



## ***LIFE LESSONS FROM THE LADIES: Part Two***

### **COOL MOMS: LESSON 11**

There are a lot of “cool” moms mentioned in Scripture. Some have an abundance of information written about them, while others are mentioned in a paragraph, or a single sentence. (I wouldn’t mind having a sentence about me!!) But whether they are called by a name or not, the fact that they are mentioned means they are in the Word for a purpose. There’s a lesson to be learned or a warning to heed. Being a mother is a very important role the Lord chooses to give many women. Psalm 127:3-5 tells us that children are a gift from the Lord, and God chooses the gifts He gives to each one of us. Mothers are called to love their children (Titus 2:4-5), be available (Deuteronomy 6:6-7), be involved with their lives, teach them the Word of God (Psalm 78:5-6; Deut. 4:10; Ephesians 6:4), and train them, developing their skills, talents, and spiritual strengths and gifts (Proverbs 22:6, Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12). While some of us are mothers and some are not, we can learn much from the character of the mothers we’ll be discussing. This week we’ll look at three “good” moms and next week we’ll take a peek into the lives of some that are, well, not so good.

Before we begin, let’s take a little quiz to see how much we know about some of the moms mentioned in the Bible. Don’t worry, it won’t be graded! 😊

#### **Questions**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Who was Jacob’s mother?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Who was the mother of Isaac?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Who was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Which mother in the Bible had a set of twins?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Who was John the Baptist’s mother?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Who was the first mother mentioned in the Bible?

#### **Answers**

1. Sarai (Sarah)
2. Mary
3. Elizabeth
4. Deborah
5. Eve
6. Rebekah

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|--|-------------------|
| _____ What was the name of Jesus' mother?                      | 7. Rebekah        |
| _____ Which female judge said she was a "mother in Israel"?    | 8. Moses          |
| _____ Who was the mother of King Solomon?                      | 9. Rachel         |
| _____ Whose mother placed him in a basket made from bulrushes? | 10. Bathsheba     |
| _____ What relationship was Naomi to Ruth?                     | 11. Mother-in-law |

How'd you do? This week we're going to begin with one of the mothers on that list. I pray that as we ponder each lady, we remember that she was a real woman, with a real heart, real emotions, and experiencing a very real difficulty. Another great reminder, ladies, that the difficulties we struggle with are universal; we are not alone. Obviously, the Lord is always with us, but many women who are heroes of faith have blazed the trail for us as well.

### **First Day**

1. Read Exodus 2:1, 6:20 and Numbers 26:59. What was the name of Moses' mom, and what small bit of information about her heritage do we know?
  
2. Read Exodus 1. Describe the dark situation that the Israelites were facing. What was their frightening dilemma?
  
3. Why did the king order this horrible command?
  
4. We read about these two women in last year's lesson, but what amazing act of faith and courage was shown by Shiphrah and Puah?

5. Tomorrow we'll continue to look at the life of Jochebed, but for now, ponder the actions of the two Hebrew midwives. What risks did they take? What motivated them to disobey Pharaoh? How was their action an example of faith?

I love these two ladies. What courage, what strength, what love for their God they must have had to disobey such an order. It sure made me look at my own heart. Would I choose to disobey an order if it threatened my life? Would I sacrifice myself for the lives of others? Would I trust God to take care of me? Spend a little time examining your own heart on these questions.

**Memory Verse of the Week:** "She watches over the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed ..." Proverbs 31:27-28a

## **Second Day**

### **Work on your memory verse.**

Remember that we'll be focusing more on Jochebed rather than Moses. I'm not ignoring this wonderful guy, because obviously his story is crucial to our faith, but I really want to focus on mama. Sorry Mo!

1. Read Exodus 2:1-10. Describe her dilemma.
2. Describe the decision she made. (Why do you think she waited for three months?)
3. Describe the risks she was taking.
4. How would you describe her faith?
5. Describe the amazing rescue.

