

Junior High Quarterly

Compassion

Quarterly Aim: The student will evaluate his life for areas where he can show greater compassion towards others.

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About the Writer



Dr. John Cooper has been the pastor of Stamps-Landmark Missionary Baptist Church in Stamps, AR, since December 2009. He also has served as a faculty member at Louisiana Missionary Baptist Institute and Seminary in Minden, LA, since 2000. He received his Doctor of Theology degree from LMBIS in the Spring of 2015.

Dr. Cooper was born and raised in Fort Smith, AR, where he was saved and baptized at Massard MBC. He surrendered to preach in 1997 at Liberty MBC in Shreveport, LA. He has been the pastor of Hope MBC in Heflin, LA, and Landmark MBC in West Monroe, LA, as well as associate pastor of Liberty MBC in Shreveport and missionary helper at Landmark MBC in Stonewall, LA.

He is married to the former Cynthia Dart of Van Buren, AR. They have a daughter, Hilary.

He enjoys sports and watching the Razorbacks in particular.

Email: jdcooper20@bellsouth.net

A Surprise Source of Compassion

APPLICATION

To show human compassion from Pharaoh's daughter.

SCRIPTURES TO READ

Text: Exodus 2:1-10.

Related Scripture: Deuteronomy 13:17; 1 Samuel 23:21;
1 Kings 8:50; 2 Chronicles 30:9; 36:15, 16; Psalms 78:38;
86:15; Luke 15:20; 1 Peter 3:8.

Devotional Reading: Joseph's Response to His Brothers,
Genesis 50:15-21.

Getting Started

A year ago, University of Arkansas Head Football Coach Bret Bielema was getting his team prepared to play its biggest game of the year against top-ranked Alabama. Nothing needed to sidetrack him from preparation for that game. Alabama was the elite of the elite programs, having won four of the last seven national championships and fourteen titles overall. Most college coaches have tunnel vision during the season no matter the opponent, but Alabama demanded a special kind of tunnel vision.

Coach Bielema's concentration changed with a phone call. It was the mother of one of his players, whose father had just died in Minnesota. She wanted Coach Bielema to be with her son when she told him the devastating news on the phone. Not only did the coach do that, but he also arranged special air transportation for the player back to his home state. Coach Bielema and his wife then accompanied the player to Minnesota so he would not be alone and spent time with the family before returning to Arkansas at 2 a.m. By 6 a.m., Bielema

Defining the Term:

Compassion is a feeling of wanting to help someone who is sick, hungry or in trouble.

was back in his office at work toward the upcoming game. The coach's actions were hailed by many sports commentators as being a true act of compassion.

Think About It:

What are some ways people have shown you compassion? In contrast, what are some ways you have shown others compassion?

The Bible and Compassion

The Bible is full of stories and living examples of compassionate people. One of the most-loved stories of compassion is the parable Jesus told of the good Samaritan, who had compassion on the Jew who was beaten, robbed and left for dead (Luke 10:30-36). We will look at that story in more detail in Lesson 13. No one, though, had more compassion than Jesus, who gave His own life that you and I might live eternally. Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Having compassion means doing what it takes to supply what is needed at that moment.

The Bible Lesson

The Jews were slaves in the land of Egypt, but God was continuing to bless His chosen people. They were continuing to multiply and had become so large that Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, was concerned that they might by sheer force overthrow the Egyptians. So, Pharaoh chose to work his slaves exceedingly hard and charged his people to drown every male Hebrew child (Exodus 1:22). By doing this, he hoped to control the Jewish population and keep God's chosen people under his rule. But he didn't count on Moses being born or that his own daughter would help Moses to survive.

"Amram" means "exalted people," while "Jochebed" means "Jehovah is glory."

