

HONOR TO MOTHERS

Today we are going to talk about mothers as this is a day set aside in our country to honor mothers. Back on May 9, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a joint resolution in Congress recommending that the federal government observe Mother's Day. The next year, the president was authorized to proclaim it as an annual holiday. Though this is special one-time event each year, we should honor our mothers more often than that. Mother's should be honored every day.

The labor of love done by a mother is most often overlooked and underappreciated. As she uses her God-given talents of mothering, her deeds are usually expected. A mother is expected to be there to raise and nurture her children. A mother is expected to get up and care for the home even when she doesn't feel like it. A mother at time has to be the comforting nurse that tends to the hurt of her children. So today take times to tell you mother what she means to you and how much you appreciated what she has done for you.

The Bible tells us to honor our mothers. Early in the history of the Israelite nation they were instructed to honor their father and mother. *Exodus 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.* This commandment has a promise associated with it which says if you honor you parents your days may be long. The principle is if you do what your parents say, then you are likely to avoid putting yourself in a dangerous, life-threatening situation. The apostle Paul echoes the same thought. *Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. (2) Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)* (3) *That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.* So mothers are to be respected and honored. I would like to spend the next few minutes to look at the lives of some of our Biblical mothers.

EVE –MOTHER OF MANKIND

The first is Eve, the mother of all mankind. From a mothering aspect we have very little said about Eve other than she gave birth to sons and daughters (Gen 5:4). Of these children we are familiar with Cain, Able and Seth. As a mother, Eve must have felt heartache and disappointment. She lost a son to death; in fact, more troublesome than that he was killed by her other son who was later banished from Eden which meant she likely lost this son too. As a mother, don't you know she agonized over this and was disappointed in Cain for the deed that he did.

But then there was joy of having another son which was named Seth. *Genesis 4:25-26 And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. (26) And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.* From v26 we learn that grandchildren began to call upon the name of the Lord. How did they know about the Lord if not taught and who taught them? I suggest that this godly behavior was influenced, at least in part by the teaching of Granny Eve.

SARAH – THE IMPATIENT MOTHER

The next mother I want us to consider is Sarah, Abraham's wife and the mother of Isaac. Here we see an impatient mother. God had made a promise to Abraham that his descendents would be more numerous than the stars and no doubt Sarah was aware of this but much time had passed and she had not yet conceived. She apparently thought that she was never going to conceive but she was not going to let her infertility stop her from providing Abraham with children. In her human wisdom, she decided that she could help God with the keeping of His promise. *Genesis 16:1-4 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. (2) And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. (3) And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. (4) And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.*

We learn Sarah has taken matters into her own hands and it worked. She gives her maid servant to Abraham and she was able to bear Abraham a son. While Sarah accomplished what she was trying to do, it went against God's plan. Whenever you go against God's plan, it never works in your favor.

When Hagar conceived a child for Abraham there was immediately animosity between Sarah and her handmaid Hagar. Apparently, Hagar was dishonoring Sarah because she could not conceive. Because of this, Sarah dealt with her maid harshly as Sarah was very unhappy about this whole mess. Sarah probably wished that she had never taken matters into her own hands. She should have just waited on the lord and trusted in him. This should be a lesson for us. We need to put our trust in the Lord and try not do thing our own way.

We are familiar with the rest of the story. After Sarah was way past the age to conceive a child, God lets Abraham know that Sarah was not going to bear a child. How exciting this couple was. For you mothers try to remember how excited you were when you found out about the conception of your first child. ***Genesis 17:17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?***

HANNAH A FAITHFUL MOTHER

Now I want us to consider Hanna, the mother of the prophet Samuel. Samuel is the best known and possibly the favorite of all the judges in the history of Israel. He got his godly start from a godly mother, Hanna. This story is found in the first part of 1 Samuel. There we learn that a man by the name of Elkanah had 2 wives. One was named Peninnah (pen- in – naw) and the other Hannah. Like the story of Sarah and Hagar, Peninnah was able to have children but Hannah could not. When they would go once a year to worship God and make sacrifices Elkanah would make an offering and give a portion to Peninnah and her children but he would give a double portion to Hannah because he loved her so much even though she had not bore him any children. This was very troublesome to Hannah and all she wanted to do was to be a mother and it certainly didn't help matters when Peninnah would give her a hard time about not having any children yet.