6. Describe the role his sister, Meriam, played. Do you think mom told her what to do, or did she do it on her own? Discuss possible scenarios.
7. Ok, here's the million-dollar question. Name the ways you see evidence of God's providence in this story.
8. Why do you think Pharaoh's daughter went behind her father's back and rescued the baby?
9. Do you think Jochebed would have been afraid? What other emotions may she have been feeling?
10. Along with nursing him the formidable years of his life, what else do you think she taught him? In what ways do you think this wise woman influenced him?

Elisabeth George wrote, "Jochebed is the first person in Scripture to have a name compounded with *Jah*, or *Jehovah*. Jochebed means 'glory of Jehovah,' 'Jehovah is her glory,' or 'Jehovah is our glory.'"

11. I wonder if she knew her son was destined for a purpose. What do these verses say about him? Read Exodus 2:2, Acts 7:20, and Hebrews 11:23.

I think Jochebed is a rock star for overcoming so much fear. The first three months of hiding him must have caused her so much anxiety as she fervently prayed he wouldn't be discovered. Then, deciding to put her complete trust in God by placing her beloved baby in a handmade ark floating at the water's edge, dangerously close to the fierce current of the Nile River. I mean, can you imagine it? I think my heart would have been pounding out of my chest as I held my breath. Just reading this story takes my breath away. When my children were young and I was

scared to let them go out into the “big bad world,” I constantly reminded myself of this woman’s faith. She sent Moses off to the most pagan place on earth at the time. She trusted God to take care of him, and she believed He would. You go, girl!

12. Last question of the day. Are you afraid of “letting something go”? Maybe a child going to kindergarten or an 18-year-old going off to college? Perhaps you’re letting go of a dream, or a job, or taking some other kind of risk. What can you learn from Jochebed’s example?

### **Third Day**

#### **Work on your verse.**

I think we can all agree that Jochebed was responsible for teaching young Moses about God, faith, and what it means to walk in His ways. She prepared him to stand strong and instilled in him a deep faith that he would never depart from. I’m constantly amazed at God’s providence in every aspect of this story, from the floating ark to the sister standing there when the Pharaoh’s daughter came out, to her compassionate heart which moved her to rescue him, and to Jochebed’s opportunity to become his nursemaid.

Edith Deen wrote, “The whole character of Moses displays her holy guidance. It was she who instilled in him a belief in God, Creator of Heaven and earth. It was she who imparted to him the sacred traditions of Israel and who told him of the divine promise to Abraham and his descendants that they would become a great nation. It was she alone at night who would rock him to sleep and watch him play and romp around in the Pharaoh’s palace during the day. And yet this lowly Levite mother could rejoice that her son Moses, the adopted son of the princess, would receive the best education available in the king’s palace and could later have the privilege of boys of the highest rank, probably an education at Heliopolis, the Oxford of ancient Israel. What other Hebrew son could be so blessed? What other mother could know such inward joy? In later years, when the priests of Egypt would try to initiate her son into idolatry, he would remember his mother’s God and her faith in Him. And he would remain a Hebrew at heart through all the years of his life. We can be pretty certain that it was his mother’s early influence that enabled Moses to make the decision to leave the court and go out among his people and lift their burden, for from her he had inherited loyalty to his own race.”

1. Jochebed’s amazing faith was accompanied by planning, work, and action. Is God calling you to step out in faith in some area? What “plan of action” is He leading you to take?

We never hear about Jochebed after Exodus 2:10. But her influence lives on through her three kids, not only Moses, but Aaron and Miriam as well. She passed them the torch of faith. The Bible doesn't say a great deal about this godly mom, but the lives of her children speak volumes! Aaron became Israel's first high priest, marking the beginning of the Aaronic priesthood (Exodus 30:30). Miriam was a gifted poet and musician and led the Israelite women in a victory song after God delivered them from the Pharaoh's army (Exodus 15:20). And we know that Moses was used by God to lead His people out of Egypt! Her children's lives "called her blessed," just like our memory verse says!

2. Discuss the influence a mother has on her children, both good and bad.
  
3. List ways your parents influenced you. Please be respectful.
  
4. If they negatively influenced you in some way, how can you turn it into a positive? Have you changed the pattern, or continued the unhealthy patterns? (Are you still blaming them for your bad behavior, or taking responsibility for your own actions? Ouch!)
  
