

God's Love is Like a Mother's Love

God said in Isaiah 66:13, *"As a mother comforts her son, so will I comfort you."*

God, by His own chosen words, likens His care over us to the role of a mother. What does it mean? I would like to look at some mothers of the Bible and, with the backdrop of these mothers, perhaps we can understand a little more God's love for us.

First, let's look at Moses' mother, Jochebed, in the second chapter of Exodus. Miriam, an older daughter, was about twelve years old when Moses was born. Aaron was about three years old. Scripture tells us that Jochebed was *"large with child."* Moses was about to be born and Pharaoh hears that *"Israel's deliverer is about to be born."* He determines that he will remove all possibility of this deliverer surviving and gives the decree, *"That every newly born male child would be thrown to the crocodiles in the river Nile."*

Can you even begin to imagine what this mother's heart was going through? She was a slave in a slave city, expecting a child and Pharaoh had decreed that *"every male child"* would be killed. The Egyptian territorial army were watching and, if her child should be a boy, he was to be snatched from her arms, taken out and destroyed.

It was a boy and, Scripture says, *"she hid him three months."* Her ingenuity defies understanding. She becomes afraid that the boy's cries would be heard, so she sneaks down to the river, pulls reeds from the river bank and weaves them into a basket, covers it with slime, to water proof it, then leaves the home-made cradle in the river for Miriam to watch over.

Like every mother, she thought, *"No one can resist my child!"* She leaves the little basket with Moses in it where she knew Pharaoh's daughter would be bathing at the river. And, sure enough, Pharaoh's daughter finds the little baby Moses, and decides to take him as her own son. Miriam comes dashing up and asks, *"Would you like to have a Hebrew mother to nurse the child for you?"* She, of course, chooses Moses' real mother, Jochebed, who raises him until he is old enough to become the prince of Egypt, who later delivers Israel from Egyptian bondage.

What I want us to see is the preserving, attentive, improvising, never-give-up, care this mother had in what seemed like a helpless situation. This mother would not accept the inevitable. She would not give in to the idea that it was impossible to save her son. With a never dying attentive care, she does not stop searching for some means to preserve her helpless child.

Let me ask you, *"Mother, have you ever felt helpless?" "Have you ever faced what seemed like an impossible situation?"* Put yourself inside this mother's heart. Her mind turns from morning to night, trying to figure out, *"How can I preserve my son?"* She never gave up but kept on risking everything until she found a way!

Maybe you are in a place where it seems that there is no way out! You may be facing what seems to be odds that cannot be changed? There is no doorway for you to go through. I want to say, *"The God Who comforts as a mother comforts, has promised to comfort you!"* If this earthly mother would never give up until she found a way, how much more will God care for – and – deliver you?

2.

The second mother I want us to look at is Mary, the mother of Jesus. John 19:25 says, *“There stood my His cross His mother.”*

Here is a scene that strong men have fled from, however, Mary, who had seen her Son beaten and dragged through the street of Jerusalem, stood and watched the nails driven into His hands and feet. She had seen His cross raised in the air. As Jesus hung there, I'm sure you mothers can feel a little of what Mary must of felt. She did not faint, nor fainter. *She stood there!*

She did not understand what was happening. When Jesus was twelve years old, Mary and Joseph had taken Him to the Temple. As they were hurrying around and heading for home, they found that Jesus was not with them. They go back to the Temple and find Him teaching the Scribes. Mary explains, *“Your father and I have been looking for you.”* Jesus answers, *“Don't you know that I must be about My Father's business?”* Jesus' statement seems to have cut across her claims. She didn't understand.

Jesus leaves home when he is thirty years old. Sometime during this interval, Joseph dies, and Jesus, no doubt, supported the family. After ministering in other places, Jesus comes back home, and the crowd says, *“Isn't this the carpenter's son?”* They drive Him out of the city to a cliff, to cast Him off its steep embankment.