1. A Godly Heritage (Exodus 2:1-4)

Amram, a son of Levi, and Jochebed, who was of that same Levitical tribe, had earlier come together as husband and wife (Exodus 6:20), and they had already been blessed with a daughter, Miriam, and a son, Aaron, prior to the decree of Pharaoh to drown all the newborn Hebrew males. The Levites would later become the priestly tribe of the nation of Israel. They were godly people who gave life to godly children. Notice they did not go outside their own tribe to marry; they found their spouse within the Levite tribe. Certainly, the marriage arrangement in that time was different from today, but the principle remains the same. Young Christian men

and women should seek to marry within the Christian faith (2 Corinthians 6:14).

When Jochebed gave birth to Moses, she was not going to obey Pharaoh's edict. Moses was a "goodly child" (Exodus 2:2) which means he was fair or beautiful. Some even think that he may even have had a mark on him that showed God's hand was upon him. After hiding him for three months, Jochebed could not hide him any longer and did put him in the Nile River, but inside a makeshift basket that would keep him alive. Hebrews 11:23 speaks of the great faith these parents had who did not fear the king. Miriam watched to see what would happen to her baby brother as he floated in the basket on the Nile.

2. Compassion from a Stranger (Exodus 2:5, 6)

Moses' life would be saved by the least likely of all candidates—Pharaoh's daughter. She was minding her own business, simply taking her maidens and going to the river to bathe, when she saw the basket floating at the edge of the river. Bathing in the Nile was not only normal, it was often considered invigorating and healthy. The basket intrigued her, so she sent her maidens to retrieve the basket.

When she opened the basket, she saw this "goodly child" who wept on cue. Most young ladies have a special place in their hearts for babies. If you doubt that, you should watch them when a baby is near. It is part of a woman's motherhood nature to have a soft heart when it comes to babies. God created women with that nature. Pharaoh's daughter was no exception. She saw the baby Moses, and she already was awed by him, but then he cried, and she was a goner. She immediately had compassion on him. She wasn't thinking about her father's commandment; she wanted to have Moses for her own.

3. God's Provision (Exodus 2:7-10)

Pharaoh's daughter wanted to raise Moses for her own, but she could not nurse him. This was long before a woman could go to the local store and buy formula. She needed a nursemaid to give him the care necessary to sustain him. Miriam, watching from a distance, came to Pharaoh's daughter and suggested she get a nurse to nurse him. Miriam went and got Jochebed the mother of Miriam and Moses to be the nursemaid.

Digging Deeper:

Collegiate athletes are often accused of taking easy classes like "Basket Weaving 101." If that were true, they could learn from Jochebed, who made an ark of bulrushes and daubed it with slime and pitch. This ark was a type of chest made of papyrus plant, which was often used for boat building. Slime was similar to our asphalt and pitch was like tar. She then laid the basket in the "flags" (Exodus 2:3) which speaks of the marshy tract of backwaters.

In the Bible:

God has used many unusual objects to accomplish His will, such as pagan kings and even donkeys.

He Wrote It:

“Here we see a wonderful interplay between the will of God and the wisdom of men. God was not willing that any little baby be killed, and these women, Jochebed and Miriam, had used their wisdom to see that Moses’ life was spared.”

—David Robinson

“Exodus: The Redemption of Slaves”

ABA Literature, 2001

When Jochebed arrived, Pharaoh’s daughter agreed to pay her to nurse her own son. When he was old enough to be weaned, Jochebed returned Moses to Pharaoh’s daughter to finish raising him. Undoubtedly, though, Jochebed had instilled in Moses his Hebrew heritage, and one day, he grew to choose that heritage and to suffer with God’s people rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin and the riches of Egypt. He went on to do the will of God and lead His people out of Egyptian bondage (Hebrews 11:24-27).

The Bible Lesson and You

It’s easy to have compassion on those whom you know and love, but having compassion on those whom you do not know and love is more difficult. In the coming week, look for opportunities when you can have compassion for a stranger. It could be simply buying lunch for someone at school or helping to tutor a needy student at no cost. Remember true compassion is doing something for others without any hopes of getting anything for yourself.