5. If you are a mom, are you igniting the "flame of faith" in your home? Please give some examples of ways to pass on the torch.
  
6. How much does "fear" factor into your parenting? Did Jochebed allow her fear to affect her faith? What are you afraid of?
  
7. Were you, or are you, a helicopter parent? What's the danger of this? How does Jochebed's example challenge that mindset?

8. Whether you're a mom or not, what needs to change in your life for you to shine more brightly for Jesus in your home, neighborhood, and world? Who are you passing the torch to?
  
9. Jochebed's life screams of courage, bravery, and obedience. What was the source of this? How did she have the ability, wisdom, or power, to do this?

If I were Jochebed, my mind would have been reeling with the "what ifs" or the "buts". What if a crocodile got him? (Supposedly there were many crocodiles in the Nile River.) What if his little boat sank? What if a "bad guy" got him? What if, what if, what if.

10. Jochebed was a woman who trusted God and His faithfulness. How about you? In what areas do you struggle with trust?

Joni Eareckson Tada wrote, "Moses's mother did everything in her power to protect her son, but eventually she reached the limit of what she could do. Grieving what seemed a certain death for her treasured child, she placed him in a basket - and, ultimately, in the Lord's hands. Sometimes, after we've done what we can, all that's left for us is to stand and wait, 'watching to see' what God might do on our behalf."

11. Jochebed and Miriam "watched what God would do." Have you done all you can do in some situation, and now God is asking you to "stand and watch?" Are you willing?

#### **Fourth Day**

##### **Work on your verse!**

Let's meet another mom who is actually better known for being someone's mother-in-law. As Jochebed is known for being a woman of trust, this woman is known for another wonderful character trait.

1. Please read her account in Matthew 8:14-17, Mark 1:29-34, and Luke 4:38-41. Using all three accounts, briefly summarize her story and what we know about her.

Obviously, we don't know much about her, or about her daughter, Peter's wife. Not even names. But we do know that Jesus saw her desperate need for healing. Women were not held in much esteem during that time period, so it was doubtful that the Pharisees would have paid much attention to the situation. But Jesus did. I love that Luke, being the physician, used the wording "bent over her" to be clearer in his description of the situation. Mark equates serving with "greatness" throughout his Gospel, and Matthew is writing to a Jewish audience, and if a Jew touched a sick person, it would make them unclean." I love that Matthew adds that "Jesus Himself touched her" and didn't keep it out of his text.

2. What did she immediately do, according to all three accounts? Why?
  
3. Does Jesus ask her, or seem to expect her, to repent of anything before He heals her? What was her healing contingent on?
  
4. This text indicates that sickness is not always a result of sin in someone's life and being a believer doesn't exempt you from sickness. Some within the church believe that. Why can that doctrine be so dangerous?
  
5. Jesus "rebuked" her fever in Luke's account. What else does He rebuke later in Matthew 8:2-27? Jesus can heal and "calm" whatever and whenever and whomever He pleases. How does that fact give you comfort?
  
6. What some call a "minor miracle" seems to have a major effect according to Mark 1:29-35. What happened?



Jesus is ministering all through the region around Galilee. He was probably tired and hungry, yet He still made time to heal this woman whom He loved. And to her, “service” was a natural response of gratitude. She wasn’t known for much, except her huge heart of servanthood and hospitality, and the Holy Spirit saw fit to record it for us!

7. What is your “natural response” of gratitude? Do you stop and thank Him, praise Him, and acknowledge His work? Or are you busy and just keep moving on?

This woman is a great example of using the gifts God has given you. Ministry and serving others is how God had chosen to use her in the body of Christ. She obviously had the gift of hospitality as well.

8. It’s been said that Matthew 20:25-28 is the “key to living the life of Christ.” Read it and explain it in our own words. How does Galatians 5:13, Colossians 3:22-24 and Romans 12:1-2 tie in with this thought?

