

EXPLOITS OF THE YOUNG IN SCRIPTURE

Miriam – saving Moses

Exodus 2:4 And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

Exodus 2:7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

Miriam was somewhere between 10-12 years old when she watched with anxiety her baby brother's ark being borne by the mighty Nile into the arms of Pharaoh's daughter. Scripture does not tell us that Miriam's parents ordered her to keep an eye on the ark; it would be impossible for a child to follow a tiny ark subject to the powerful and unpredictable currents of the mighty Nile. It appears that while the parents rested in faith, Miriam acted in faith and decided to keep an eye on the fate of her baby brother.

Miriam was clearly mature beyond her years. She did not allow emotion to overwhelm her, but calmly approached Pharaoh's daughter and came up with a bold proposition. 'Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?' (Exodus 2:7). There is an enviable boldness children demonstrate at times; a boldness that we adults seem to have left behind in youth. Not only would baby Moses survive, but Miriam wanted the best of both worlds for her baby brother – the love of his own family, and the love and attention of the royal family. Her

decision to follow her baby brother by faith paid untold dividends: she played a decisive role in the deliverance of Israel way before her brother lifted up his staff and divided the Red Sea by the power of God. No wonder she is called a prophetess in the Bible.

Exodus 15:20 And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

Miriam, perhaps more than anyone else in Israel, had more reason to celebrate that watershed moment. Let us recall that Pharaoh had determined that every Hebrew male child should be drowned in the Nile.

Exodus 1:22 And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

God had now turned the tables on Pharaoh. The best men that Egypt had, including Pharaoh, now drowned before her eyes in the Red Sea, while her baby brother, Moses, now eighty years old, was the instrument God used to destroy them. She was the only one who was a witness of the day when her brother was given the prophetic name Moses – drawn out from the water – and, best of all, she played a key role in ensuring that her brother knew his family background and the promises of God.

Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

Hebrews 11:25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

We can see in our minds' eye Miriam rocking her baby brother in her arms and telling him, 'I am your real sister, Moses!' As he grew, the family must have shared with him the great story of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob which he never forgot when he went to his 'other family' – the royals of Egypt.

Miriam was just 10-12 years old when she intervened at perhaps the most crucial crossroads in the history of Israel. She teaches us not to underestimate the role that children can play in fulfilling the plans of God. Her faith saved Israel. Not only was Miriam called a prophetess in the Bible (written by own her brother Moses), but years later, when God protested against Israel, he reminded them of the leaders whom he raised up to deliver them; and Miriam is mentioned in the same breath as Moses and Aaron.

Micah 6:3 *O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me.*

Micah 6:4 *For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.*

In the last chapter, we read about the significant influence of Timothy' mother and grandmother on his own faith. What kind of a family produces three tremendous spiritual warriors like Moses, Aaron and Miriam – a prophet and leader, a high priest and a prophetess? The answer is always God-fearing parents! Thank God for the faith of Amram and Jochebed. The faith of parents has a long-term impact on the destiny of nations.