

Jochebed

Mother of Moses

- A. Setting the circumstances
- B. Three phases of Moses' life
- C. Spiritual Legacy

A. Setting the circumstances

1. Who was Jochebed? She was Moses' mother. At the time of his birth, she already had two other children, "Miriam," who was more than a decade older than Moses and is referred to in Ex. 2:8 as (almah), the term for a young woman of marriageable age, and Aaron who was approx. 3 years older than Moses who was the baby.
2. Jochebed was married to Amram, and she was his father's sister (Ex. 6:20). So, she was the wife of Amran & his aunt! Ironically, such a marriage would later be forbidden by the pen of Moses in the Law of Moses.

3. At the time of the birth of Moses things were about as bad as they could possibly get with infanticide becoming the law of the land for Jewish boy babies. This was because of fear on the part of the Egyptians that the Jews were multiplying too fast and that they might join up with an enemy and the Egyptians might lose everything in a takeover. Jochebed faced these forces of evil and more in the ancient circumstances of her own time. It was a sufficient challenge for her simply to keep her son alive. For, as you know, she was a Jewish slave in Egypt along with her Jewish husband Amram. It would be difficult if not impossible for us to appreciate their lot in life.

3. (cont.) Everyday was filled with great stress and difficulty just trying to keep body and soul together. For they as slaves in Egypt had to endure the blazing heat of that middle eastern sun as they labored to make bricks for the construction of Egyptian buildings for Pharaoh. Everyday seemed increasingly difficult. Nevertheless, God prospered the Jews during these times so that they increased in number: “But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they were in dread of the sons of Israel” (Ex. 1:12). The Egyptians, frightened at their increase in number, “compelled the sons of Israel to labor

3. (cont.) rigorously; and they made their lives bitter with hard labor in mortar and bricks and at all kinds of labor in the field, all their labors which they rigorously imposed on them” (Ex. 1:13a-14). Panic set in at the ever-increasing strength of Israel so that the “king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah, and the other was named Puah; and he said, ‘When you are helping the Hebrew women to give birth and see them upon the birthstool, if it is a son, then you shall put him to death; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.’” The midwives ignored this command, and God blessed them for it (Ex. 1:17), “and the people

3. (cont.) multiplied, and became very mighty” (Ex. 1:20).

“Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, ‘Every son who is born you are to cast into the Nile, and every daughter you are to keep alive’” (Ex. 1:22 emphasis added). This might have brought more success in limiting the rate of increase. However, it did not get all the boy babies killed.

4. It was into these circumstances that Moses was born.

The king’s edict was, “Every son who is born you are to cast into the Nile” (Ex. 1:22b), but nothing and no one can overcome the plan of God. Moses was a definite part of that plan. Obviously Amram and Jochebed were too.

4. (cont.) Notice Ex. 2:23-25: “Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God. So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them.”

5. It may well be those words of God that Amram and Jochebed had in mind to which the author to the Hebrews refers in Heb. 11:23: “By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents,

5. (cont.) because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict." By definition faith is taking God at His word. Clearly, these parents had to believe some word of God with reference to their son Moses. It seems best to surmise that it was this promise, not necessarily that they were convinced that their last baby boy would be the deliverer, though that is not impossible either, assuming the possibility of a direct word from the Lord to them. That Jochebed might indeed have had it in mind that Moses would have been raised in the palace stands to reason when you consider the fact of where she left him in the Nile to be found by

5. (cont.) the daughter of the king. Miriam's fetching of her and Moses' mother to nurse him, while no doubt constantly instructing him of the plight of the people and their definite need of a deliverer lends further credence to our supposition. Add to that the fact of Moses' attempt to deliver the people in his own strength, and the matter seems almost sealed (Ex. 2:12). True, the whole thing seemed a failed attempt when Moses fled to Midian upon being found out for murdering the oppressing Egyptian (Ex. 2:15). But God still recognized the faith of his parents and intended to acknowledge it with an incomparable victory which eventually came to

5. (cont.) pass. The end result was of course that Moses did indeed deliver the people from bondage, but it was all accomplished in the power of God.

6. So great was Moses in his own walk of faith that he himself became a type of Christ. About Moses, God said, “I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him” (Deut. 18:19). Peter said that promise was fulfilled in Christ, “Moses said, ‘THE LORD GOD SHALL RAISE

6. UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED in everything He says to you. And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:22-23).

7. It follows that it is the will of God that our children become conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Moses was a type in advance, believers are to bear His image after His ascension. This is made plain enough in Rm. 8:29, “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” We

7. (cont.) might say that the forces against this happening have never been greater. Perhaps not, but they have always been great. Becoming what God wants us to be is not at all possible apart from God the Spirit, but it is possible. John said, “Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world” (1Jn. 4:4b). **Present challenges**

8. Dear Friends, we must join together and believe God for great things for our children. Our ultimate reward will be to hear the Master say to them, “Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master” (Mt. 25:21b).

B. Three phases of Moses' life

1. Forty years of growth and development (Ex. 2), but he was not yet prepared to be the deliverer.
2. Forty more years, then *God* sent him to be the deliverer (Ex. 3:1-4:20).
3. Forty more years and there was deliverance and a great victory (Ex. 4:21-12:41).

C. Spiritual legacy

1. Moses was far from perfect, but still he was called “faithful in all his house” (Heb. 3:5).
2. He appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration along with Elijah and Jesus.
3. In the end, Jochebed (and Amran) surely get some credit here.
4. How did Moses have it said about himself that he “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward” (Heb. 11:24b-26)?

5. One of the great threats to Christianity is seen to be the secular educational system to which most all of us have been subjected to at times. How did Moses get subjected to and “educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds” and come out unscathed. Could it be that Jochebed’s influence overcame it all? And your children can overcome all the lies of our present milieu by careful instruction from mom and dad and others, of course.