A Slave & A Princess

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday May 1st, 2022

Text: Exodus 2:1-10; Hebrews 11:23

# **Intro**

1. The month of May! A time when we reflect on and honor our mothers.
	1. Though Mother’s Day is a special one-time event each year, we should all honor our mothers on a daily basis – especially those who are faithful to God!
2. Today, we will reflect on two mothers, one a slave, and the other a princess, but both preserved and raised a child who would become Israel’s deliverer and lawgiver!
	1. Both women, one acting on faith, played a part in God’s grand plan to fulfill His promise to Abraham *(Genesis 15:5-7, 13-16)!*
3. Mothers will do extraordinary things for their children!
4. **Jochebed**
5. Jochebed was a Levite mother.
	1. Exodus 6:20: “Amram married his father's sister Jochebed, and she bore him Aaron and Moses…”
	2. Exodus 2:1: Amram and Jochebed were from the tribe of Levi.
	3. The mother of Aaron, Miriam and Moses is Jochebed.
6. Jochebed means “The Lord Honors”
7. Her character: Her fierce love for her son and her faith in God enabled her to act heroically in the midst of great oppression!
8. Her Sorrow: To live in bondage as a slave
9. Her joy: God not only preserved the son she gave up to Him, but that He restored her child back to her.
10. Background: Exodus 1:8-22
	1. In Exodus 1 we are told a pharaoh over Egypt arose who didn’t know Joseph and he enslaved his descendants. Israel grew stronger!
	2. God had foretold Abraham that his people would be in bondage for 400 years but that He would deliver them and bring them to Canaan (Genesis 15:13-14).
	3. Pharaoh feared their number, so he ordered the midwives to kill all the male babies they deliver.
	4. We are told the midwives feared God and let the boys live, defying the king’s edict!
	5. When Pharaoh found out he asked them why they let the boys live and they responded that Israelite women are stronger than Egyptian women and usually give birth before they arrive.
	6. God blessed the midwives and their families and multiplied the Israelites in captivity!
	7. Pharaoh, in anger, ordered that all newborn boys be drowned in the Nile River!
11. Her faith: Exodus 2:1-4; Hebrews 11:23
	1. When her son was born under those conditions and she saw he “was beautiful” she couldn’t drown him to the Egyptian’s Nile River god, but she kept him hidden for three months.
	2. Imagine what she must have heard during those intense months: the cries of mothers as their sons were torn from them.
		1. These cries of suffering mingled with their cries for deliverance from bondage were heard by God and given to Moses 80 years later at the burning bush as reasons why the time had come for Him to fulfill His promise to Abraham (Exodus 3:7-10).
	3. Imagine what she thought each time her little baby boy cried, fussed, or made any noises!
	4. By faith they trusted God and when they could hide him no longer, they put him into a basket made of bulrushes (from where papyrus were made) and set it by the reeds by the bank of the Nile, which swarmed with crocodiles!
	5. Baskets: Such an ordinary object that was used for such an extraordinary purpose!
		1. Imagine the love that went in to her either weaving it herself, or covering it with tar to make it float!
		2. God uses ordinary items, ordinary people, and ordinary events to bring about His will!
	6. His older sister Miriam stood off at a distance to see what would happen to him!
12. Jochebed had no idea that her faith, in preserving her son, would ultimately lead to the deliverance and preserving of her people!

### **Pharaoh’s Daughter**

1. Her character: She had compassion when she saw the Jewish boy floating in a basket in the Nile. She acted courageously by taking him up as her own, despite her father’s wicked command.
	1. She delivered a child from death who would later deliver his people from slavery!
2. Her sorrow: Her adopted son, whom she had raised for 40 years, had to flee for his life to avoid Pharaoh’s wrath!
3. Her compassion: Exodus 2:5-10
	1. As Miriam stood at a distance, imagine her surprise when Pharaoh’s daughter came to bathe in the Nile and saw the basket.
	2. When she had a maidservant retrieve it she saw the baby boy crying and recognized him as a Hebrew! He had a death sentence as commanded by her father.
	3. We can only think of what Miriam must have thought would happen, but she acted fast.
	4. She quickly approached and asked if the princess of Egypt would like her to get a Hebrew nurse for the child.
	5. Pharaoh’s daughter said, “Go ahead,” indicating her intention of keeping the boy alive!
	6. Miriam brought Jochebed to her and she was even paid for her services in nursing and caring for her own son!
	7. When he was weaned, she brought him to the princess, and he became her son. She even named him Moses, a Hebrew name that means, “drawing out of water,” for she said, “Because I drew him out of the water.”
		1. Hebrew tradition said the weaning of a child could be between 3-5 years.
	8. For the next 40 years she educated him, a prince in the courts of Pharaoh himself (Acts 7:21-22)
4. Pharaoh’s daughter’s courage and compassion speaks volumes of her character, and in so doing, she helped fulfill God’s promise to Abraham!

