

Jochebed Who ?

Text : **Exodus 2: 1-15**

INTRODUCTION :

A. Refer to occasion : Mother's Day holiday.

1. This is a holiday motivated only by love and appreciation.
 - a. **Prov. 31: 28** - **Her children rise up and bless her;
Her husband *also*, and he praises her ...**
 - b. **Rom. 13: 7**- **Render to all what is due them: ... ; honor to whom honor.**
2. America needs holidays to promote family values.

B. Somewhere just above 50% of all people on earth are women, thus, mothers or potentially mothers.

1. Though only half the population, far greater influence on history than any other group.
Of a truth ... "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world."
2. Men lead the church, but women often have the greater influence on the church.
 - a. This has always been true, but much more so in the modern American Church.
 - b. Women have even greater influence in countries which were once ruled by Spain.
3. The Roman church effeminized religion.
 - a. In effect, the mother of the Savior is made more important than the Savior Himself.
 - b. Spanish culture emphasizes the use of influence to approach power.
 - c. **THUS :** They reason that the Savior is too powerful to approach directly, so one must approach Him via an intermediary and what better arbitrator than His mother.
4. We know this to be an erroneous doctrine (**I Tim. 2: 5**), but it has always been true that a man's mother can influence him when no one else can.

C. Generally speaking, both the present and the future of the church is more strongly effected by women than by men. (*The ministry of Jesus was supported by women.*)

1. In most congregations there are more women than men.
2. Typically, women are more comfortable expressing their feelings than are men.
 - a. One's faith is a deep feeling which is pregnant with emotion.
 - b. Spirituality is a relationship with God.
(**Thus, if her women aren't spiritual, a congregation has no hope.**)
3. More often than not, women are also the spiritual leaders in the home.
 - a. This is not the way God intended it to be, but it's the way it most often is today.
 - b. Thus, if the woman exerts a spiritual influence at home, the husband and kids follow.

4. Men take the lead in the public services, but they are the product of women.
 - a. They have been trained by their mothers.
 - b. They have been trained by female bible class teachers.
 - c. The men seek the approval of their wives and sometimes of their mothers.
5. Whether positive or negative, women are quick to react and demand a hearing.

TRANSITION :

By this morning's lesson we wish to observe what a powerful effect even one mother can have on the course of history as well as on her own children.

Who is Jochebed ? She effected the entire course of human history.

I. THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF OUR TEXT :

- A. The children of Israel (descendants of Jacob) had been in Egypt for about 390 yrs**
 1. A lot of history had occurred during that time. (**Twice as long as the U.S. has existed**)
 2. Kings (*called Pharaohs*) had come and gone.
 3. Many wars had been fought.
- B. The old dynasty of Pharaohs had fallen and an outsider family had come to power.**
 1. History is unclear about exactly how this occurred.
 2. It was most likely the result of a war.
- C. The new dynasty had different loyalties and alliances than the old one.**
 1. They didn't know all the history behind the social conditions in the country.
 2. Specifically, they didn't know how the Hebrews had come to be among the Egyptians.
 3. They felt no sense of gratitude for Joseph having saved them from starvation.
- D. The new ruler feared the Hebrews. (**establishing his reign / dynasty**)**
 1. The Hebrews had prospered above the general population. (**large herds ..Goshen**)
 2. Their numbers were very large and growing. (**too large a % of the population**)
 3. They refused to be assimilated into the population and the culture of Egypt.
 - a. Different religion
 - b. Different language
 - c. Different race who would not intermarry

E. The new King (the Pharaoh) dealt with them as any other political problem.

1. **ILL. - Very similar to the Latino problem in the United States today.**
 - a. Separated by language and by culture
 - b. Refuse to assimilate
 - c. As their numbers swell, they are becoming an increasingly powerful political force.
2. The Hebrews' multiplication was upsetting the balance of power. (**from 70 to millions**)
 - a. However, if that many people left, it would cause economic chaos.
 - b. The politician's number one goal is to stay in power. (**eternal principle**)

