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Moses' Parents, Particularly His Mother

Moses' Mother

When and where does a child's spiritual education begin? It is my understanding that it begins in the home (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15). No matter how good Sunday School teachers or DVBS are, they can never take the place of a child's parents, especially the mother, because fathers go to work and it is mothers who have the most time with the children. There was a time when the father worked and mum was at home caring for her children. Today's world is different, mums have to work to make ends meet. Yet, together time must be found for mum and dad and the children to have a Bible lesson and prayer. I remember as children, before we went to school, there was a bible reading and prayer at home.

Jochebed illustrates a mothers devotion.

- a) We are told nothing about Moses' birth nor babyhood except that he was a goodly child (Ex. 2:2); exceedingly fair (Acts 7:20); and a proper child (Heb. 11:23). At times it has been said or written that the word "goodly" means he was beautiful to God. Having gone through every lexicon I have I can find no foundation for such a description. The Greek words in Acts and Hebrews are the same "ἀστεῖος". The Sept translated Exodus 2:2 as "Seeing he was fair". The Cephher translates it as "she saw that he was a goodly child" and translated Acts 7:20 as "He was exceedingly fair". To my understanding, Moses was a beautiful baby, was quiet of nature, not always crying and whining.
- b) The home Moses was brought up in was no different from the home of other slaves. She had three famous children, Arron, Mariam and Moses, and in the historical narrative she is referred constantly to his mother (Ex. 2:2-9). She was the first person in the Scriptures to have her name compounded with the Name of the Lord "Jehovah".
- c) While no doubt Amram her husband was in full agreement with the activities and planning's of his wife, but apart from one verse (Heb.11:23), the main focus is on Jochebed the mother. It was she who:
 - i) Hid him three months (Ex. 2:2).
 - ii) Took for him an ark of bulrushes, making sure it was waterproof and possibly the pitch would have prevented the crocodiles smelling the infant (Ex. 2:3).
 - iii) It was she who put it in the flags (reeds) along the river bank (Ex. 2:3).
- d) If Jochebed knew from God that Moses was to be used by God and nothing could frustrate or hinder His purposes, why did she hide him? (Ex. 2:2). Faith does not act foolishly but prudently, not recklessly but intelligently. God has given us grey matter for to use intelligently. Faith does not rule out common sense, praying for "how to do things". God puts no premium on ignorance, rashness or foolishness.
- e) Interesting we read nothing specific about Jochebed in Hebrews 11, but it deals with his parents (Heb. 11:23). Little baby's grow, and possibly after three months he had grown and she could no longer hide Him. Being a husband and wife of faith she put her little baby of three months into the crocodile infested river. The king had given a decree that, "Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river" (Ex. 1:22). That is exactly what Jochebed did, she put her son in the river. With what care and love, and no doubt many a tear, this mother made the ark for her little son.
- f) The question then comes into focus, "Were these motherly actions action of love, faith or pure luck? Was putting him in the basket his preservation from the crocodiles? The coming of Pharaoh's daughter, the baby's cry, the compassion of the heart of the princess, the giving of the child to his mother good luck, amazing happenstance, or was every step of the way guided by God? Were the parents acting in fellowship with God, in faith? Hebrews 11:23-24 gives the answer. They were acts of faith believing in the sovereignty God. The fact that Mariam was left to watch, that would indicate Jochebed expected God to move.
- g) It would appear she was a woman who knew the promise of God and was given the understanding that her son would be the deliverer of Israel even though it was still 80 years distant. I take it that she knew the word of the Lord to Abraham (Gen. 15:13,16) and acting on that understanding, trained her son so that if it pleased God, he would be suitable to be the one who would lead Israel out of Egypt. Her focus was definitely spiritual for no doubt anything needed would have been supplied by the Princess. However,

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Jochebed's work before God was to teach Moses and for him to learn he was one of the afflicted. While Jochebed had her son in the home she took the opportunity so that he was well grounded in the knowledge of the true God and the inheritance of being, by lineage, a child of Abraham.

- h) Moses' mother, Jochebed, nursed the child (Ex. 2:9), she gave it of herself. The lesson for mothers is to treasure our own time of fellowship with God, reading, praying, and meditation. Pray to God for fresh understanding of the scriptures so that you can know better how to react to circumstances and teach the children.
- i) Jochebed displayed a wonderful trust in God. However, that trust was even more tried and there can be no doubt that she prayed for the preservation of her child in the idolatrous saturated environment of the palace. When the little boy was in the palace as the Princess' son, he would have been exceedingly well educated, but in that education he would have been taught the Egyptian wisdom (Acts 7:22) and the worshipping of idols. Jochebed knew that at some time she would have to release her son to the palace, a wicked ungodly place, and therefore she did all she could with the help of God to give him a good foundation.

Like the mother of John 6, whose name we are not given, give the child something that God can use. Therefore, be careful what our children watch, teach them bible verses according to age and ability, help them learn Bible lessons and not just Bible stories.

. . . . Rowan Jennings