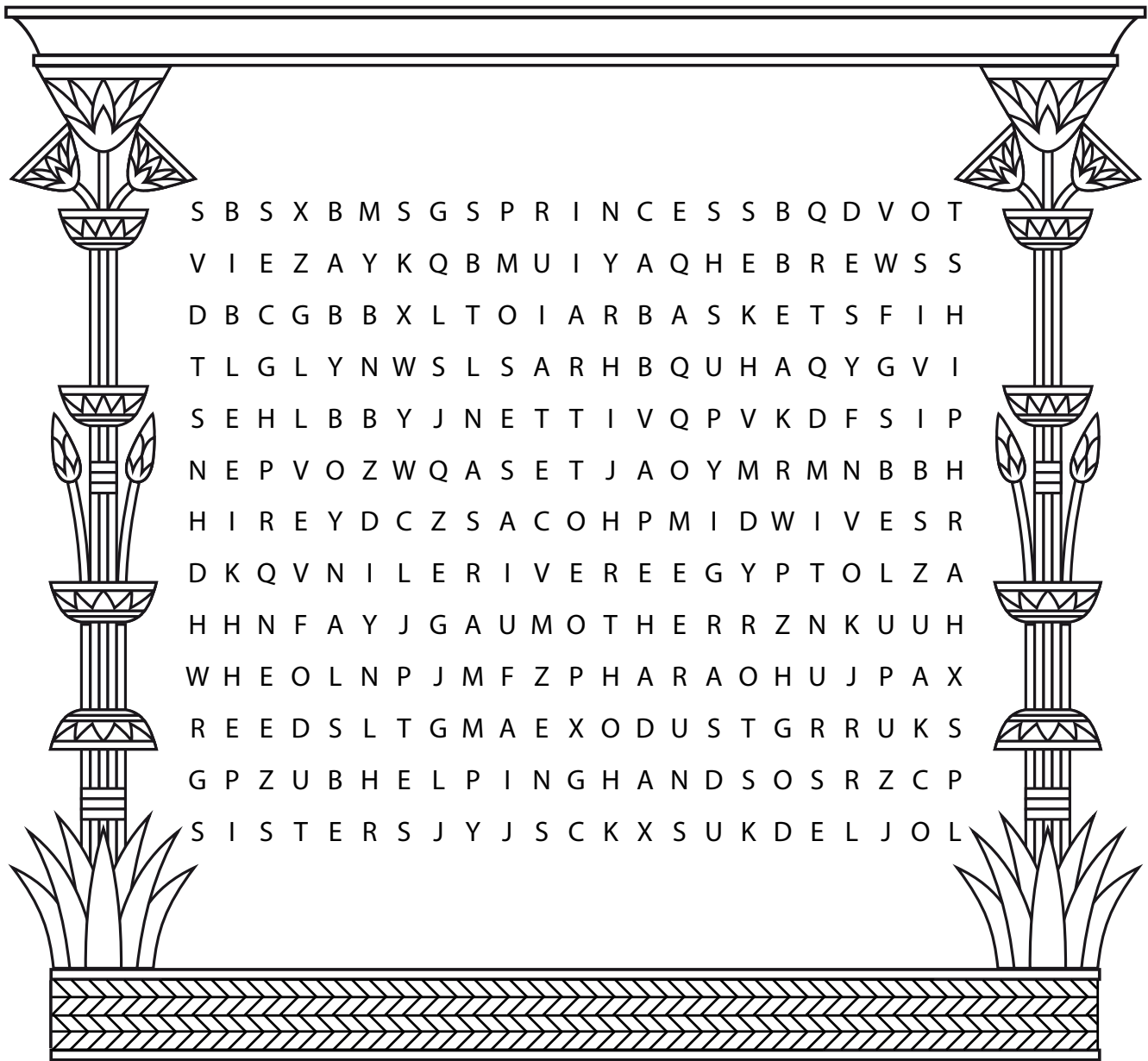




Word Bank

BABY
BASKET
GOD
HEBREW
KING

MOSES
MOTHER
NILE RIVER
PRINCESS
SISTER

**Word Bank**

BABY
 BASKET
 BIBLE
 BOY
 EGYPT
 EXODUS
 GOD
 HEBREWS

HELPING HANDS
 MIDWIVES
 MIRIAM
 MOSES
 MOTHER
 NILE RIVER
 NURSE
 PHARAOH

PRINCESS
 PUAH
 REEDS
 SERVANT
 SHIPHRAH
 SISTERS

