

Sponsor's Guide

To be used with Junior High, Young People and Adult

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



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A Surprise Source of Compassion

Lesson 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.

Application: To show human compassion from Pharaoh's daughter.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

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

When Joseph's father died, his brothers feared he had not truly forgiven them. They imagined he hated them. Their feelings revealed their guilt concerning how they had treated Joseph. They acknowledged they had done wrong. They confessed to Joseph and asked for his forgiveness. They did not expect their brother to have any compassion for them.

Joseph was moved with tenderness, love and compassion toward his brothers. The word "wept" means to mourn with tears. Although Joseph did not know God's plan at the time his brothers treated him so cruelly, he later understood God's purpose in his suffering. He knew God had sent him ahead to Egypt so that he could provide for his family in the time of famine.

The lack of forgiveness puts one out of the will of God. Joseph was not trying to be God in deciding who should be forgiven and who should not. He had genuinely forgiven his

brothers years ago. If he had failed to forgive, his life would have been guided by the foolish decisions of a bitter person. Joseph's right attitude and decisions to trust the Lord in every situation revealed that he truly had forgiven his brothers. Joseph assured them of his love. He spoke of his compassion for them and for their children. His words of kindness and his acts of compassion toward them gave them the needed assurance that Joseph loved them. Joseph loved and forgave those who hated and mistreated him.

EXAMINING THE TEXT

Exodus 2:1-10. Moses' parents were of the priestly tribe of Levi (verse 1). Their names were Amram and Jochebed. Amram means friend of God. Jochebed means God is her glory. These godly parents had a great responsibility from the Lord to raise their children according to His will and way. They had three children, Aaron, Miriam and Moses. God had a plan for each of their lives. Aaron would be the high priest. Miriam would serve as a leader among the women. Moses would serve as the deliverer God

would use to bring the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage and lead them through the time of the wilderness wanderings. Everything that happened in Moses' life before he went to Pharaoh at God's command prepared him for this great work. God's great leader and prophet Moses received godly training from parents who exhibited great faith in the Lord.

Amram and Jochebed made the decision to protect the child by preserving his life (verse 2). God's power was seen in the experiences of their family. God gave them conception. The child conceived was a son. He was an attractive child, a baby to be desired and loved. The word "goodly" means beautiful, cheerful, pleasant or sweet. This child Moses was God's answer to the prayers of the children of Israel as they suffered bondage in Egypt. God's plan for Moses' life included choosing his parents, blessing him with physical beauty and placing him in a home in which he was protected and loved. At the age of three months, the child could no longer be hidden from discovery. The law demanded that all the boy babies be killed (Exodus 1:22). God gave Jochebed the understanding concerning how to proceed with wisdom to continue to protect the life of her son Moses.

Moses' mother prepared an ark of safety for him so that he would not drown in the river (Exodus 2:3). The ark was made of bulrushes, similar to a basket in construction. The bulrushes were reeds that grew near the river bank. They could be braided to make ropes, shoes or clothes. They were also used for water crafts that would float when treated with slime and pitch. "Slime" was a type of mud

that would make the ark water tight. "Pitch" referred to a bubbling up of a liquid state. It hardened when dry. With such a covering, the ark of bulrushes would surely float. The picture of the covering of the ark in which Moses was placed reveals God's plan to cover the sinful condition of people by the blood of Jesus. Jesus is the ark of safety for whosoever will trust in Him. Just as Moses was secure in God's protection in the ark of bulrushes, so is the believer safe in Jesus.

Miriam stood watch to see what happened to her baby brother (verse 4). God was at work in the lives of Moses' parents and his sister. She had compassion for Moses. She had a desire to see what happened to him. God directed the events of Moses' life so that he was spared from death in the river. Moses' life was not thrown away by His mother. She took every precaution to preserve his life. The word "cast" means to throw out, to throw down, or to throw away (Exodus 1:22). Godly parents make the necessary sacrifices to teach, keep safe and secure the training of their children in the good and right way. Miriam obeyed God by faithfully watching over her brother. God used Miriam to help place Moses where He wanted him. God still uses people such as parents, friends, relatives and church members to help show children the way to live and trust in God.

