

## We Owe You Mom!!!

Exodus 2:1-10

Mother's Day is one of the most special days of the year. There are more telephone calls made on Mother's Day than any other time of the year. If you haven't called your mom yet, you ought to do so.

Mothers are some of the most under-appreciated people in the world. On Mother's Day, I like to remind everyone to be good to their mothers and appreciate them more, but today's message is not about how to be good to your mother. Today's message is about a mother who had to make some hard choices for the welfare of her son. Being a mother or a father isn't for the faint of heart. It requires some tough decisions—decisions that are risky and heart-wrenching, decisions that require faith.

Mother's Day is a day we give gifts and show love. A wealthy son decided to do something special for his mother on her day. He went to a pet shop and saw a very expensive talking bird. This bird could whistle Amazing Grace. This bird could quote the 23rd Psalm. It was an unusual bird. The bird cost \$30,000, but what did he care? He was wealthy so he spent the \$30,000 and bought the bird for his mother and had it shipped to her. On Mother's Day, he called his mother. "Mother, how did you like the bird I sent you?" She said, "Oh, it was delicious, son."

We all want to give our mothers something very, very special.

Abraham Lincoln said, "No man is poor who has a godly mother." There have been many mothers in the history of the world who have impacted their sons. Abraham Lincoln praised his mother. St. Augustine, the great religious leader, said his mother Monica's prayers brought him to the foot of the cross.

The Bible tells us about many wonderful mothers. The mother of Samuel, Hannah. Hannah, who didn't have any children but went to God in prayer and asked God to give her a son. God answered her prayer, and she was the mother of the wonderful man, Samuel.

In the New Testament, a young preacher named Timothy became a great fellow worker of the Apostle Paul. His mother, Eunice, taught him from a child the Holy Scriptures and brought him to faith in the Jesus Christ.

The mother of Moses was named Jochebed. It meant "The Lord is my glory." Jochebed. The writer of the book of Exodus is Moses himself, and Moses has enshrined his own mother in the pages of the book which God inspired him to write. What she did around the birth of her son, Moses, and how she poured into his life is inspiring. The faith she displays is an encouragement and a challenge to every mother.

The Children of Israel had come into the land of Egypt during a famine. Joseph was there, and he sent for his family to come down there, so the Children of Israel moved down into the land of Egypt.

In Exodus 1, we learn that there arose a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph. That changed the circumstances. He was a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph or God. Now the Children of Israel lived as slaves in the land of Egypt.

That is the circumstances in which mothers bring up their children today. We are living in a nation and in a generation that does not know Jesus. When you talk about the Bible, and its values, and mothers who love Jesus, there are many people who really don't know what you are talking about. If you have a Christian mother, you have a tremendous heritage.

If you have Godly mother, you have a lot to be thankful for, but be aware of the fact that there is a generation in America today that does not know what it means to have a Godly Christian mother.

Egypt was a very pagan land. They had many kinds of false gods. They didn't believe in the one true Jehovah God. They had gods of every kind and description. As result of the kinds of gods they worshipped in Egypt, they had a very low regard for human life.

The Pharaoh who did not know Joseph and his rulers sent out an edict that all the Hebrew baby boys be thrown into the crocodile-infested Nile River. Pharaoh was trying to minimize the impact of the Children of Israel who were quickly increasing in number. Every boy baby was to be destroyed in the Nile River.

It reminds us that mothers are assigned the responsibility of bringing up boys and girls in an atmosphere and a society that is filled with the worship of all kinds of false gods. As a result, there is still very little regard for human life.

Jochebed has the burden to bring up this boy in that kind of atmosphere. Birth is supposed to be a happy time. She already has a daughter, Miriam, who is about 15 years old. She has a little boy named Aaron who is three years old. She already has her hands full, and now she is about to have the third.

The time of birth ought to be a time of great joy and great expectancy, but for Jochebed, it wasn't like that at all. It was a time of grief and anxiety. She became aware of the fact that she was going to bring a child into the world whose life might be in danger.

Today is also a day of great anxiety. I thank God for the young couples who know that they need to be in a church and raise their boys and girls in church. I thank God for you Christian mothers and fathers, but it is also a time of great anxiety in America today because we are aware of the fact of the devastating atmosphere in which children live. We are aware of the fact of the difficult times in which we live to bring up boys and girls.