F. The king had a political problem so a political decision was required to solve it.

1. He made them his slaves, a nationalized resource. (**common solution in that era**)
 - a. He took away their economic power. (**Just like Hitler did with the Jews**)
 - b. Their new status before the law prevented their organizing any political opposition.
2. He ordered the midwives to allow boy babies to die at birth.
 - a. **Read ... Exod. 1: 15-21**
 - b. Even way back then they knew partial-birth abortions were wrong.
 - c. God rewarded the midwives for their righteous decision.
 - 1) **Vs. 21 ... He establish them in households.**
 - 2) **Compare ... Prov. 11: 18- The wicked earns deceptive wages,
But he who sows righteousness gets a true reward.**
3. When they didn't kill the boy babies, the king ordered the babies thrown in the Nile.
 - a. **Exod. 1: 22 (Worshipped Nile ... There could have been religious significance.)**
 - b. This was forward thinking ... population (threat) control. (**No value on life**)
 - c. He let girls live to work and to produce more women, because they couldn't fight.
4. This would kill a lot of babies. (**hundreds daily**)
 - a. 600 k men left Egypt (**Bethlehem was only 1,100 people when Herod killed boys**)
 - b. The total population would be like Chicago; How many boys born there every day?

*** THIS was the circumstance into which Jochebed delivered her child, Moses.**

II. WE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT JOCHEBED ?**A. Her name is not mentioned in the account of the birth of Moses in Exod. 2.**

1. The man's name is commonly listed, but even Amram's name was not mentioned.

2. Her name is found in the genealogies of the Levites. (**Exod. 6: 20 & Num. 26: 59**)
 - a. Moses says only that she was a “daughter of Levi.”
 - b. It's unusual for women to be named in genealogies. (**She was a special lady.**)

B. Jochebed married her cousin.

1. Her husband (Amram) was the son of her father's sister.
2. Thus, Amram was also a Levite.

NOTE : In those days it was considered good to marry a close relative. (This particular relationship was made illegal under the law of Moses. **Lev. 18: 12**)

1. Positive Examples

- a. Abraham married his half sister. ... **Gen. 20: 12**
- b. Abraham sent his servant to get Isaac a wife from his family. ... **Gen. 24**
- c. Jacob married two of his cousins. ... **Gen. 29**

2. Negative Examples (It was considered a disgrace to marry outside the family.)

- a. Esau was disgraced by marrying a Hittite woman. ... **Gen. 26:34**
- b. Samson married a Philistine. ... **Judg. 14: 3**

3. There were benefits from such marriages : (Sin to marry foreigners .. **Ezra 9)**

- a. They worshipped the God of Heaven.
- b. They had the same basic family values. (**You knew what you were getting.**)
- c. There were family loyalties. (**greater likelihood of trustworthiness**)

C. Jochebed and Amram already had two other children.

1. Miriam was the oldest.
 - a. Was a prophetess (**Exod. 15: 20-21**)
 - b. She spoke against Moses in the wilderness and struck with leprosy. (**Num. 12:1-15**)
2. Levi who could speak well before others
 - a. Went with Moses to confront Pharaoh
 - b. Became the first High Priest of Israel
3. The quality of the children reflects to quality of the home and Jochebed as a mother.

One scholar wrote : She suckled all three on the same strong milk 'til she weaned them from milk and put them on the marrow of lions. The oak has its roots around the rock, and the children of Jochebed had their roots around their godly mother.

D. Jochebed and Amram were slaves.

1. As slaves, their offspring belonged to the king.
2. Slave were property with few, if any rights.
3. Their owner would no more hesitate to kill them than to slaughter an ox.

III. WHEN MOSES WAS BORN HIS PARENTS REFUSED TO OBEY THEIR KING**A. They saw that Moses was a “goodly child.”**

1. Repeated three times in scripture. (**Heb. 11: 23, Act 7: 20, Exod. 2:2**)
2. All children are beautiful to their mothers, but Moses must have been special.

B. They hid Moses for three months.

1. This was a most difficult task.
 - a. All slaves worked. (**brick makers ... projects kept Pharaoh in power**)
 - b. Jochebed could not have stayed at home to care for the child w/o explanation.
2. The parents risked their own lives to save their child.
 - a. Sadly, today many kill their unborn children to prevent their being inconvenienced.
 - b. The parents of Moses were people of faith. (**God's people act differently**)
 - 1) **Heb. 11: 23- By faith Moses, ... , was hidden for three months by his parents**
 - 2) **Psa. 56: 11- In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid.**
What can man do to me?