Pharaoh's daughter was curious about the unusual sight near the river bank (Exodus 2:5). The Egyptians were fanatical about cleanliness, even to the point of shaving body hair lest they get lice. When Pharaoh's daughter went to the river to bathe, she saw the ark. God led in placing the ark where

it would be discovered by her. It aroused her curiosity when she saw the unusual thing in the water. When her servant women brought it to her, the baby in the basket was taken up out of the water. God used the curiosity of an Egyptian woman to provide a means of rescue from the river. God is active in the lives of people. These actions reveal even the smallest details in our lives do not escape God's attention. He is at work to accomplish His plan in the lives of His people for good (Romans 8:28). Although everything seemed to work against Moses, God was at work on his behalf to preserve his life.

When Pharaoh's daughter saw the baby and heard him cry, she was moved with compassion even though she knew he was a Hebrew child (Exodus 2:6). The word "opened" means to put off or to vent with an opening. When she looked in the opening, she saw Moses. Her heart was moved with compassion for the crying baby. Moses cried at God's right time. Pharaoh's daughter came to the river at God's exact time. The baby was obviously a Hebrew baby. The Egyptians were a Hamitic (descendant of Ham) people and the baby was of Semitic heritage (children of Shem). The obvious difference in physical characteristics and the law concerning Hebrew boy babies caused her to rightfully conclude Moses was not an Egyptian baby. She had the power as Pharaoh's daughter to exempt a child from the law requiring the male Hebrew baby to be killed. God placed Moses under the protection of Pharaoh's household.

Miriam's question encouraged the daughter of Pharaoh to make a practical decision (Exodus 2:7). The baby needed a wet nurse. A Hebrew

woman could perform this task for her until the baby could be weaned. In addition to the protection of Pharaoh's household, God arranged for Moses to receive his early training from his godly mother. God's plan is for godly parents to teach and train their children to know and love God as well as how to live for God. "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). The choices involved in bringing a child up in a manner that pleases God requires faith, understanding God's will and obeying His commands. These things served Moses well throughout his life. Although he was considered the son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses went through life with the knowledge of who he was and how God expected him to live.

God's plan for Moses' life included the love and compassion of a godly mother (Exodus 2:8). Miriam went to get her mother Jochebed and bring her to Pharaoh's daughter. Jochebed did not know anything of the events at the river until Miriam related them to her. She was willing to be used of God in the unusual circumstance of nurturing her own child and training him until the time she had to give him up to live in Pharaoh's household. By faith, she went to the river to meet the Egyptian woman. God blessed Jochebed's faith by sparing the life of her son and by giving her the opportunity to keep him at home a little longer. She taught her son Moses to have compassion for others by her example. When God gave her the opportunity, she gladly stepped up to give her best effort to raise her own child in a God honoring manner. She stood before Pharaoh's daughter as an experienced mother.

Moses' mother was paid wages to cherish and nurture her son (Exodus 2:9). The word "wages" means payment, salary or compensation. The best payment Jochebed or any mother could possibly receive is to watch her adult child make life choices that reflect a love for God and a respect for His commands. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Hebrews 11:24-26). God's command and promise for parents is "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Moses' mother was blessed with the financial means to meet Moses' needs while she had him.

Moses went to live with Pharaoh's daughter (Exodus 2:10). Although she raised him as an Egyptian, he had been taught well by his mother. By faith, he made the choices to leave Egypt and to keep the Passover (Hebrews 11:27, 28). His time in Pharaoh's household enabled him to receive training in the proper manner of behavior in the king's court. Moses saw how Pharaoh made decisions in leading his people. In a similar manner, God placed David in Saul's court so that he was trained in the ways of ruling and leading the nation Israel. Early life experiences gave the knowledge and training to handle later life opportunities. Moses in Pharaoh's household received the best education the Egyptians could provide. The construction of the pyramids

reveals it was an advanced society with great architectural achievements. God provided Moses with great advantages while living in Pharaoh's household.

RELATED SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 13:17. Israel was commanded not to touch the unclean thing—anything God had forbidden. If they were tainted by the unclean thing, God's judgment would fall heavily upon them. When they turned away from the unclean thing, God promised to show mercy, give compassion and send blessings.