There are very disturbing aspects of our culture. The impact of the sexual atmosphere sexual perversion in America is engulfing the lives of our boys and girls. It's like a crocodile-infested Nile River flowing right through America. The television, movies, and music are creating pressure and anxiety in parents.

For nine months, Moses' mother knows what the penalty is going to be if this baby is a boy. Then the time for birth occurs. She is aware that her baby is born into a very hostile culture that had already laid claims on the life of her little one. Moses was a pretty little baby. The Jewish historian, Josephus, says that Moses was such a pretty little baby that men left their jobs to go and see the baby Moses.

Acts 7:20 says that Moses was no ordinary child. It means this baby was special to God. Every little baby is special to God. There are no accidents as far as God is concerned. God was involved. God was there. God was on the scene when you were born. Every little baby born into this world is special to God.

Jochebed understands that her boy is special. She determines that this boy is going to fulfill the purpose that God has for him coming into the world.

She hid him for three months. She was hiding him from Pharaoh. The time comes when she can't hide him any longer. She makes a choice. She determines that she is not going to allow her boy to be destroyed in the river. That's what every mother has to decide. Every mother has to come to a point of decision and determination in your life that your child is not going to be destroyed, realizing that your child is going to be very, very special to God. I can see that determination. It takes a lot to bring up a child today. It's not easy to be a mother today. It takes a lot of tears, a lot of prayers, a lot of talking and guiding and influencing.

Some people raise flowers or other kinds of plants. You have to put a lot of work in it if you are going to grow a beautiful flower. Some of you raise roses. Roses don't become pretty on their own. They don't grow wild. You have to cultivate them and fertilize them, care for them and trim them. It takes lot of work to make a beautiful rose. Where did we get the idea that you have to cultivate and work hard at making beautiful plants and yet you

can just kind of lead your children alone to grow as they will without any influence and expect them to come out right? If you want a young man who loves the Lord or a young lady who lives for Jesus Christ, it's going to take some determination on your part. It's not going to just happen.

How can you expect them to turn out right when you haven't done anything to help them along the way? The average boy and girl in America watches television five hours a day. The average boy and girl in America doesn't get five seconds of Bible reading and prayer. Do you read the Bible with your child? You say you believe the Bible, but do you ever open up the pages of your Bible and read it to your son or your daughter? I want to encourage you to determine right here today, to make up your mind today, that you are going to do whatever is necessary to make your son or daughter exactly what God wants them to be.

I think somewhere along the way Jochebed realized that she was not going to be able to keep this son of hers out of the Nile River, but I have the idea that she determined that if her son was going into the Nile she was going to do something to protect that child as he went into the Nile.

Can you imagine living with such fear? When I think of the times in which Jochebed was called to be a mother, I think of some mothers today. I think of mothers in parts of Africa who face the very real prospect of having their son taken from their arms to be trained as child soldiers. These are challenging days to be a mother in our world! Though no one threatens to kill or steal our babies in America, there are forces at work which threaten to drown our children. Kids might drown in the river of violence and promiscuity that is pouring out of the TV set every day. They can drown in a sea of confusion as the lines between right and wrong are blurred in our society. They can drown in a competitive culture that rewards performance above character. Every conscientious parent knows how dangerous it is to grow up in our world!

In the dangerous world in which she found herself, Jochebed stands out because she did what she could to save her child. Then, when she could do no more, she depended totally on the faithfulness of God. She was a model of faith.

Exodus 2:3 says "When she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile."

When you read about an ark in the Bible, it is always a picture of safety. When you read about Noah's ark - it was a big ark so that animals and people could all get in it and be safe. When the floods came, they were safe in that ark. This basket is like an ark, a picture of safety. She has determined that if her boy is going to go into that Nile River, he's going into the Nile in the safety of the ark. You can't ultimately shelter your children. We want to. We do everything we can to shelter our children, but ultimately you can't do it.

Sooner or later, your children are going to go out into the world in which they live, into the culture that surrounds them. You can get your boys and girls to the Lord Jesus Christ and get them in the safety of the ark, so when they go out into the world, they will be in the safety of a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mothers, the greatest thing you'll ever do is lead your child to know Jesus as Savior. Far more important than the clothes you put on their backs will be the faith that you put in their hearts. Far more important than the culture with which you surround them will be the Christ you put within them as they come to know Him as their Lord and as their Savior. You ought to begin praying every day for the salvation of your children.

