

Simply Charlotte Mason presents

Exodus & Numbers



Bible Picture Portfolios

by Emily Kiser

With Bible Picture Portfolios

you have everything you need to present enjoyable Bible lessons in a school Bible class, family devotions, or Sunday School. The beautiful art combined with the Bible accounts will influence and enrich your students more than you can imagine.

In this book you will find

- Eight Bible passages from the book or theme of this portfolio. Both English Standard Version (ESV) and King James Version (KJV) are included for you to choose from.
- Simple step-by-step instructions that explain how to use the artwork to enrich Bible lessons with all ages.
- Helpful Leading Thoughts that will allow you to point out details and engage in discussion about each picture.
- A brief biographical sketch of each artist to share with your students as desired.
- Cross references to related works in other Bible Picture Portfolios and Picture Study Portfolios, so you can easily expand or extend your Bible study.

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published by Simply Charlotte Mason

Bible Picture Portfolio: Exodus and Numbers
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About Bible Picture Portfolios

In *Home Education*, Charlotte Mason suggested that parents give their children reverent pictures to look at—art that illustrates the Bible stories read from Scripture. She said, “The study of such pictures . . . should be a valuable part of a child’s education; it is no slight thing to realise how the Nativity and the visit of the Wise Men filled the imagination of the early Masters, and with what exceeding reverence and delight they dwelt upon every detail of the sacred story. . . . [T]he child who gets it in early days, will have a substratum of reverent feeling upon which should rest his faith” (*Home Education*, p. 252). In keeping with this advice, these Bible Portfolios have been produced, in order to make the selection of profitable pictures easy and to include the relevant Scripture texts that accompany the stories.

Miss Mason recommended that a simple picture study be done with these pictures, allowing the children a few moments to carefully and quietly observe the painting. Afterwards, turn the picture over and give them the chance to “say what they have seen in it” (*Home Education*, p. 253). She cautioned that parents and teachers shouldn’t give the interpretation of the picture, nor drive home the points of the story, but instead, “let the pictures tell their own tale” (p. 253).

These portfolios have been created for all those interested in giving their students biblical art to study and enjoy:

- Teachers may use these portfolios for Bible lessons during school time.
- Families can benefit from adding them into their devotions or family worship.
- Sunday School teachers can use them with their classes to bring high-quality artwork and picture study to children who may not regularly be exposed to it.

We hope these portfolios help make this aspect of the great feast of a Charlotte Mason education easy to implement and enjoy!

How to Use Bible Picture Portfolios

As in other Bible lessons, the Scripture passage should be read and narrated first. This is the one lesson in which Miss Mason encouraged children to use the exact words they heard in their narrations; and as these words are the inspired word of God, it's no wonder! Two translations for each Scripture passage are included in the portfolio: the English Standard Version (ESV) and the King James Version (KJV). You are welcome to use whichever version your family, school, or church prefers.

After the passage has been narrated, show the students the corresponding picture and allow them to observe it carefully for a few minutes in silence. Encourage the children to make a picture of it in their mind. After this quiet time of studying the picture, turn it over and have them share what they've seen. This is all that is necessary to enjoy and learn from the artwork.

Some Leading Thoughts have been included for each picture that give a bit more information about each piece. The biographical information may be shared with your students before looking at the picture to arouse their sympathy with the artist. The other information may prove interesting and useful for the teacher: a painting's history has been shared if it is of particular interest, optional prompts for discussion have been given, and some details that may be unclear have been explained. Teachers should feel free to use the Leading Thoughts with their students if they ask questions or would like to know more about the artwork, but it is perfectly fine to enjoy the picture without using these additional materials.

To recap,

1. Read the Scripture passage.
2. Have the children narrate the passage, using words as close to the text as possible.

3. Show the artwork to the children, possibly sharing a bit about the artist who painted the piece, and allow a few quiet moments to closely examine the painting.
4. Turn the picture over and ask the children to tell what they saw in it—not only a description of what it looked like, but also anything it made them think of in light of the Scripture passage just read.
5. Optionally, share some interesting idea from the Leading Thoughts section about the piece, or invite the students into a discussion using the prompts in the text as they are interested and engaged.

Introductory Note

In choosing Scripture passages for her curriculum programmes, Charlotte Mason relied upon Canon Paterson Smyth's lessons for Sunday Schools. In his volume titled *Moses and the Exodus*, Paterson Smyth included selections from Numbers and Deuteronomy as well as Exodus. Miss Mason followed suit, so we have included an episode from Numbers in this portfolio.



Finding of Moses in the Bulrushes

The Finding of Moses by Salvator Rosa

c. 1660–1665, oil on canvas, 48.5" x 79.8"

Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan

1. Read the Bible passage in the translation of your choice.

Exodus 2:1–10 (ESV)

Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. When she

opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

Exodus 2:1–10 (KJV)

And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him. And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had

opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

2. *Ask for a narration of the Bible passage.*

3. *Show the picture, tell about the artist if desired, and allow a few minutes to study it.*

The Finding of Moses is one of the greatest masterpieces by Salvator Rosa, an Italian Baroque painter. Rosa was born in 1615 outside of Naples and showed an interest in the arts at an early age. He studied under several prominent painters of his day and established himself as a painter by the time he was 20. During his career, Rosa spent periods in both Rome and Florence, two of Italy's greatest centers of art. In addition to his achievements in visual arts, Rosa was also an accomplished playwright and poet. He died in 1673.

4. *Turn the picture over and ask students to tell what they saw.*

5. *(optional) Share some or all of these Leading Thoughts.*

During Rosa's life, pure landscapes, or paintings that simply depict scenes from the natural world, were not respected as serious art. However, Rosa had a special interest in landscape painting, and later Romantic painters who had a similar affinity were influenced by his work. In order to make his paintings more palatable to the established artistic sensibility, Rosa used his landscapes as settings for biblical and historical scenes. *The Finding of Moses* is one such work—the landscape dominates the group of figures in the foreground. As is common in art, Rosa did not try to convey a scene that was historically accurate in its details. Neither the figures nor the geography of this painting remind the viewer of Ancient Egypt, but rather of Europe. Which figure do you think represents Pharaoh's daughter? Who do you think the woman in red might be?