### **Two Mothers Who Did the Extraordinary**

1. God kept Moses safe during evil and dangerous times, first by the faith of his parents who put him in a basket, then in crocodile-infested waters, being drawn out of the water by an Egyptian Princess, and finally, He was with him while he grew up under Pharaoh’s nose in his own courts.
	1. God used the Egyptians to protect and educate Moses in ways that made him an effective leader.
2. Jochebed was a mother who trusted in God, saved her baby, Moses (who she did not get to name!), and trained him to have faith in God. A mother who was not only concerned about physical well-being but spiritual well-being!
	1. This expression of her faith gives us a hint as to the kind of instruction Moses received from his mother during the first few years of his life (Exodus 2:9-10).
	2. When God told him that he was speaking with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Exodus 3 at the burning bush, Moses didn’t have to ask, “Who?”
3. Pharaoh’s daughter adopted a Hebrew boy, loved him and saw to his education, and protected him.
4. Pharaoh continually tried to destroy the Israelite strength, by enslaving them, ordering the boys to be executed by midwives in secret, and finally, throwing off any subtlety, he commanded the open extermination of all the Hebrew newborn males.
	1. Moses is saved by Pharaoh’s own daughter.
	2. These events show that the king’s efforts to destroy the strength of Israel, which is clearly a work of God, is met with failure again and again.
	3. That failure involved the efforts of women, whom Pharaoh did not consider a threat (he let the girls live), first by the midwives who feared God over the king, and then by Jochebed, a slave, and Pharaoh’s own daughter, a princess!
5. Two women, two mothers, a slave and a princess, preserved the life of Israel’s future deliverer and so preserved the entire Jewish people!

# **Conclusion**

1. This Mother’s Day, reflect on your mothers, grandmothers, mothers-in-law, and mothers in the faith; those who have helped shape you into who you are today, for that is right.
2. Also, reflect on these two mothers of our study throughout the month of May as you consider the work of God in your own life:
	1. **Praise God** that even the worst enemies and dangerous encounters in life are weak compared to the Mighty God we serve! (Romans 8:18: Nothing we suffer in this life compares to the glory promised by God)
	2. **Give thanks** for God’s power to save (Romans 1:16: The gospel is God’s power to save)
	3. **Confess your own weaknesses**, especially a failure to trust God for the lives of your children (James 5:16: Confess your sins to each other and pray for one another)
	4. **Ask God** to give you opportunity to be an encouragement to another mother who is concerned about her children’s well-being, both physically & spiritually (Philippians 2:3-4: Don’t just look out for yourself but also for the interests of others)
		* 1. Read: *The Reason Why* (Story Below)
3. **The May Mother’s Day Challenge:**
	1. As you keep these things from Exodus 2:1-10 in your mind as you pray and honor the mothers in your life, throughout the month of May make Mother’s Day last for a mother and her children of the “household of the faith” (Galatians 6:10).
	2. God used a basket, an ordinary item, to do something extraordinary!
	3. If you choose to take up this challenge, look around the congregation for a mother who you want to encourage and let them know you love them and are thinking of them.
	4. **Use a Basket!** Fill it with small gifts of your choice to brighten her day or the day of her children, or both. Fill out a card with encouraging words from the Scriptures, and also let her know you will pray for her and each one of her family members by name for the next few weeks. You can sign it or keep it anonymous, your choice.
	5. Imagine the joy and encouragement you could bring to a sister in Christ and how you might use an ordinary object filled with ordinary items to brighten the day of a mother and her children!
4. God made a promise to Abraham to bring his descendants out of slavery from a foreign nation to Canaan (Genesis 15:13-14).
5. God used a basket, a slave and a princess to accomplish and fulfill that promise!
6. When you have faith in God and put it into action, God can turn the ordinary into the extraordinary!
7. Do you live your life “by faith?” Put your faith into ***Action!*** (Hebrews 11:23)
8. If you are not a Christian, you are not serving God but yourself. Repent and be baptized!
9. If a Christian in error, repent and be forgiven!
10. Whatever your requests may be, come forward ***NOW***and let them be known while we stand and sing!

**The Reason Why** by Lisa Stevens, The Woodlands, Texas (Submitted to Reader’s Digest)

<https://www.rd.com/article/mothers-day-short-stories/>

I was rushed to the emergency room with complications from my high-risk pregnancy. After weeks of mandated bed rest in the hospital, I found myself suffering from an unfamiliar sadness. One day, my nurse brought a surprise to my room—a newborn named James.

James’ mom (who also experienced a high-risk pregnancy) sent her precious, healthy son for me to hold, along with an encouraging message: “This is the reason you are here in the hospital.” Three decades later, my heart is still full of gratitude for Baby James and his mom. And, I am thankful for my own healthy son, Hunter.