

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA

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Dearest grandchild,

Since Mother's Day is approaching let's think about motherhood. In particular, let's think about the mother of Moses. Her name was Jochebed. Lately I have been thinking about her a lot. This grew out of my discouragement about the many ways our government has attacked the foundations of our faith. While there are MANY ways this is happening, in particular today I am bothered by same sex marriage and men in women's restrooms. Millions in California voted to pass Proposition 8 to protect the sanctity of marriage. In 2012 the 9th Circuit Court flushed all those votes down the drain and ruled that Proposition 8 was unconstitutional. In 2013 the U.S. Supreme Court also ruled against God, tradition, and most Americans and somehow found the right to same sex marriage in the constitution. Chief Justice Roberts read a dissenting opinion from the bench and labeled that decision as "unconstitutional", "unprecedented" and an "act of will, not legal judgment". Equally disturbing is the open invitation for transgender people to use any restroom they want. This is dangerous! Take, for example, the case of Jonathan Adrian Wolf. In 2006 he was convicted of raping a 20 year old deaf girl in Nebraska. Today, however, Jonathan lives in Seattle, claims to be a woman, and has changed his name to "Johanna". Now he "she" claims that anyone who wants to keep him "her" out of the women's bathroom is a bigot.

Not long ago I was pondering these problems in the middle of the night and began to think about the ungodly conditions in Egypt when baby Moses was born. Surely the problems we face, bad as they are, pale into insignificance by comparison to the difficulties faced by Jochebed. Consequently I began to think about her with new admiration. There is an old saying that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world, and her story helps make this saying credible.

As you know, by order of the king Egypt, all boy babies were to be killed. Jochebed, however, was not afraid of the king's command (Heb. 11:23). The Scriptures are clear that "she" saved her baby's life. Note in Exodus 2:1 - 3 that: "She" gave birth. "She" saw that he was a fine child. "She" hid him for three months. When "she" could hide him no longer "she" got a papyrus basket, and "she" put him in the basket and placed it among the reeds of the River Nile (Ex. 2:1 - 3). Her decision to place baby Moses where the princess bathed, and to have her daughter watch from a distance, helps us to understand her courageous determination to save her baby's life.

As you know, the human infant is one of the most helpless creatures on earth. A baby calf will be standing in a few minutes, running in a few days, and able to survive on its own in a few months. It takes us years of growth to enable us to care for ourselves, and we could not have survived a week after our birth without the care and compassion of our mothers.

Discouragement is a common temptation, and is particularly deadly because it doesn't even seem like a sin. So the person who would never lie, steal, or commit adultery, might well become discouraged. The truth, however, is that the subtle sin of discouragement opens the door for lying, stealing, and adultery. That's why Jochebed's encouragement is so important. Note that "encourage" and "discourage" both involve courage. One gives it, and the other takes it away.

Since Aaron, the brother of Moses, was 3 years older than Moses (Ex. 7:7), we know the evil decree of the Pharaoh was less than 3 years old. Egypt rose to prominence about 3,000 B.C. and reached the pinnacle of its power from about 1570 B.C. This was the very time that the mother of Moses dared to defy the most powerful dictator on earth.

One reason for her courage may well involve her belief in the promises of God. Many years before, God told Abram that his descendants would be enslaved in a foreign nation for 400 years. God promised, however, that “afterward” his descendants would come out of bondage with “great possessions” (Gen. 15:14). I think Jochebed knew about this promise. 1,500 years later Stephen knew about it too and reminded the Jews that Moses was born “as the time drew near for God to fulfill His promise” (Acts 7:17). I think that not only did Jochebed and Stephen know about this promise, I think Moses also knew about it. Remember Moses killed the Egyptian because he supposed “that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them” (Acts 7:25). Unfortunately, they didn’t understand.

But let us return to the mother of Moses. I continue to be encouraged by her courage, faith and patience. It was 12 months from the time of her conception, to the time when Moses was rescued from the river and became the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. Poor Jochebed had to wait another 40 years for Moses to even try and deliver the people of God. After that failed, she had to wait another 40 years for her dreams to actually become reality. This was 80 years after she saved the baby Moses from death. Since her husband, Amram, lived to be 137 (Ex. 6:20), it is quite possible that she also lived to see her dreams come true. Moses responded well to her teaching, for even though he was the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, he still chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season (Heb. 11:24, 25). What a beautiful tribute Moses is to the courage and conviction of his godly mother.

Granny feels that she had the greatest mother in the world. As a single mother with almost no formal education Granny Coppenger successfully raised 8 children. I had a great mother too and think of her almost every day. As Mother’s Day approaches remember that worry and discouragement are sins. When the devil tempts you to worry or be discouraged, join with me in thinking about Jochebed. May her godly example help all of us to be faithful to God in the midst of adversity.

Remember also that honoring your father and mother is the first commandment with a promise (Eph. 6:2). The “promise” was that things would go well with you, and you would live long in the land.

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce