

## Mothers Day 2023 Exodus 2:1-9 A Mother's Faith

**2 Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi. <sup>2</sup> And the woman conceived and gave birth to a son;**

Now, we learn that both of Moses' parents, Amram and Jochebed, were from the tribe of Levi. Since Aaron was 3 years older than Moses, Aaron was likely one of the boys saved by those faithful midwives. A second thing to notice is that Moses was a chosen child from the only tribe called to the spiritual leadership of Israel—the Levites. Moses was pre-ordained for the leadership role that God would have for him later in his life, even before God revealed that the Levites were to be the priests.

**and when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months.**

Moses was beautiful. This word *Towb* is the same word that God uses over and over in Genesis chapter 1, starting in Genesis 1:4 when God saw that the light was good, and ending in Genesis 1:31, when God saw all that He had made, and it was very good. Like His creation of the world, the birth of Moses was a part of His plan to deliver Israel, to fulfill His promises to Abraham, and to bring forth the Messiah.

Exodus specifically says that it was Jochebed, his mother's faith that saved him. She saw he was beautiful, and she hid him for three months. I mean, the author of Hebrews 11:23 is generous, crediting both his parents, saying **23 By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.** But, Exodus 2 makes it clear that it was his mother's faith in God's purpose for Moses that drove these decisions. She was willing to risk all of their lives by defying Pharaoh in order to see God's Will done. To do this, as always, she had to overcome her fear. It's always, a case of faith vs. fear. Fear of not being enough, fear of messing things up, fear of failure, fear of success, fear of consequences, and of course fear of death. Faith and fear cannot coexist in the same place at the same time. 2 Timothy 1:7 says **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"**. 1 Cor 13 says **"perfect love casts out fear"**. And as we find so often in leaders who don't know God, it was fear that was driving Pharaoh's decision to persecute the Israelites. You would think that, all people the leader of the world at that time, the most powerful person on earth wouldn't be afraid, but he was. We read in Exodus 1:8-11 **8 Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. 9 And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. 10 Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, otherwise they will multiply, and in the event of war, they will also join those who hate us, and fight against us and depart from the land." 11 So they appointed taskmasters over them to oppress them with hard labor.** It was fear that caused the oppression and persecution of God's people. This Pharaoh knew not Joseph, but more importantly this Pharaoh knew not Joseph's God, and so Pharaoh himself was a slave—to fear. If we put our faith in anything but God, then we will be slaves of fear. That is the status of humanity without God, no matter what their position. In fact, the primary motivation for seeking power and money and position and privilege is that when things go bad, these things can be a protection for you. But, it's different for the people of God.

In Romans 8:15, Paul tells us that we **"did not receive a spirit that makes us a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship"**. We don't have to be in slavery to fear again. That means that before we knew Jesus we were enslaved to fear. In fact, all in the world who aren't following God live their lives enslaved by fear, but as believers we no longer have to be, we have been freed from a spirit of fear and given a spirit of sonship. So how did we live enslaved by fear, and how do we go about living out our freedom from it? Hebrews 2:14-15 tells us that by living the perfect life without sin, Jesus purchased for us freedom from fear. How did He do that? **14 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, so that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.** Did He destroy the devil physically at that time? Sadly, no. But He did destroy his power over death. The word translated destroy here is the Greek *katargeo*, to make useless or ineffective. Jesus holds the keys to death and the grave now. Through dying for our sins on the cross

Jesus destroyed the power of death to cause fear in the life of believers. The enemy's power over us, his hold on us, is made ineffective through what Jesus did on the cross. **1 Cor 15:56-57** **56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.** Freedom has been made possible, but it is up to every one of us to realize that freedom in our lives by choosing to live out the freedom we have been given. And how do we do that? We know longer allow ourselves to live in fear. We fight the battle against our flesh in our minds. **1 Cor 10:3-5** **3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage battle according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but [b]divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying arguments and all arrogance raised against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,** That means that we refuse to give in to the fear of our flesh.

**<sup>3</sup> But when she could no longer hide him, she got him a papyrus <sup>[d]</sup>basket and covered it with tar and pitch.** The word for what Moses' mother put him in is *tebah*, or ark. This word is only used one other place in the Old Testament: Noah's Ark. Both Noah and Moses were deliverers, called to lead people and animals to a new location where they could be fruitful and multiply, and play their part in God's redemptive plan for the world.

**Then she put the child in it and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile.**

So Jochebed did the best that she could and put the ark of reeds, this little basket among the other papyrus reeds by the bank of the Nile. Jochebed demonstrated faith in putting baby Moses in God's hands. How hard it must have been for her to trust God with her little one, not knowing what was going to become of baby Moses. She demonstrated great trust in God.

**<sup>4</sup> And his sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him.**

His sister Miriam (ex. 15:20) protects him by watching over him. The whole family is involved in protecting Moses. **<sup>5</sup> Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile, with her female attendants walking alongside the Nile; and she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her slave woman, and she brought it to her.** The Israelites lived in Goshen, so Pharaoh's daughter would have had to have been in the region in order to find Moses. It was God that brought them together, and caused Miriam to witness the event.

**<sup>6</sup> 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."**

When the Egyptian princess opened the ark, and knew immediately that this was one of the Hebrew children. She must have known about her father's cruel program of population control. The sight of little Moses touched her heart. She probably hated what her father was doing, and decided immediately to rescue this little baby.

**<sup>7</sup> Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a woman for you who is nursing from the Hebrew women, so that she may nurse the child for you?"**

Clearly, according to all evidence, the Hebrew women were having a lot of children, and it's at least implied that the Egyptian women weren't, since the Hebrews were becoming so much more numerous compared to the Egyptians. And, of course Miriam knew the perfect Hebrew woman to find.

**<sup>8</sup> Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go ahead." So the girl went and called the child's mother. <sup>9</sup> Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him.**

And so, we can only imagine the excitement with which Miriam ran back to Jochebed with this amazing news of God's provision. Moses' protection was assured by his adoption by the Pharaoh's daughter. And so, by trusting God, Jochebed not only made sure that Moses was safe, but also received back what she had given into God's hands. God had turned horrible circumstances into hope, and ultimately salvation, because of the trust that this young Levite woman placed in Him. The only things that we truly get to keep are the things that we dedicate to God. If we give God our lives, our time, our

resources, our love, our children, then God does not forget. God wants us to know that we can trust Him with what is most precious to us.

**<sup>10</sup> And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. And she named him <sup>[1]</sup>Moses, and said, "Because I drew him out of the water."**

Moses was given this Egyptian name, which means "son" or "to beget a son". But, this word sounds a lot like Moseh, from Mashah, which means "to draw out", which fits the circumstances of Moses being drawn out of the water. The Princess both honors his Hebrew family by giving him a name associated with the Hebrew language, and also makes him legitimately Egyptian by giving him an Egyptian name, emphasizing her adoption of Moses. And so, it was through the courage of women, doing the right thing even though it could cost them to accomplish His plan of deliverance for the Israelites.