

WOMEN OF FAITH

1. Jochebed

We often hear about great men of faith, but what about the women? There are many wonderful examples of women in the Bible, and we are going to look at some of them. Let's begin with someone whose name you may not be familiar with – Jochebed, the mother of Moses.

Scripture Reading: Exodus 1:22 – 2:14

Although we are not told the name of Moses' mother in this passage, it is recorded in Number 26:59. Her name, Jochebed, means 'Yahweh is glory' or 'God's glory'.

- ✿ What can we learn about Jochebed from these verses – who was she, and what was the situation at that time? Exodus 1:22-2:1

(Jochebed was from the tribe of Levi and she was married to a man who was from the same tribe. She was living at a time when the Hebrew people (the Israelites) were slaves in Egypt and Pharaoh had ordered that every son who was born to a Hebrew woman was to be thrown into the Nile River. This was the time when Jochebed became pregnant.)

- ✿ When she gave birth to her son, what did she do to try and save his life? Exodus 2:2-4

(Initially she hid her baby for 3 months, but when she could hide him no longer she made a basket from papyrus and pitch, and left him among the reeds in the Nile River.)

- ✿ According to God's Word, why did she do this, despite the danger? Exodus 2:2, Hebrews 11:23

(She saw that the child wasn't an ordinary child. There was something special about him. Perhaps it was the Holy Spirit who gave Moses' parents a sense that God had a purpose for their son.)

It is a fascinating story how God preserved Moses' life, a story often told in Sunday school. The very river that Pharaoh had ordered the Hebrew babies to be thrown into, became the place where Moses was saved.

- ✿ How do you think Jochebed felt leaving her son in a basket on the river? Put yourself in her place!

(It must have been very difficult, yet she trusted that God would take care of her son. If God did indeed have a destiny for her son to fulfil, then God would need to save his life. And he did!)

As we know from the story, the Princess, the daughter of Pharaoh himself, saw the basket and had it brought to her. In an amazing turn of events, Jochebed was able to nurse her son. However the time came when she had to take him back to the Princess and he became her son.

- ✿ What do you think went through Jochebed's mind when she had to do this?

(She would probably not see her son and he would not be known as her son, but the son of the Princess. He would grow up in a culture that was very different to hers - one where idols were worshipped. Perhaps she wondered if he would choose to follow the God of Israel and fulfil the destiny God had for him.)

✿ What gave Jochebed the courage to do what she did? Hebrews 11:23

(It was her faith in God.)

✿ How do you think Moses' actions reflected the values his mother must have taught him? Exodus 2:11, Acts 7:25, Hebrews 11:24-26

(Moses obviously knew he was a Hebrew and that God's purpose for his life was to save his people. He chose to follow the God of Israel rather than value the treasures that Egypt could offer him.)

✿ Share what you have learnt from the life of Jochebed.

Conclusion

Jochebed is listed among the men and women of faith in Hebrews 11. Imagine placing your three month old baby in a basket and leaving him to float among the reeds in the river! Yet she didn't give way to fear, and trusted that God would take care of him. Then again when she had to give her little boy back to the Princess, she had to believe that God would watch over her son as he grew up in the palace.

God wants us to learn to trust him, and believe that he will take care of our children too. Trust him, in whatever situation you are going through, and trust him with the outcome. Jochebed is a wonderful example to follow.