1 Samuel 1:8-11 Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons? (9) So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. (10) And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. (11) And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

As you can see Hannah was distraught and prayed to God from her heart with eyes full of tears. She poured her soul out to the Lord and asked him to allow her conceive a son and that she would give him to the lord all the days of his life. She put her trust in the Lord and the lord heard her prayer and answered it with the birth of a son who was named Samuel. Now she stayed at home with Samuel until he was weaned then she took him to the priest to let him forever serve the Lord.

From this story mothers can learn the impact of prayer regarding your children. In the rearing of children there are often circumstances where you are just not sure what to do. In such times take it to the Lord. Then there are times of joy and thankfulness; in such times take it to the Lord.

We also learn that Hanna honored her vow to the Lord (1 Samuel 1:24-28). She willingly gave her son over to the priest Eli to raise in service to the Lord and from here Samuel became the great man that he was. Since Hannah was so faithful and a wonderful mother, we learn that God blessed her with even more children. Back in v21 we are told that she bore three more sons and two daughters.

JOCHEBED (JOCK – A – BED) A PROTECTIVE MOTHER (Exodus 2)

The next mother in our honor to mothers is Jochebed, the mother of Moses. Like Samuel, Moses if the most famous leader of the Israelites. Much is said in scripture about his leadership of God's people. And like Samuel, he got his start with a god-fearing mother. Jochebed is good example at what a mother is willing to do to save her child.

In Exodus 2 there was a decree issued by the Pharaoh of Egypt to kill all male babies less than two years of age of which included Moses. Moses mother loved him dearly and she was not about to have him killed because of the Pharaohs command. She made a basket and placed her baby inside and placed the basket in the river where Pharaoh's daughter would find him.

Now as we read the story of what happened, it's easy to see that Jochebed was taking a big risk in putting her son on the river and allowing the Pharaohs daughter to see him. She could easily order her servants to drown baby Moses. But when the Pharaoh's daughter saw the baby cry her heart melted. There seems to be a natural desire for most women to embrace a child that is crying and that is what Pharaoh's daughter did.

After taking the child, Jochebed was brought in to be the babies nurse and as such she had the opportunity to teach Moses about God and the children of Israel until he was weaned. This teaching at a very young age stayed with Moses and he never forgot it. Mothers, never underestimate the importance of teaching your children when they are young. This is why it's important to have those toddlers in a Bible class. All mothers and fathers alike can learn a great lesson from Jochebed. It's very important that we teach our children about God early on. What we teach them now will stick with them for the rest of their lives and will influence how they live their life in the future. We must understand that as Christian parents and grandparents that our children and our grandchildren look at us for examples.

While it's important to begin teaching your children at a young tender age, there are some mothers that have already missed that opportunity. Their children are already beyond that young age. I want you to know that it doesn't matter how old your children are, you should never give up on them. Take every opportunity you can to teach them more about God because you never know what influence you may still have on them. So never give up.

EUNICE – A COMMITTED MOTHER

Now let's close by considering Timothy's mother and grandmother. We just discussed the importance of teaching your children while they are young. Notice what Paul says about Timothy. *2 Timothy 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* Here we see a young man that knew the scriptures from his youth - *from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures.*

QUESTION: HOW DID HE LEARN IT?

ANSWER: FROM HIS MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER.

2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also. Much is inferred in this verse. For one thing we see the influence of faithfulness in at least two generations. Lois was a godly woman who taught her daughter Eunice which now the two of them persuaded Timothy to have an unfeigned faith. That word "unfeigned" carried the idea of sincerity, solid, unwavering.

Another point to mention before closing is that Eunice taught Timothy without the help of a Christian husband. Timothy's father was a Greek and from context it is implied that he was not a believer. *Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:* We have mothers today that do not have the support of a husband in the teaching of their children. If you find yourself in that situation, you can still be successful in your efforts and Timothy is a good example of such.

Lois and Eunice were Christian women and as such were entitled to receive the spiritual blessings found in Christ. *Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:* One of those spiritual blessings is salvation. *2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.*

Are you in Christ? Are you a Christian?