Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Mom's Week, Part 2: Jochebed
Scripture: Exodus 1:22
Code: A208

In the centuries after the death of Joseph (circa 1804 B.C.), the last recorded event in Genesis, Israel's status in Egypt had changed radically from favor to enslavement (circa 1525-1445 B.C.). But despite the harsh conditions, the growth of the Israelite community was phenomenal! In keeping with God's promise, the seed of Abraham grew from being an extended family to being a nation.

Pharoah instituted a number of measures to curtail their population, but his human power could not compete with God's continued blessing on Israel. Eventually, Pharaoh demanded that all his subjects become involved in murdering newborn Hebrew boys by drowning them in the Nile River (Exodus 1:22). One mother, Jochebed, managed to hide her beautiful baby for three months. "*But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him*" (2:3-4).

In the midst of dire circumstances,Jochebed fully entrusted her child to God's safekeeping, and her hope was justified. God providentially used an Egyptian princess to override Pharaoh's death decree and protect the life of His chosen leader for the Israelites (vv. 5-10). Moreover, He gave Miriam the courage and presence of mind to approach the royal entourage and deftly convince the princess to pay the baby's own mother to nurse him.

Moses needed a miracle to survive, and Jochebed was ready when the miracle came. Her faith in the Lord's provision was one of the first steps in Israel's march from Egypt. Did this faith come easily? Certainly not. Jochebed gave Moses everything she could, then gave him up -- twice: once when she set him afloat in the river and once when she returned him to be raised by the princess. Both times Jochebed probably thought she'd never see her son again, but she entrusted her child to God's hands.

Later, as the adopted son of a princess, Moses undoubtedly was granted special privileges belonging to nobility, but none of these persuaded Moses to relinquish his native origin and faith, no doubt taught to him by Jochebed while she cared for him as a small boy. Rather, his spiritual maturity was such that when he came of age, he "*refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter*" (Hebrews 11:24). As the son of Jochebed, Moses learned faith. As the son of a princess, he learned reading, writing, arithmetic, and perhaps one or more of the languages of Canaan. All these skills and experiences served him well when he became God's ambassador from Israel to Egypt.

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