Listen to what the writer of Hebrews says about Jochebed in Hebrews 11:23: "*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.*"

Though the Pharaoh said all the male Hebrew babies had to be thrown into the Nile, Jochebed and her husband disobeyed the king and hid Moses for three months. That takes courage! Imagine how hard it probably was to hide an infant. When our daughter was born, we were only 28 years old. We didn't quite know what to do with her! I remember those first few months well because she had a bad case of colic. We couldn't have hidden her if we tried. She made too much noise! But somehow Jochebed succeeded in hiding Moses.

We often think of faith as passive—this whole idea of “Let go and let God,” but real faith is an active thing. Faith sometimes calls us to do risky things. I think of mothers who have been unable to conceive but have seen that as an opportunity to adopt children who might otherwise have spent their lives in an orphanage. That's a courageous act of faith. I think of mothers who are married to unbelieving husbands but sometimes defy those husbands in order to expose their children to the truth of God's Word. I think of mothers who stand up to a teenage son or daughter, saying no to something when all the other mothers say yes. I think of mothers who choose to give up a lucrative career so they can stay home with their children when everyone around them says that's crazy. What gives these mothers the courage to act in such a way is that they fear God more than they fear man. They want to please God more than they want to please their friends or their children or even their husbands. And they trust God. They trust that as they're obedient to what He is calling them to do in the face of threatening circumstances, He'll take care of them and their child.

It's interesting that the word used for “basket” is the same word used for Noah's ark. Noah's ark was covered with tar and pitch just like this one was. Both Noah and Moses were placed in the ark, which is not a very safe environment, because the occupants of an ark are at the mercy of the elements. The Nile was known for crocodiles. At three months old, Moses was completely helpless in a river filled with crocodiles, but I want you to notice that Jochebed was not careless about this. She didn't send him floating down the river. She placed him among the reeds along the banks of the Nile. This was a place women would congregate. It was kind of like placing a baby on the steps of a hospital today. She also didn't just put him in the Nile and wave good-bye, saying, “Have a nice life, Moses! Maybe I'll see you sometime!” She had Moses' older sister stand at a distance to find out what would happen to him. If Jochebed herself had stood by the reeds, watching and waiting, it would have been obvious who she was, but Moses' sister made a good spy. When Moses was discovered in the Nile, his sister offered to find a Hebrew woman to nurse him, and the plan fell into place. You see, Jochebed was clever—she was sensible in her planning.

The story gets beautiful as baby Moses is floating down the Nile River in that little ark of the bulrushes. His teenage sister, Miriam, is in the reeds, watching to see what's going to happen. About that time, Pharaoh's daughter comes out to her private pool.

“Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt compassion for him. ‘This is one of the Hebrew babies,’ she said.” Exodus 2:5-6

The moment they get that ark to Pharaoh's daughter and she looks in, little Moses cried. What caused Moses to cry? Maybe the Lord pinched him. When you get a mother's heart and a little baby together, something is going to happen.

No mother's heart is a match for the cry of a baby. That's why God gave little boys mothers. That's why God gave little girls mothers. Because God knows that little boys and little girls need somebody who has a heart to love them. They need somebody to take care of them. They need somebody who will cry with them when they cry. They need somebody to whom they can come with their little hurts and scrapes and cuts. Dear mother, God bless you today. Determine in your heart you are going to be the kind of mother God wants you to be for those little ones.

Miriam comes walking up about that time and asks,

“Then his sister asked Pharaoh’s daughter, ‘Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?’ ‘Yes, go,’ she answered. So the girl went and got the baby’s mother. Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, ‘Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you.’” Exodus 2:7-9

Mrs. Kathy Barker shared with our Women’s Ministry on Monday night that there are typically 7 occupations that a mother has:

- Teacher
- Coach
- Nurse
- Chef
- Housekeeper
- Chauffer
- Psychiatrist

If we calculate the average salary for each of these professions and add them together, our mothers should earn annual salary \$463,000.

Isn't that something? God gave her a little baby, and now God is going to pay her to take care of it.

We owe our mothers so much.

- We owe you for your time. The days and nights you took care of us
- We owe you for your example. Consistent and dependable
- We owe you for your support. Challenging
- We owe you for your humor. Sparkly and quick
- We owe you for your humility. Genuine and gracious
- We owe you for your hospitality. Smiling and warm
- We owe you for your insight. Keen and honest
- We owe you for your flexibility. Patient and joyful
- We owe you for your sacrifices. Numerous and quickly forgotten
- We owe you for your faith. Solid and sure
- We owe you for your hope. Ceaseless and indestructible
- We owe you for your love. Devoted and deep

She knows now that she is going to have a few short years to pour faith in the heart of Moses. She knows she has just a few years to put some determination in the heart of Moses. Mom, you have just a few years to do your job. Mom, you don't have many years. It goes by in a hurry.

