

## Godly Mothers in the Bible

Today is a day where much of the world pauses to remember mothers. This is certainly not a Biblically sanctioned day for churches to set aside, but it is a topic addressed in scripture and worthy of consideration from time to time. One of the things we find in the New Testament letters is how they addressed current events and situations and how Christians were to respond to such. It makes a lesson “relevant” to what is going on. And just as I believe our current circumstance warrants some lessons to remind us of how we can deal with this present distress, so the world’s call to remind us to remember mothers warrants a study of what God’s word says about that subject from time to time. So, with that in mind, I will like to devote this lesson to an examination of some godly mothers in the Bible.

### I. What does the Bible say about mothers?

- a. They are typically and more naturally inclined to love their children. Paul would appeal to that natural tendency in 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8. Sadly, this is not always the case. 2 Timothy 3:3 in the list of selfishness, Paul mentions the unloving; The KJV uses the expression, “without natural affection”. It can at least apply to the unloving mother who selfishly neglects, abuses or even murders her child, often before he or she is given opportunity to live in this world. Titus 2:4 speaks of older women teaching the younger women to love their husbands and children. While there is something natural about a mother’s love, there are also so many things to learn as she carries that out.
- b. We are to honor our mothers – Ephesians 6:1-3 calls for children to obey and honor their father and mother. Proverbs 23:24-25 - *The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, And he who begets a wise child will delight in him. Let your father and your mother be glad, And let her who bore you rejoice.* Proverbs 1:8 calls for the child to hear the instruction of your father, and to NOT forsake the law of your mother. So much could be said about what is involved in honoring your parents, but hopefully we understand it. When we love our mother and father, we will honor them. As Proverbs 31:28 notes that the virtuous wife (woman), *“Her children rise up and call her blessed...”* She has a role in raising children – keepers at home, teaching children
- c. Her role will have a great influence on what will become of the children, and society in general. In the traditional home, she will spend the greatest amount of time with them and thus has the opportunity to mold them on the homefront. Truly, the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.
- d. FOR the remainder of this lesson, I want to focus on a handful of godly mothers we find in scripture. Some of the best lessons in life, and in God’s word, are learned from examples. After all, our lives are about following the example of Jesus (cf. Philippians 2:5, 1 Peter 2:21-23, 1 Corinthians 11:1, etc.). So let us consider some godly mothers.

### II. Some godly mothers in the Bible

- a. Not all mothers in scripture were godly. In fact, most mothers that we read about, how they reared their children is not addressed. We do read of the ungodly influence of mothers in many instances – Jezebel (2 Chronicles 22:3), the daughter of Herodias (who had John the Baptist beheaded – Matthew 14:6-8), Rebekah (who taught Jacob to lie and deceive his father – Genesis 27), etc. But there are a few godly mothers that stand out for what they did. Let us notice a few of these.
- b. Jochebed, the mother of Moses. Recorded in Exodus 2:1-10, we find that Pharaoh had ordered the killing of every male child of Israel. Jochebed (cf. Exodus 6:20) hid Moses in a small ark and put it in the river. When Pharaoh’s daughter found him, Miraim (Moses’ sister) offered to find a nursemaid to

help raise him. She went and got Jochebed was commissioned to help raise him while in Pharaoh's household.

YOU find in this example, **a mother's love**. This is the "natural affection" we previously mentioned. There is a willingness to sacrifice and take extreme measures to protect her children. That is what she did. We also find, though not directly mentioned, that she likely would instill in Moses the values of YHWH. He had to learn his heritage from somewhere. It was likely his mother. **Consider Hebrews 11:23-27**. Notice her faith in her actions. She saw that Moses was a beautiful child and did not fear the evil instructions of Pharaoh. BY FAITH, she hid Moses and took measures to protect him and see that he was spared.

It is often the mother who will get up at all hours of the night to nurse an infant, and will stay up when that child is ill. She is the one who will clean up the constant messes that they make. She will sacrifice her own wants to see that her child is taken care of.

We know of the faith of Moses and all that he accomplished. Where did that begin? With his mother and father. That is what we find in Jochebed.

- c. **Hannah, the mother of Samuel**. Found in 1 Samuel 1, we find Israel in the period of the judges. It was a tragic time. The book of Judges ends with this statement, "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (Judges 21:25).

