

A Tale Of Two Mothers

(Exodus 2:1-10)

Intro: Mothers' day means something to everybody because everybody has a mother. Most of us have very fond memories of our mother. I certainly do, I thank God for my mother. I loved her very much, and told her so every time I had the opportunity. **So, today we want to honor you our mothers. We want to thank you for your faithfulness and love!**

MOVIE—Beauty Of A Mother

A Tribute to Mothers

Somewhere between the youthful energy of a teenager and the golden years of a woman's life, there lives a marvelous and loving person known as "Mother."

- A mother is a curious mixture of patience, kindness, understanding, discipline, industriousness, purity and love.
- A mother can be at one and the same time, both "lovelorn counselor" to a heartsick daughter, and "head baseball coach" to an athletic son.
- A mother can sew the tiniest stitch in the material for that dainty prom dress, and she is equally experienced in threading through the heaviest traffic with her SUV.
- A mother is the only creature on earth who can cry when she's happy, laugh when she's heartbroken, and work when she's feeling ill.
- A mother is as gentle as a lamb and as strong as a giant. Only a mother can appear so weak and helpless, and yet be the same one who puts the fruit jar cover on so tightly even Dad can't get it off.
- A mother knows that dried play-dough doesn't come out of shag carpets.
- A mother knows that her silverware is going to end up in the sandbox or a mud-hole.
- A mother has the fascinating ability to be almost everywhere at once and she alone can somehow squeeze an enormous amount of living into an average day.

Let's face it mothers are an integral part of our lives. We wouldn't be who we are without our mothers, nor would we even be here!

Some of the most renowned people in history have shared how important their mothers were in shaping their lives. George Washington, for example said of his mother, *“All that I am I owe to my beloved mother.”*

This was also true of one of the greatest men in Old Testament history. I am referring to Moses. Moses became the kind of man he was because of the type of mother he had. In fact, who he was, was very much determined by the type of mothers he had, because God gave Moses two mothers.

Both of the women who fulfilled the maternal role in Moses’ life made certain choices in regard to Moses that impacted the course of his life. Their choices made Moses the man he became. The old saying, *“The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world,”* was absolutely true in the life of Moses.

I want to examine the choices made by Moses’ two mothers. Their choices have much to teach us about love, about life, and about the legacy we leave our children. I want to examine the two mothers, who had a profound impact on Moses’ life. Allow me to point out the choices these women made in the life of Moses.

I. They Chose To Give Moses Life

A. Consider the choice of Jochebed

Moses was born into a culture of death. The Book of Exodus opens with the sons of Israel in Egypt. Joseph had died (v. 6), and a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph (v. 8). This new Pharaoh was worried about the increased multiplication of the Hebrews (v. 7). Pharaoh ordered the Hebrew midwives to put to death the Hebrew’s male babies, but to let the girls live (vv. 15-16).

v. 17 The Hebrew “midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live.” God blessed the Hebrew midwives, and established households for them (vv. 20-21). The chapter closes with Pharaoh’s command to his people in v. 22, “Every son who is born you are to cast into the Nile, and every daughter you are to keep alive.” Moses would have been killed as soon as he was born.

Let me just say, Pharaoh’s attempted genocide of all the Hebrew males is a foreshadowing to Herod’s murder of all the newborns in Bethlehem. This was

Satan's diabolical attempt to overthrow God's promise to send a Deliverer to provide redemption for all who would believe in Him (Gen. 3:15; 15:5, 7).

Chapter 2 opens with a man from the tribe of Levi marrying a daughter of Levi. The parents' names are given in chapter 6:20 (Amram and Jochebed). Jochebed conceived and bore a son, who was beautiful, and whom she hid for three months. Imagine her anxiety. Imagine the waiting, the expectancy, the wondering whether the baby would be a girl or a boy. There were no ultrasounds to determine the sex of her baby. They had to wait until the mother gave birth. When she did, she gave birth to a beautiful baby boy. The word "beautiful" is actually the Hebrew word *tob* = "good." It is an echo back God's original creation in Genesis 1 and 2 it was *tob* = good.

Jochebed chose life for her son. She chose to disobey the command of Pharaoh. She allowed her son to live. By the way, both of Moses' parents were involved in the decision to give him life. **Heb 11:23** says, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months *by his parents*, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command."

Amram and Jochebed hid the growing baby boy for three months (v. 2). When she could hide him no longer, she got a whicker basket, and covered it with tar. The Hebrew word used here for this whicker basket is literally "ark." It is found only here and in Noah's Flood story in Genesis 6. The theological connection between these two events is remarkable. Both Moses and Noah are chosen by God to forego a tragic watery fate that leads to death for God's enemies and deliverance for His elect. Moses' deliverance from the Nile looks back to Noah's deliverance in the ark, and forward to the deliverance of God's people through the Red Sea in Exodus 14.

Jochebed placed her baby boy in the basket, and set it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. She instructed her daughter Miriam to keep an eye on the basket to see what would happen to the baby (v. 4). I am of the opinion that Jochebed placed this whicker basket very near where Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe. In any event, God providentially arranged for Moses to be discovered and delivered by Pharaoh's daughter.

