

A Mother's Courage in the Hands of God

Exodus 2:1-10

Student Devotion

Sometimes courage looks like charging into danger. Other times, it looks like trusting God in the silence. It's hiding a baby when the law says he should die. It's releasing that child into a river and praying that God will hold him when you no longer can.

Exodus 2 opens in a world filled with fear. Pharaoh has ordered that every Hebrew baby boy be thrown into the Nile. Yet one woman—Jochebed—refuses to surrender to fear. She protects her son as long as she can. And when she can hide him no longer, she places him in a basket and gives him to God.

Her courage is not loud, but it is lasting. And God uses it. Through her trust, and through the faith of two other women—Miriam and Pharaoh's daughter—God saves a child who will one day lead Israel out of slavery.

This week, we're going to walk with these women. We'll learn what it means to have faith when the world is dark, to act with courage even when we feel powerless, and to trust that God is always working behind the scenes.

Day 1: Courage Starts Where Fear Should Win

“Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son...” (Exodus 2:1-2a)

Think About It:

Every mother in Egypt knew the decree. If you gave birth to a boy, he would be taken. That was Pharaoh's law. But Jochebed gave birth anyway. She chose life in the middle of a death sentence. The fear was real, but so was her faith.

Jochebed hid her son for three months. That choice was risky. Every cry could be heard. Every day could be the day someone found him. Yet she kept going. Her courage came from trusting that God saw her child and had a plan for him.

The kind of faith that grows in dangerous places is not loud. It is steady. It believes that the God who gave the child can also protect him.

Pray It:

God, help me trust You when fear is loud. Give me the kind of courage that holds steady when life is uncertain.

Do It:

Write down one fear you've been carrying quietly. Ask God to help you move forward in faith rather than shrink back in worry.

Day 2: When You Let Go, God Still Holds

“She got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds...” (Exodus 2:3)

Think About It:

At some point, hiding Moses was no longer possible. Jochebed had to make a decision. She made a basket. She sealed it. She laid her son inside. And she set him into the water.

This was not an act of surrender. It was an act of trust. The word used for “basket” is the same word used for Noah’s ark. This was her version of an ark—small, fragile, but full of faith. She released Moses, not to the river, but to God.

Sometimes faith means letting go. It means giving your plans, your fears, your people to God. You trust Him to guide the basket when you can no longer carry it yourself.

Pray It:

Father, give me the strength to release what I can't hold. Teach me to trust that You are still holding what I let go.

Do It:

Think of one area where you're holding on tightly. Write a short prayer asking God to take it into His hands.

Day 3: God Moves Through Unlikely People

“Then Pharaoh’s daughter went down to the Nile... She saw the basket... She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him.” (Exodus 2:5–6)

Think About It:

Pharaoh gave the order to kill. His daughter saved the life of the deliverer. She should have walked away. Instead, she reached into the basket and pulled out a crying baby.

God's work often shows up in unexpected people. He does not only use those we expect. He moves through royalty, servants, foreigners, and family members. He speaks into stories through those who barely know His name.

Pharaoh's daughter felt compassion. That one emotion changed everything. She made a choice in the moment. She spared a child. She defied a king.

The people around you may not look like spiritual leaders. That does not mean God cannot use them. He moves through anyone He chooses, including the person you least expect.

Pray It:

Lord, help me see the people around me the way You do. Use my heart and my decisions to help carry out Your purpose.

Do It:

Look for one person this week you would normally overlook. Ask how God might be working through them—or through you—in their life.

Day 4: Small Courage Can Open Big Doors

“Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, ‘Shall I go and call a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby for you?’” (Exodus 2:7)

Think About It:

Miriam was young. She stood at a distance, watching. But when the moment came, she stepped forward with wisdom and courage. She didn't wait to be asked. She offered a solution that brought her brother back to their family.

Courage is not always dramatic. Sometimes it looks like quiet readiness. Sometimes it's one sentence at the right moment. Sometimes it's a teenager speaking up in front of royalty because she knows something good needs to happen.

God used Miriam's voice to reconnect Moses to his mother. He worked through a young girl watching from the reeds.

You don't need to be famous to be faithful. You don't need to be in charge to be courageous. God uses people who are ready to speak when the door opens.

Pray It:

God, help me stay ready. Give me courage when the moment comes. Let me speak with wisdom and grace.

Do It:

Practice one sentence you want to be ready to say. It could be encouragement, truth, or hope. Ask God to give you the moment to speak it.

Day 5: What You Place in God's Hands Never Falls Apart

“So the woman took the baby and nursed him.” (Exodus 2:9)

Think About It:

Jochebed placed her son into the river, and now he is returned to her arms under the protection of a royal household. She is paid to care for her own child. Only God can write that kind of story.

The child Pharaoh wanted dead is now growing up inside Pharaoh's palace. The God who led the basket through the reeds is the same God who will later part the Red Sea.

Jochebed did not know what would happen when she released Moses. She only knew she had to trust the God who gave him. What she gave up in faith, God returned in peace.

When you entrust your people, your dreams, or your future to God, you may not see the full story. But He sees every detail. And He will care for what you place in His hands.

Pray It:

Lord, thank You for guarding what I cannot. Give me peace as I trust You to carry what I surrender.

Do It:

Think of one story in your life where God worked in a way you did not expect. Thank Him today for what you see now that you could not see then.

Conclusion: Faithful in the Middle of the Story

Jochebed did not know what her courage would set in motion. She only knew that her child was worth protecting and that God was worth trusting. That simple obedience became part of God's great plan to rescue His people.

God is still writing those kinds of stories. He is still using women who walk with quiet faith, still stirring courage in people who feel small, and still turning ordinary obedience into something eternal.

Whatever you are holding today, place it in His hands. He sees. He directs. He protects. The God who saved Moses through the courage of three women still works through faith that trusts Him with the future.

See you Sunday.