C. After three months they came up with a plan to set Moses afloat in the river Nile.

1. This is Jewish legalism at it's finest.
 - a. He was actually in the crocodile-infested river. (**The letter of the law is obeyed.**)
 - b. The floating basket kept the child from drowning. (**The purpose of law avoided.**)

* - **Some religious people have the same attitude toward the scriptures.**
2. Jochebed had a well-devised plan, but not without significant risk.
 - a. Imagine the scene in their house as they prepared the basket. (**weeping, praying**)
 - b. Under the watchful eye of his older sister ... Miriam.
 - c. Placed where the king's daughter came to bath. (**religious act - Nile was worshipped**)
 - 1) Princess undoubtedly had a regular place where she bathed.
 - 2) The site was most likely improved with stone, etc. (Kings led lavish lives.)

3. They got Jochebed to be the wet-nurse.
 - a. She was paid for nursing her own child who had been condemned to death.
 - b. Wet-nurses were common before the era of refrigeration and canned formula.
 - c. Jochebed was allowed to keep the child until he was weaned.
 - 1) That was commonly near 5 yrs. of age.
 - 2) Remember Hannah ... **I Sam 1: 21 ff**
 - d. This is the time when the boys are turned over to their fathers for training.
4. **In all of this, Jochebed acted out of faith in God. ... Heb. 11: 23**

IV. JOCHEBED PROVED HERSELF TO HAVE BEEN A GREAT MOTHER.

A. She only had Moses for a few years.

1. She taught him enough in his first five years to make him a Jew the rest of his life.
2. The bishop in charge of Catholic schools in North Central Ohio used to say :
“Give me a child until the fifth grade and he’ll remain a Catholic until the day he dies.”
3. **Jochebed proved the power an early influence in a child’s life can have.**
**Prov. 22: 6 - Train up a child in the way he should go,
 Even when he is old he will not depart from it.**

B. Pharaoh’s daughter had Moses for many more years than did Jochebed.

1. But in all those years, she was unable up root Moses’ early training by Jochebed.
2. The princess gave Moses the very best education possible.
Acts 7: 22 - Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds. 23 - But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel.
3. Moses was successful in the Egyptian system. (**“set for life”**)
 - a. Raised close to power
 - b. Trained in civil administration / politics
 - c. Trained in military skills

C. The life of Moses in Egypt was pleasant.

1. His birth family and kinsmen were all slaves. (**offered no physical blessings**)
2. The decisions of Moses were made based upon his faith in God. ... **Heb. 11: 23-29**
 - a. He chose to leave a life of pleasure.
 - b. He willingly chose to suffer with God’s people.
 - c. Moses had been taught there was something beyond this life controlled by Jehovah.

D. The influence of a mother during the early years is immeasurable.

1. Scientists are finding ever more proof that much of one's life is programmed in his first 3 to 4 yrs. while he is under the watchful eye of his mother.
 - a. Eating habits
 - b. basic values and preferences
 - c. attitude toward religion in general
2. Moses is proof that the scientists are correct about this.

E. Dynamic churches are built in the bible classes and on mothers' knees.

1. As the children learn the stories, they are taught to apply the lessons of faith.
2. They learn how to server and to trust God.
3. The best teachers in the congregation should be with the young active minds.

CONCLUSION :**A. From Jochebed we are reminded of the awesome power a mother can wield.**

1. Jochebed had no idea she was training the first leader of the Jewish nation.
2. Question for mothers and Grandmothers : **Who can you influence for God ?**
3. What is the potential of that child ? (**Jochebed had no idea about Moses' future.**)

B. In this modern age there is an urgent need for surrogate mothers.

1. Mothers work out of the home so they don't spend time with their children.
2. Some feel no responsibility beyond earning and providing things. (**don't cook**)
3. Many would be better mothers, but they don't know how. (**their mom worked**)

C. Challenge :

1. Mothers, realize you will always be "mom" no matter how old they get.
2. Grandma can have a powerful influence in a child's life. (**mother w/ 2nd chance**)
3. Find a young person who needs what you have to offer. (**love and guidance**)
(**mentor them toward God**)

D. Facts to remember :

1. God knew what He was doing when He made women different from men.
2. Women are the only creatures on the planet that were created in response to a need.
3. God uses people to accomplish His will, **but** a person must allow himself to be used.

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