His mother is concerned for Him and gathers His brothers to come to Him. Jesus is told, *“Your mother and brothers seek You!”* Jesus answers, *“Who is My mother?”* She must have been shocked by Jesus' question. It must have cut into Mary's heart as she feels rejection.

Can you get inside this mother's heart? She sees her son rejected and despised. In the end, she sees that even His closest followers deny Him. She sees Him dying in shame in the most despicable kind of death. But nothing can drive her away. *“She stood by His cross!”*

Mothers, let me ask you, *“Have you ever felt rejected? Have you ever feel that no one understands?”* This mother did not understand, despite the Simeon's prophecy at Jesus' dedication, *“A sword will pierce through your soul!”* She didn't understand, but she stood by Him.

Oh, the enduring, steadfast, unremitting love of this mother!

Mothers – and anyone else here that needs this reality – *“God does understand your problem and He will comfort as a mother comforts.”*

3.

Let's look at a third mother. Her name is *“Rizpah.”* She can be found in the 21st chapter of 2 Samuel. She is the mother of two of Saul's sons. However, she was never Saul's wife, but a concubine. Saul – (that is, *“Saul,”* Israel's first king in the Old Testament) – Saul had such a great beginning, but he forgot many things that God had said to him and, in the end, confessed, *“I have played the part of a fool!”* He wouldn't do things God's way. He failed to remember the vows he made to God.

On this occasion, Saul had vowed, “*The people of Israel would never kill the Gibeonites,*” and he sealed his promise in God’s name. But, he forgot all about his vow and set out to exterminate the Gibeonites. He loses the battle and ends up committing suicide.

David becomes king over Israel and, because Saul had forgotten his vow, and failed to honor it, David asks what he could do to make atonement. We can never understand it, but, in the brutal frame of reference of that day, they ask for the seven sons of Saul – (two of which were Rizpah’s) – to be hung on the hill of Gibeah, where the fierce battle had been fought. David met their request. The Bible tells us in the 21st chapter of 2 Samuel that Saul’s sons were “*hung in the month of barley harvest*” (or, the month of April).

Rispah goes to this hill where her sons were hanging and Scripture tell us that she “*spreads out sackcloth*” – a sign of mourning – “*from barley harvest until the coming rains.*” The Bible tells us that she stayed on that hill, fighting off the birds by day and the animals at night!

Think of that mother, alone on that hillside, fighting the birds in the heat of the sun and the wild beasts at night. April, May, June, July, August, September, October – seven long months, she was there protecting the bodies of her sons. In October King David hears about this mother, how that she had stayed there until she died. And, because of her actions, David has the bones of Saul’s seven sons taken down and given an honorable burial.

At the risk of sounding a little gruesome, I ask you to picture this mother, Rizpah. Her sons had ceased to be lovely. The objects of her love and become things of horror. Decay had set in, blackened by the sun. The stench of decomposition was there. Her sons had become unlovely, but this did not dim her love! They were counted a curse, unworthy of the burial of even dogs, yet, Rizpah, would not cast them out of her heart. They were objects that only a mother could love. Others shunned them but she would still cling to them and would not let them go. Others may treat them with deep disgrace, but she still had a deep compassion for them.

God said, “*As a mother comforts, I promise to comfort you!*”

1. **Jochebed** – reveals how a mother’s love will never give up improvising a way to deliver, so God will find a way to deliver us.
2. **Mary** – pictures a mother whose love seemed to be rejected, yet remained true when all else turned away.
3. **Rizpah** – shows a mother who loves the unlovely and despicable.

God promised to be like a mother to us. We do grow weary in this life. In a day when there is too little love, we need to ask God to give us a higher sense of the privilege of being an expression of His love. To those who feel helpless, rejected and despised, we need to pray for new hope, a new realization of what kind of God we have. We need to thank God for revealing his nature through the love of mothers and give us eyes to see and hearts to respond. We need to claim God’s promise to be a “*Mother*” to us.