

JOCHEBED, THE MOTHER OF MOSES

INTRODUCTION

Genesis 12:1-3. God says to Abraham, "I will make you a great nation." He gave promises of care and protection to him and his descendants (Isaac, Jacob, twelve sons of Jacob (Israel).

Genesis 37-50 The story of Joseph. The people of Israel (70 people) went to Egypt, very blessed and prospered greatly.

But another king arose who did not know Joseph and recognized that the people of Israel (the Hebrews) multiplied and he believed they would be a threat to the Egyptians.

This is a study of the life of Jochebed, daughter of Levi, one of the twelve sons of Israel.

Numbers 26:58-59. ⁵⁸These are the families of the Levites: ... Coat (son of Levi, one of the sons of Jacob) begat Amram. ⁵⁹Amram's wife was named **Jochebed, daughter of Levi**, who was born to Levi in Egypt; **she gave birth from Amram to Aaron and Moses, and to Miriam their sister.** " (**Exodus 6:20**).

Exodus 1:15, 16, The king of Egypt spoke to the midwives saying, "When you attend the Hebrew women in their births, and see the sex, if it is a son, kill him." But the midwives feared God and did not obey the king. They told the king that that the Hebrew women were robust and gave birth before the midwives arrived.

Then the king delivered a decree to all the people saying, "Cast into the river every son that is born" (**Exodus 15:22**).

Jochebed was the daughter of Levi, and of course she had heard God's teachings and promises to care for and protect his people, and so they "did not fear the king's decree."

Exodus 1:7-22. The midwives refused to obey Pharaoh's edict. The edict, "Cast into the river every son that is born, and preserve every daughter alive." But the midwives said the Hebrew women were very strong and robust and gave birth before the midwife arrived and the text does not say they were punished. But then he gave the edict to all the Hebrews to cast into the river every male that was born, a cruelty beyond all description.

The midwives had faith in God and were willing to accept the consequence of disobeying the king.

Hebrews 11:23, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden by his parents for three months, because they saw him as a beautiful child, and did not fear the king's decree."

Beautiful – pleasing to God (**Acts 7:20, 21**). **It was obvious that God had a special plan for this child.**

They feared God and obeyed Him instead of fearing and obeying the king. **Acts 4:19**, "Judge whether it is right before God to obey you rather than God."

Exodus 2:1-10, ¹A male of the family of Levi went and took for his wife a daughter of Levi, ² who conceived, and bore a son; **and seeing that he was beautiful, (pleasing to God, Acts 7:20) hid him three months.** ³But not being able to hide him any longer, she took an ark of bulrushes and daubed it with asphalt and pitch, and placed the child in it and put him in a reedbed on the bank of the river. ⁴And his sister stood in the distance, to see what would happen to him. ⁵And Pharaoh's daughter went down to bathe in the river, and her maidens were walking along the riverbank, she saw the arquilla in the reedbed, and sent a maid of hers to take it. ⁶And when she opened it, she saw the child; and behold, the child wept. And having compassion for him, she said, Of the children of the Hebrews is this. ⁷Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I call you a nurse of the Hebrews, that she may nurse the child for you?" ⁸And Pharaoh's daughter answered, Go." **Who do you think she went looking for? Of course! To his own mother.**

Then Pharaoh's daughter came the maiden, and called the mother of the child, and said, Take this child and raise him, and I will repay him. And the woman took the child and raised him. ¹⁰And when the child **grew up**, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son and she named him Moses, saying, 'For I brought him out of the water.'

A question for mothers, how would you feel if you were pregnant and the government of your country decreed that every child (male) born should be thrown into the river as if he were garbage?

This plan of Moses' parents was very judicious. Not only did they save his life but also by God's providence he was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter to be trained to be a great deliverer and leader of Abraham's people (Genesis 12:1-2).

The plan for Moses' protection **required that he be pulled out of the water very soon** so as not to be carried away by the current or eaten by a crocodile.

Moses' sister loved him and she **was also very brave.** She was willing to do God's will **"at all costs."**

"A beautiful boy." This does not mean that if the child is ugly you can throw him in the river. He was beautiful in God's sight (**Acts 7:20, 21**), because He had chosen him to be the deliverer of His people Israel from slavery in Egypt.

Exodus 2:3-10. Here we see that the woman took a great risk and hid the child, but after the first three months, she realized that she could not hide him anymore.

God gave her the opportunity to raise her son but she had to stop being his mother during part of his childhood and all his youth because Moses had to be an Egyptian prince to be trained to be the deliverer and leader of God's people.

Jocabed agreed to have another woman be the mother of her child to raise him because this was actually the way to surrender him to God's protection.

Jochebed was a mother with much faith. Therefore, she is among the characters of true faith in Hebrews 11.

She also taught Moses to put his trust in God. We see evidence of this during his lifetime as a deliverer and leader of the people of Israel.

Jochebed was in danger of being severely punished. She knew that if she was discovered, she would have to face the wrath of Pharaoh. However, she was determined to preserve her baby's life "whatever the cost."

There are severe trials for Christians and we must be well resolved to do God's will "at all costs."

Moses' mother manifests much nobility, knowing that although she had given birth to him, she was only the wet nurse who raised him for the princess.

But in reality she was not entrusting her son to another woman, **but to God.**

Every Christian mother must entrust her children to God. Give them to the Lord, so that He will take care of them. She was a courageous mother who took action wisely, believing that God would do what it took to save her baby's life.

Every mother must recognize that her children are God's, because all human beings belong to Him (Psalm 24:1). He has given them to us to care for them and to train them for His service.

It is indispensable that every mother instruct her children in the faith.

Hebrews 11:24-27 speaks of Moses' faith, the faith that motivated him to carry out God's plan to be the deliverer and leader of the people of Israel.

I repeat: The tribe of Levi was the tribe in charge of religious service and received many instructions from God and also many promises of protection and preservation.

We repeat this because faith comes by hearing God's word (Romans 10:17) and although the text in Exodus does not reveal the details of God's providence in this story of Jochebed and Moses, in reality they had already received teachings and promises from God to serve as the basis and source of their faith.