B. Consider the choice of Pharaoh's daughter

In verses 5-6 the daughter of Pharaoh comes down to the river to bathe. When she sees the ark floating in the reeds, she sends a maid to investigate. She

brings the basket to her, and when she opened it she saw a baby boy inside, and he was crying. She had pity on him, and recognized that this was one of the Hebrew's children. Pharaoh's daughter had pity or compassion on the child. In that instant this princess had a choice. She could obey the decree of her father and have the child drowned. Or, she could choose life. This pagan princess, born into a culture of death, chose life for a Hebrew baby who should have been killed.

vv. 7-9 Moses' sister steps forward and offers to provide a Hebrew nurse to nurse the child for her. **8** Pharaoh's daughter agreed to the arrangement and even paid the nurse, none-other-than Moses' mother, to take the child and nurse him for her. **God loves to bless us in the midst of trials!**

v. 10 After an unspecified time, probably 3-4 years (a Hebrew baby was nursed for 3-4 years), the boy was returned to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, because she "drew him out of the water."

Interestingly several women were involved in the events surrounding Moses' birth: the midwives' fear of God and their disobeying Pharaoh's orders; the defiance of Moses' mother; the compassion of the Egyptian princess, Pharaoh's own daughter; and the watchcare of Moses' own sister, Miriam.

I. They Chose To Give Moses Life; secondly,

II They Chose To Give Moses Love

Both of the women God placed in the life of Moses loved him. His birth mother risked her life to save his life. His adoptive, Egyptian mother risked the wrath of her father, the Pharaoh to save his life.

Why would they do this? The only answer that makes sense is love. They loved Moses more than they loved themselves. Their love for him motivated them to action.

A. Jochebed loved Moses because he was her son. Her body gave him life and nourished him as he grew (vv. 7-9). Her love for Moses allowed Moses to fulfill the greatest earthly destiny ever designed for any Hebrew. His mother's love caused her to risk everything to save him. This in turn resulted in Moses' being able to lead his people out of Egyptian slavery, destroy the armies and

power of Egypt without lifting a single sword or firing a single arrow. Her love allowed him to fulfill his God-given destiny to be a savior of his people.

B. Pharaoh's daughter loved Moses because God put it in her heart to love him. There is no other reason that this pagan daughter of Pharaoh would adopt the son of a Hebrew slave. Her heart was moved by the plight of a helpless child, and she took him as her own son. She named him "Moses." The name means, "drawn out," referring to the fact that Moses was "drawn out" of the Nile River. This name was also providential. Moses was "drawn out" so that he might one day "draw out" others.

It is hard to escape the irony of this situation. Pharaoh had to pay for the upkeep of a child he had ordered to be murdered. Again, this is the providence of God.

Moses was loved and nurtured by two mothers. If you were born into a family where you received love, you should rejoice! If you have been loved, you have been blessed.

Illustration: Washington Irving once said, "The love of a mother is never exhausted. It never changes, it never tires, it endures through all; in good repute, in bad repute, in the face of the world's condemnation, a mother's love still lives on."

Illustration: The mother of three notoriously unruly youngsters was asked whether or not she'd have children if she had it to do over again. "Yes," she replied. "But not the same ones."

Thank God for your mother today! If your mother is alive, give her a call and let her know how much you appreciate her.

I. They Chose To Give Moses Life

II. They Chose To Give Moses Love; finally,

III. They Chose To Give Moses Leadership

Both of Moses' mothers invested themselves into his life.

A. His birth mother introduced him to the God of Israel

Moses birth mother, Jochabed, introduced him to the God of Israel. It was during the early years of Moses' life, while his mother nursed him, that Moses learned about the God of Israel (Gen. 3:15). She would have warned him about the false gods of Egypt. She would have told him the stories of Abraham, and the covenant promises God made to Abraham and his descendant, Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 12; 15; 17). She would have told him about the reason the Israelites were in bondage in Egypt. She would have told him about God's promise to Abraham to deliver His people from bondage after 400 years (Gen. 15:13-16). She would have instilled within him a love and respect for the God of his fathers.

Jochebed's lessons took root in Moses' heart. How do we know? **Heb 11:24-27** says, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

By the time Moses had grown to the age of 40, He understood that God would use him to deliver the people of Israel from their slavery (Acts 7:24-29). Jochebed's scriptural instruction prepared Moses for his first encounter with God at the burning bush (Exod. 3:15).

B. His Egyptian mother gave him the best that Egypt had to offer.

We read in Acts 7:21-22 "Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him as her own son. And Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was a man mighty in words and in deeds." This means that she gave him the best education available. It is possible that Moses, by virtue of being adopted by the daughter of Pharaoh, was in line for the throne. He was trained and groomed as a prince in Egypt. He was trained for leadership, and that training would serve him well in his later years.

C. The lessons Moses learned from his two mothers set the very course of his life.

Thus it is □ with the children God has entrusted to us to raise. We need to give □ them something that all the universities, schools, and extracurricular activities in the □ world cannot give them. We need to give them the knowledge of God!

If they leave our homes with a clear □ understanding of who God is, and have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior from sin and death, then we have prepared them well. No one is more important in preparing their child to face life than you are mothers.

Conclusion: God providentially prepared Moses for his role as the deliverer of Israel through □ the two women He gave him to be his mothers. Their influence made Moses into the □ man he became. He delivered God's covenant people out of bondage in Egypt, introduced them to God at Mount Sinai, and established the Tabernacle where the people could meet with God.

If you were blessed to have a loving, godly mother, thank God for her today. In addition, let her know how much you love and appreciate her today!

“A man's work may be from sun-up to sun-down, but a mother's work is never done!”

Closing prayer:

Closing song: *Because You Loved Me!*