

Mothers

5/12/24

Day 1:

In the Bible, a good mother is portrayed as one who exemplifies selflessness, compassion, and wisdom.

She is seen as a nurturer who provides love, guidance, and protection to her children. The story of Mary, the mother of Jesus, serves as a powerful example of this maternal archetype.

Mary's unwavering faith in God and her willingness to sacrifice for her son symbolize the essence of what it means to be a good mother.

Proverbs 31 also offers insights into the characteristics of a good mother. The passage describes a woman who is strong, wise, and industrious.

She is depicted as a caretaker for her family, ensuring their well-being and happiness.

This portrayal emphasizes the importance of diligence and dedication in fulfilling the role of a mother according to biblical principles.

These examples highlight the diverse characteristics of good mothers in the Bible, including faith, love, courage, wisdom, and sacrificial devotion to their children and families.

Here are some examples of good mothers in and around the Bible:

1. Eve - Mother of All Mankind

The first mother, Eve, meaning "mother of all living" (Genesis 3:20). Along with Adam, she gave into temptation with catastrophic consequences resulting in the fall of mankind, painful childbearing and ultimate death. However, from the very beginning we can see God's redemptive plan as He was the one to clothe Eve's nakedness and shame (Genesis 3:21).

She could have died instantly for the sin she committed, for the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). However, the Lord had mercy on her and even in the pain of labor, she recognized that it was with the Lord's help that she could multiply her offspring.

Generations would come forth from Eve that would lead to the birth of Jesus Christ. God has given us mercy and grace through the death of Jesus which is where mothers can find strength and hope for their lives.

Day 2

2. Sarah - Faith in God's Promises

Sarah was called Sarai before God changed her name to "mother of nations." She was barren, which would have been cause for shame in her culture and she would have had to live with the distress of finding out that she was unable to conceive. God made a promise to Abram that he would have descendants, but the promise seemed to remain unfulfilled. So Sarai took matters into her own hands and told Abram to sleep with her servant, Hagar, which was a cultural norm of the day. This way Abram would have the heir that was promised.

Sarah laughed at the idea that she could carry a child in her old age, yet she gave birth to Isaac and saw God's faithfulness to keep His promise to them. Hebrews 11:11 lists Sarah as an example of faith in believing that God would do what He promised. She made a lot of mistakes, including how she treated Hagar, but her faith in God's promises is biblical wisdom for mothers to follow.

3. Hagar - Meeting with the God Who Sees Her

Hagar was a woman who trusted that God would care for her after she was treated harshly by Sarai and fled. After encountering the angel of the Lord by a spring of water in the wilderness, she is told by him to return back to Sarai. The angel says that she would have a son called Ishmael and that her offspring would be multiplied (Genesis 16). Hagar called upon the name of the Lord who spoke to her and said, “You are the God who sees me” (Genesis 16:13) and she now saw the God of Abram for herself.

Motherhood can feel like a wilderness at times and can bring feelings of isolation, exhaustion and a longing to be refreshed. In the New Testament, we read of Jesus at a well saying to the woman from Samaria that He provides living water (John 4:10, 13-14). The Samaritan woman would have been an outcast like Hagar, yet Jesus saw her like He saw Hagar and provided everything they needed. The Lord sees all women including mothers in their struggles, weariness, hurts and fears.

In Isaiah 40:11 it says “He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.” Mothers can look to Hagar and be reassured that He is the God who sees them and that “truly here I have seen him who looks after me” (Genesis 16:13).

Day 3

4. Jochebed - Trusting in God for Her Child's Life

Not much is said about Jochebed the mother of Moses, yet actions speak volumes. Her name means “Yahweh is glory” and she lived that message; she knew who her God was. Moses was born into slavery at a time when a decree was ordered to kill all Hebrew boys under the age of two. By faith, Jochebed hid Moses for three months before putting him in a basket and floating him down the River Nile, trusting that he would be safe.

Moses was raised by Pharaoh’s daughter who had found him floating in the basket along the river. Just like Hagar’s recognition that God saw her, His providence enabled Jochebed to nurse her own son in Pharaoh’s household until Moses was old enough. Mothers can trust the Lord with their children knowing that He is Lord of all. He is sovereign and He loves them.