She determines she is going to teach this boy the lessons that will put dedication in his heart. She knows where he is heading. She is getting him ready to go. I wonder what she taught her little boy Moses? I think she taught him two great lessons. I think she taught him who he was, that he was special to God and that he was really somebody.

Mother and fathers, speak words of encouragement. Speak words that are positive. Speak uplifting words to your sons and daughters. Tell them who they are. Tell them that they belong to God, that they are not the result of some fortuitous concourse of atoms or some accidental evolutionary process. They are products of the creative activity of God. You are somebody.

I think she taught him who God is. I think she said to him, "Moses, I want you to know that our God is not the god of these pagan Egyptians. Moses, our God is the One who created the whole universe. There's only one God like that. He is the Lord God Almighty. He is the Lord God Eternal. Moses, don't ever forget who you are and don't ever forget who God is."

Boys and girls, if you have a mother and father who have had enough faith in the One True God to bring you up in the things of God, you have so much to be thankful for.

She has him for just a few years and then that inevitable day comes. Verse 10 "the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water." Exodus 2:10

The inevitable day came when the knock came on the door and the servants of Pharaoh's daughter came to get Moses. How was it that day? Do you remember the first day your little one went off to school? That's how Jochebed must have felt that day. You can almost see her as the tears from her eyes fall down on the neck of this little boy Moses. Can't you see her as she puts her arms around that little boy and whispers in his ear, "Remember who you are, Moses. Remember who God is. Moses, I'm going to be praying for you." He goes into a totally different atmosphere. He moves into the fast lane of Egyptian society. All the luxury and the finery will now be poured into the cup of this young man Moses. He's living in the home of Pharaoh's daughter.

He's in an altogether different social atmosphere. It's an atmosphere of prosperity, but he would hear a voice, the voice of his mother, in his ear saying, "Remember who you are, Moses."

He went into an altogether different academic atmosphere. The Bible says in the book of Acts that he was trained in all the wisdom of Egypt. The background is that he went to the University of Heliopolis. Ten thousand students. It was the Harvard of the ancient world. I can image that on a day a professor stood in the University classroom and said, "Young men, you came from a white worm that crawled out of the Nile River and evolved into a man." Moses could hear his mother whispering in his ear, "Moses, remember who God is." God puts some determination in his heart.

When Moses came to the age of 40, they took the throne of Egypt and put it on a silver platter. He was in line to be the next Pharaoh of Egypt according to history. So they put the throne on the silver platter to Moses and Moses said, "I'm sorry, I can't take it." They said, "You crazy Hebrew, go ahead and take it. What do you mean you can't take it?" He said, "This woman is not my mother. My mother is a slave woman who lives in the tents of the Israelites. Her name is Jochebed. My mother has taught me that this world is not the only world there is. There is another world. My mother has taught me that there is a God who is going to send His son to be our Savior and come into this world. I have made a decision. I'm going to put my lot and cast my life with my mother's God." That's the day Jochebed got her wages.

Mother, if you will make up your mind to bring up your sons and daughters in the things of the Lord, the day will come when you will get your wages. One of these days you will see that little one get down by their bed and you will see them through tears ask Jesus to forgive them of their sins and ask Jesus to come into their hearts and get saved. Mother, you'll get your wages.

Then you will see those sons and daughters begin to grow. You'll see them as they get involved in the activities of our church, and you will get your wages.

Then, they'll have some decisions along the way - whether they are going to live for the world or whether they are going to live for the Lord. They'll decide to live for the Lord. Mother, you'll get your wages.

Then, they'll find the mate God has for them. They'll get married, and on that wedding day, you'll see them standing there in love with one another and in love with Jesus. Mother, you'll get your wages.

The day will come when you will get that letter in the mail and it will tell you what they think of you and how wonderful you are to them and what you've meant to them. When you get that letter in your hand, Mother, you'll get your wages.

One day you'll get a phone call from a long way off and that boy or girl will say to you, "Mother, I want you to know I appreciate all you did to bring me up." That day you'll get your wages.

The day will come that they will bring sons and daughters into the world and they will bring up your grand babies to love Jesus Christ. Mother, that day you will get your wages.