1 Samuel 23:21. Saul spoke kindly about the Ziphites who were ready to betray David. He considered their actions the demonstration of compassion. Everyone loves to be treated with compassion. Even though Saul's purpose was to harm David, he still appreciated others treating him with kindness.

1 Kings 8:50. Solomon prayed for God's compassion and forgiveness of sins for Israel when they sinned against the Lord. He also prayed that when they were carried into captivity for their sins, that God would move upon their captors to show them compassion. "Compassion" means to show mercy or pity.

2 Chronicles 30:9. Those among Israel who turned back to God would receive forgiveness and compassion. God's compassion would be dispersed among their children and their relatives. God's character is both gracious and merciful. When Israel turns back to God, God will turn to them and will bless them.

2 Chronicles 36:15, 16. God sent prophets to His people to carry

His message to them. His message included the need for repentance and the offer of forgiveness. The Lord's forgiveness was based upon his merciful character. Although God offered them His compassion, they abused His prophets, despised His offer and rejected His words.

Psalm 78:38. God's compassion is related to His forgiveness. The word "iniquity" denotes a stubborn, willful disobedience to God's commands. Even then, God was willing to forgive. Many times Israel deserved to receive God's wrath for their wickedness, He chose to use mercy and show compassion.

Psalm 86:15. God's character traits include compassion, grace, mercy, long-suffering and truth. This list of five things shows the fullness of God's love toward His people. "Fullness" refers to filled to overflowing. When God blesses His people, it is an overflowing of love and grace on their behalf.

Luke 15:20. The father of the prodigal son showed compassion on him and freely forgave him when the son turned back to him. The father in the parable illustrates the Father in Heaven. God's compassion is so much greater than any earthly father. He is waiting for His children to return to Him seeking forgiveness.

1 Peter 3:8. Peter wrote to Jewish believers in the Lord's churches. His instructions reveal how church members should treat one another. We should "love as brethren," show compassion, be courteous and have tender feelings of sympathy for one another. When church members treat one another according to this standard, there will be much less strife.

RELEVANCE OF THE TEXT

Pharaoh's daughter showed compassion on Moses when he was in the ark of bulrushes in the river. She acted with feelings of deep sympathy and sorrow for the baby's plight. This compassion also included the desire to alleviate the cause of his danger or suffering. She acted on her compassion and showed Moses mercy. Her kindness was not the usual for those who do not know the Lord. God moved upon her heart for her to show compassion.

God also leads His servants to show compassion. We should be ready to be kind, courteous, helpful, tenderhearted, forgiving and merciful toward those who have wronged us. If we fail to do so, we have acted upon the motivation of the old sin nature to treat others as we have been treated. Those who shine for the Lord choose to use compassion toward others. Cruel and inhuman treatment does not excuse any child of God from showing compassion.

Pharaoh's daughter felt something and did something. Her compassion led her to take action on behalf of Moses. Her actions showed more compassion than did the priest and the Levite in the parable of the good Samaritan. The Samaritan's actions also took the necessary steps to insure the well being of the man who was robbed, wounded and left for dead on the side of the road. We should never be too busy to show compassion toward others.

When Pharaoh's daughter acted with compassion, it cost her something. It took time to make arrangements for Moses' care. She paid Moses' mother to care for him. She was ready to help regardless of the personal cost. She defied the law and her father Pharaoh when she

showed compassion on Moses. Her affection for Moses was revealed in the name she gave him. Moses means drawn out, a reminder of her compassion on him.

God's compassion for Israel was seen in Moses being an answer to their prayers. Although it would still be eighty years before Moses would lead Israel out of Egyptian bondage, God had already begun to work on their behalf. They prayed for God to relieve them of their affliction. Like with Israel, we pray for God's help. He may be taking steps to answer our prayers long before we see any indication. We must trust His compassion.

CONTEMPORARY APPLICATION

When we pray for God's tender mercies, we are asking for His compassion. "Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindnesses; for they have been ever of old. Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember

thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD" (Psalm 25:6, 7). God's compassion is as limitless as His love, grace and mercy.

The greatest act of God's compassion toward humanity is His salvation provided in Christ Jesus. Even before the creation, God had a plan of redemption. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God" (1 Peter 1:18-21). God's compassion for sinners provided a Savior. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). God's compassion is offered to every sinner—to all people.