5. Hannah - Crying Out to God

Hannah desperately desired a child but was unable to conceive. It was made worse by the fact that her husband’s other wife, Penninah, had children and teased Hannah relentlessly because of her plight. She prayed to God from the anguish in her heart and said if God would give her a son, she would give him back to God, setting him apart for a life of service (1 Samuel 1:11).

Hannah gave birth to Samuel who would become a prophet and anoint future kings of Israel. He followed God’s leading, obeyed Him and gave glory and honor to God alone.

We should come before God with honest cries from the depths of our heart and know that He hears our prayers. He bottles our tears (Psalm 56:8) and knows all that we need before we ask (Matthew 6:8). He had plans for Hannah and her son even in her despair, and she was faithful to her word to give Samuel to serve God. She was part of a bigger story - God’s story for His people.

Day 4

6. Elizabeth - Righteous and Blameless in Old Age

Elizabeth was the cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus and the wife of Zechariah the priest. She was righteous before God and blameless in following the commandments and statutes of the Lord (Luke 1:6). Despite this, Elizabeth was barren and advanced in age, so when Elizabeth became pregnant, she said, “Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people” (Luke 1:25).

Elizabeth was a godly woman but experienced disgrace in her culture for not bearing children. But God had a plan for her beyond all that she could have imagined; she would be the mother of John the Baptist who would prepare the way for the Messiah (Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1; Matthew 3:3). We can follow Jesus and trust Him whatever our circumstances in life, knowing there is a plan and purpose in it.

7. Mary - Obedience and Praise to God

God became one of us, carried through pregnancy, delivered at birth and raised in childhood by Mary. Although Mary was afraid when the angel came to her with the news she would carry the Messiah, she willingly obeyed and said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38). Despite being a virgin, she was obedient to the call in a culture where she would have been shamed. Joseph wanted to end things secretly, but he too obeyed the angel as they followed this magnificent call from God.

Mary magnified and praised the Lord for looking upon her to carry Jesus. Her song to God was recorded in Luke 1:46-55. In it, she recognized that she was a humble servant and that she would be blessed because of Him:

My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call

me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name (vs. 46-49).

Mary recognized who she was and who God was. She rejoiced knowing that God had been mindful of her and she acknowledged Him as her Savior. We can be like Mary knowing that we serve a holy God and that He is the Savior of the world.

Day 5

8. Lois and Eunice - A Mother and Daughter Team

“I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well” (2 Timothy 1:5).

Timothy was the protégé of the apostle Paul and it is clear in Scripture that the faith of his grandmother Lois and mother Eunice had an impact on Timothy. This is a wonderful example of how the faith within a family can influence future generations. We should never underestimate the power of praying grandparents and parents, and remember to pray for mothers, grandparents and children also.

9. Susanna Wesley - The Mother of Methodism

Susanna Wesley was the mother of 19 children, among whom were her sons John and Charles Wesley. John Wesley was a clergyman and evangelist and was considered the father of Methodism. His brother Charles was well-known for the hymns that he wrote.

Both of these men, along with their siblings, were raised by a mother who took the time to instill obedience, Scripture and order into their lives. Her example was imperative in the spiritual formation and education of both John and Charles. She also made sure that she spent set times alone with each individual child in her care.

Her methods, faith and the love she had for her children in the face of much hardship and suffering are examples for mothers today as they look to do the same for their own children.

10. Elisabeth Elliot - A Missionary Mother

The parents of missionary and writer Elisabeth Elliot ensured that the Bible was central in their home. Elisabeth was one of six children and they all had daily Bible reading and prayer as a pattern within their home led by their parents. This example influenced Elisabeth to a faith that would sustain her when she lost her husband, Jim Elliot, in the mission field. He was speared to death by members of the tribe they had come to share the gospel with. However, Elisabeth and her 10-month-old daughter Valerie stayed on and lived amongst that same tribe that killed her husband.

Elisabeth's life had a solid foundation on the Bible and prayer. This was something that she experienced at home as a child, which strengthened and enabled her to live the life she was called to overseas. She raised her daughter and, through her writing and communication, impacted countless others to love the Lord. The Lord calls mothers to follow Him and that call can lead them across the world or to the local community at home. Faithfulness to that call leads to fruitfulness.