

MATRIARCHS

A 13 Week Study of Mothers of the Bible

*Discover the Power of Motherhood
through the Lives of Those Who Have
Gone Before Us*

Week: Week 6

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Biblical Mom: Jochebed - Mother of Moses

Title of Lesson: Desperate Times, Desperate Measures

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1eObCb2r5Cc>

Key Influence: Mother of Moses / Woman of Great Faith

Key Verse: Exodus 1-2

Jochebed - Desperate Times, Desperate Measures

Desperate times warrant desperate measures. This statement was never truer than in the time of the Bible mother, Jochebed. This faith-filled woman faced a great trial that I hope none of us will ever face. Yet in her response to her circumstances I have seen character qualities that each of us must develop if we want to be the mother God wants us to be in a world where God is too often ignored.

Jochebed lived during the time of the Israelite enslavement in Egypt. God's people had settled in this country during the time of Joseph. They had thrived there in the fertile delta area of Goshen for years, but when Joseph died the new Pharaoh did not remember him or care for his family.

Exodus 1:8-12 *“A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to the people, ‘Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come let us deal wisely with them, or else they will multiply and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us and depart from the land. So they appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with hard labor. And they built for Pharaoh storage cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they were in dread of the sons of Israel.’”*

Not only did the Pharaoh forget about Joseph and all that he had done for Egypt, but he now had become suspect of the loyalty of this foreign family that had grown into a great nation. So he sought to control their numbers by making a heinous law.

Exodus 1 15-16 *“Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiprah and the other was named Puah; and he said, ‘When you are helping the Hebrew women to give birth and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, then you shall put him to death; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.’”*

It was during this period of time that Jochebed became pregnant. For nine months this Israelite woman carried a child while fearing for its safety. Sure enough, when the baby was born it was a beautiful boy. Thanks to the God-fearing midwives who chose to disobey the Pharaoh’s decree, the baby lived and for three months Jochebed hid him so that no one would know of his existence. But you can only hide a baby for a short time, and soon she could not hide him anymore. I can hardly imagine how her mother heart must have broken as she looked at his sweet face and kissed his velvet skin. This was a desperate time, so Jochebed decided to take desperate measures in order to save her son.

We, also, live in desperate times. This world in which we are raising our children is filled with those who would desire to influence their hearts with wrong thoughts and ungodly beliefs. Once a person’s mind has fallen prey to the enemy’s schemes it is easy to make wrong decisions. And these wrong decisions can lead to harmful lifestyles at best and enslaving addictions at worst.

Our children are so easily distracted by the exciting stimuli all around them that often they do not see the consequences that these vices can cause. The media, friends, materialism, and

worldly heroes all contribute to the siren song that can serve to lead them into ruin and destruction.

Read the following verses and think about areas where we can be enslaved by the world today. What are some consequences of these ungodly vices? Identify how we can resist these temptations.

1 Timothy 6:9-14

Enslavement: _____

Resistance: _____

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Enslavement: _____

Resistance: _____

1 Corinthians 10:1-14

Enslavement: _____

Resistance: _____

Philippians 2:3-4; Proverbs 16:18-19

Enslavement: _____

Resistance: _____

How can we manage to protect our children in a world that is out to enslave them in sin and its consequences? How did this woman successfully do all she needed to do in this huge crisis that threatened her son?

I believe she had three character qualities that are essential for all mothers in every time and age.

1. A Woman of Faith

Though we do not have much information about Jochebed's personal faith, it seems she had some knowledge of the One Who had guided her ancestors. The children of Israel had lived in this ungodly country of false gods for many years, and it is probable that many had forgotten all that God had done for their family through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, & Joseph. Yet, there were still some who feared the Lord. The midwives, when ordered to kill all male babies, refused to do so because they feared God more than they did the Pharaoh.

I believe that when Jochebed saw what a beautiful child her newborn son was, she believed that God would protect him. Though every mother believes her child is special, I think Jochebed felt there was something different about this little boy. In order to proceed with her dangerous plan she must have trusted that there was some hope.

God rewarded her faith, as we will see, and even gave her the opportunity to nurse her child while he was young. While she was raising her little boy during his formative years, she would have had a brief opportunity to teach him all she knew about the one true God and instill a fear and love for Him and His people in the child's heart. I believe she put her faith in God's ability to protect her son instead of relying on her own ability. She recognized God's calling on the baby's life and trusted His will to be done.

God highly values faith in all believers and chooses to work in response to even the smallest seed of belief. Read the following verse and consider why we must have faith. What specifically must we believe?

Hebrews 11:6 _____

List specific areas in which you need to grow your faith. Ask God right now to strengthen you in these areas so that you can trust Him for the outcome.

2. A Woman of Action

Jochebed was not one to sit around just hoping that things would work out. She recognized that something had to be done. And when God gave her an idea she took action immediately, even though it may have seemed like a long-shot.

Exodus 2:3-4 *“But when she could hide him no longer, she got him a wicker basket and covered it with tar and pitch. Then she put the child into it and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him.”*

This courageous mother got a basket, coated it with pitch so that it would float, and prepared it to hold her precious son. Then she took him down to the Nile River and hid it among the reeds, asking her older daughter, Miriam, to stand watch.

She covered every detail that she could think of when it came to the protection of her baby and then she put her plan into action.