9. Her “service” was making a meal. What’s your “service” to the Lord? What are your gifts? Are you using them?

10. How does “serving” often mean we have to die to our flesh?

11. According to Matthew 25:40, when we serve others, who are we serving?

12. Luke’s account tells us that Jesus “bent” over her. What imagery does that create for us in regard to service?

13. I believe that both Jesus and Peter loved this woman. Are you a mother-in-law? Are you “serving” your family with the gifts God has given you? How?
14. Are you a daughter-in-law? Are you loving and appreciating your mother-in-law well?
15. Spend some time evaluating your life of serving. Is it a thing of the past? Are you too busy? Have you allowed “service” to sit on the back burner? I love that our lady “immediately” begins to serve them. What a huge heart she has! Is your reaction immediate when you see a need?

**See you tomorrow, ladies! I pray that we, too, will “bend” our knee before the Lord in humility as we serve those He brings into our path!**

### **Fifth Day**

**Write out your verse from memory. How do both our ladies, so far, exemplify this verse?**

Today we are going to look at another woman whose name is listed but very little is known about her, except for the fact that she was important to Paul. And that, in itself, makes her someone I want to get to know! Charles Swindoll calls her a “Lesser Light” which is a descriptive term he coined to identify those saints in Scripture who, although in God’s economy are no less important than others, are lesser known to us because so very little is written about them. Let’s meet a “Lesser Light,” shall we?

1. Read Romans 16:1-16. As Paul concludes his letter to the Romans, he greets those who have helped him in ministry. Although there are many women in this section, which two does he mention in verse 13?

2. Some think Rufus may be the same guy mentioned in Mark 15:21, but no one is sure. Who was the Rufus Mark talks about?

The people mentioned here are co-laborers with Paul in his ministry of Kingdom building. They are hard workers who seemed to have worked tirelessly for the sake of the Gospel. Many of them risked their lives to serve the Lord and His people.

3. We understand that Rufus' mom had been "like a mother" to Paul. This really touched my heart. He saw her as a spiritual mom of some sort, which is a high compliment coming from Paul. Let your mind wonder for a bit. In what ways could she have functioned in that capacity?
4. We've been talking about having and being moms, but we also can be "like" moms to many. Is there anyone in your life you consider to be in that role? Who and why?
5. Can you take a few minutes and drop a card, email, or even a text, to the person who is "like" a mom to you, thanking them for their investment in your life?
6. Have you been "like" a mom to someone? Who? In what ways have you functioned in that role?
7. Why do some people need a mother role in their lives? In your opinion, what's the most important thing you can pour into their lives?

8. Do you think you can be “like” a mom to someone and not even know it? (Why does this add more responsibility to how we walk with Christ?)

I’ve had a few women who have been “like” moms to me. The very first one went to be with the Lord many years ago. She put up with my strange questions and thoughts about the Bible and theology. She was so patient with me; she never judged me. She loved me for who I was and pointed me to Jesus. Thank you, Anne Lock, for spending so many hours with a crazy kid like me, and never making me feel like you thought you were “wasting your time.” You were a “Lesser Light” that no one knew, but man, were you an example of LOVE! Can’t wait to see you again someday!

I find it amazing that someone like Paul ... bold, full of faith, and straightforward ... recognized his need for a “spiritual” mom. As bold as he was, he was a humble man who acknowledged not only his need for a Savior, but for friends and co-laborers. So often we think we can do this thing called “life” alone and never acknowledge our need for Jesus or other people. We’ve “got this.” Well, we don’t. And if Paul is humble enough to admit his need for people, we should be too. We need to learn to depend on God and God alone. And we can support one another as we walk through this life. But let’s stop whining that we don’t have anyone who is supporting us, and look for those we can support! We are one body in Christ! We need each other. Thank you, mom of Rufus, for pouring out love and care for Paul, so he could pour out his life for so many others, including us.

9. So, of these three women, who:
  - a. Challenged you the most?
  - b. Encouraged you the most?
  - c. Inspired you the most?

Next week we’ll continue looking at random mothers in the Bible. You’ll be surprised at some things you may find out! 😊 Shine for Jesus ... Be trusting like Jochebed, have a servant’s heart like Peter’s mom-in-law, and pour yourself into someone like Rufus’ mom!