It was in the midst of this that Hannah is married to a man named Elkanah. We find that Hannah was barren and provoked severely because of this. Though she was greatly loved by her husband, she still wanted a child. 1 Samuel 1:11 records a vow that she made to the LORD. She said if He would give her a child, that he would be dedicated to the LORD all the days of his life. In that text we learn what a sacrifice that was.

Eli, the priest sees that she is praying and blesses her to go in peace and the God of Israel would grant her petition (1 Samuel 1:17-18). In time she conceives and gives birth to Samuel (which means *God Has Heard*).

After the child is weaned, she dedicates him to the Lord. He remains in Jerusalem and is raised by Eli. But on a yearly basis, Hannah would visit Samuel and bring him a little robe (2:18-21). Eli again blesses Hannah, and she has 5 more children. Meanwhile, the child Samuel grows before the Lord.

**IN Hannah, we find a godly mother, whose priority is serving God and instilling that as the HIGHEST priority in their lives.** So many parents today are more concerned about the material prosperity of their children than they are about their spiritual well-being. Godly parents will be more concerned about their children obeying the gospel and growing up to faithfully serve God than they worldly success.

Hannah knew what was most important and her devotion to God was followed by that of her son Samuel. Samuel would anoint both kings Saul and David. He would also intercede for Israel as priest. And it began with a mother of faith, who kept her word to God and ensured that her children did the same.

- d. **Lois and Eunice, the grandmother and mother of Timothy** – 2 Timothy 1:5, As Paul begins this final letter, he makes mention of his mother and grandmother. He commends their efforts to instill faith in Timothy. You may note that he commends the faith that Timothy has and notes it FIRST dwelt in them. Eunice, LIVED the faith she tried to instill in Timothy. AND Lois LIVED the faith she had instilled in her daughter Eunice. We frequently emphasize the importance of example. IT is the best way to teach and open doors for others to consider our Lord (cf. Matthew 5:16).

That also applies to parents. Children are going to spend the majority of their formative years with their father and mother. And if mother is at home, they will be watching her. It will not take long for them to figure out how GENUINE their faith really is. Children see the hypocrisy in their homes.

Children see if as parents bring their children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Primarily directed at fathers, but it applies to both – Ephesians 6:4) really see that as important in their lives.

We do NOT know how godly Timothy's father was – we know he was a Greek (Acts 16:1 – a Hellenist). We know Eunice was Jewish and believed and as such she was able to influence Timothy to be faithful.

2 Timothy 3:15 – This is further emphasized as we note that Timothy “from childhood” knew the holy scriptures. He had been taught the word of God all his life.

***Godly mothers (and fathers) will take time to ensure that their children are taught the word of God. That is what has bearing on their eternity.***

- e. ***Mary, the mother of Jesus*** – I would love to know more about Mary, the mother of Jesus.

She is such an amazing character. WE only read about her on a few occasions, but we learn about her from these.

As a virgin, she submits to God to bring Jesus into this world and to raise Him as His mother. Clearly, she was honorable and feared God in this, and throughout her life.

She showed great love and concern for Him – Luke 2:41-52, the only childhood occasion of Jesus recorded in scripture. We see her concern for Jesus when He is discovered to be missing. They return to Jerusalem and search for 3 days. She then lovingly rebukes Him.

We also note in vs. 51 that she kept these things in her heart and that she raised Him as His mother.

NEXT, we find her at a wedding feast (John 2:1-10) where she instructs servants to do whatever He told them to do – showing confidence in Him

She also shows her care and concern for Him as He is being mistreated. She and His brothers search for Him to speak with Him (Matthew 12:46-47).

Finally, we find her at the foot of His cross as He is dying. This is where Jesus makes provisions for her to be cared for by tasking John to take her in (John 19:25-27).

You can see in Mary a mother's love, to the very end. She is there in both good times and bad.

These are some of the qualities we find in godly mothers. Certainly, we ought to thank God for our mothers. And may we do so, not just one day a year, or occasionally. Instead let's be grateful for them at all times. Our mothers are always worthy of our honor and respect. Let us strive to be pleasing to our God, even in this. Think about it!