Do you have a plan when it comes to protecting your children from the harmful influences that are all around them? In our busy lifestyles it is easy to let things slip by unnoticed with the mindset that that small thing won't make a difference. Yet, all the while, each inappropriate movie, each concession to greed, each gossipy conversation is planting seeds of worldliness in our children's minds that will mold their character and may eventually cause great grief.

Consider the following verses and list some practical actions that you could take to impress on them the importance of obedience to protect them from the consequences of the world's mindset?

Deuteronomy 4:9, 6:5-9, 11:18-21; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4

3. A Woman of Surrender

Jochebed was willing to surrender her child into God's hands. When she left him in the basket at the edge of the Nile, I can't imagine the grief that must have ripped her heart. She was willing to give him up and trust God to provide for his protection and care. God did 't let her down.

Exodus 2:5-9 *"The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile, with her maidens walking alongside the Nile; and she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid, and she brought it to her. When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the boy was crying. And she had 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 a nurse for you from the Hebrew women that she may nurse the child for you?' Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Go ahead.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child away and nurse him for me and I will give you our wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed him."*

Soon the daughter of Pharaoh came to bathe . . . and at the very spot where Jochebed had set the basket. When the princess heard the child crying, she found the little ark and had pity on him. She decided to allow him to live and to keep him as her own son, giving him the name *Moses*, which means, “*drawn out of the water*”. God graciously allowed Jochebed to have continued influence in Moses’ life for the next few years. His sister, Miriam, approached the princess and offered to find an Israelite woman to nurse the crying baby. Of course, Jochebed was ready and willing.

This mother of faith and action had a huge part in God’s plan for the deliverance of the nation of Israel from their slavery to Egypt. But her motherhood was also one of constant surrender. She had the courage to leave her baby in the rushes of the Nile, trusting God for his deliverance. God was faithful and, though He gave little Moses back to her for a short time, she again had to surrender her boy to this other woman who had claimed him out of the Nile. She could have no idea of what reception he would have, what palace influences would mold him, or what training he would receive, but she surrendered him over to God’s protection and guidance.

Exodus 2:10 *“The child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son. And she named him Moses, and said, ‘Because I drew him out of the waters.’”*

Acts 7:21-22 *“And after he had been set outside, Pharaoh’s daughter took him away and nurtured him as her own son. Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.”*

Moses was trained as a prince and many years later, after learning many valuable lessons, Moses was used by God to lead the children out of Egypt and to a new land that they could call their own. These things could not have happened if Jochebed had not been willing to surrender her son to God’s will and find comfort in His power and protection.

How are you doing with surrendering your children to God? It helps to remember that these precious ones are not really yours. They have been given to you for a period of time to train and care for, but ultimately they are God’s to do with and train as He pleases.

Consider the following verses and write a prayer surrendering your children to God. Let go of the desperate need to control everything and trust His loving heart and mighty power to do a work in the lives of these ones you love so much.

Proverbs 3:5-6; Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 11:33-36

Is it your prayer today that each of your children would learn God's ways? Do you seek to find protection from the harmful influences that can kill your children spiritually and emotionally?

If so, ask God to help you develop the character qualities of Jochebed.

Be a Mother of Faith: Do not trust in your own ability to raise your children. Seek God with a trusting heart knowing that He has the ability to guide you and turn your children's hearts to Him.

Be a Mother of Action: Pray for each of your children and ask God to give you a plan. Be aware of what they are doing in school, on the internet, and with friends. Don't sit idly by, but provide alternative activities when you have a concern about what they are doing. Spend time with them teaching them God's word and giving them a good example to emulate.

Be a Mother of Surrender: Do not try to control every situation. Recognize that God can keep your child even in the midst of an ungodly world. Moses lived for most of his youth in a palace raised by a princess who did not love God. Yet God used her to protect him and preserved him in the midst of it all.

Last, don't despair! If you read the story of Moses fully, you will find that this young man made a big mistake. Early on he tried to accomplish God's calling to deliver the Israelite slaves in his own strength and he killed one of the slave drivers. This mistake caused him to run for his life and spend the next 40 years in the desert.

If Jochebed was still alive at this time I wonder how she must have felt when this news reached her? Would she have felt like so many of us do at times when our children make big mistakes? Did her faith falter? Did she think that her plan had failed and her surrender was a waste?

Those things were not true because God was not finished with her son. For forty years God personally trained Moses in the desert so that when the time was right he was prepared spiritually, mentally, and physically to return to Egypt and do what God had called him to do.

As you walk through life, seek to be **a mother of faith, action, and surrender**. God will honor your trust. Even if circumstances don't unfold the way you expect, don't be alarmed. God is not finished with you or your children. He is still at work.

Desperate times warrant desperate measures. But don't despair – God is still in control.

WHAT GOD'S WORD IS SAYING TO ME:

HOW I CAN APPLY IT TO MY LIFE:

PRAY ABOUT IT: *Precious Father, help me have faith like Jochebed. Help me believe you for what seems so impossible, not only in my life but also in my children's lives. Give me the courage to live a fearless life for your and to be an example to my children of what it looks like to follow You even when it doesn't make sense or seems scary. Help me be a mother of faith, a mother of action and a mother of surrender!*

MEMORY VERSE: *"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command." **Hebrews 11:2***

