

MOTHERS

Joe Slater

From Eve, “*the mother of all living*” (Genesis 3:20) to “*Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots*” (Revelation 17:5), Scripture abounds with references to mothers, both good and bad. At least 299 verses contain references to mothers of some sort.

God manifested His evaluation of the status of mothers as He, through Moses, enjoined respect for one’s mother: “*Honor your father and your mother*” (Deuteronomy 5:16). “*Every one of you shall revere his mother*” (Leviticus 19:3). One who cursed or assaulted his mother (or father) was subject to capital punishment (Leviticus 20:9). Though the death penalty for such behavior is not carried over into the New Testament, the command to respect (honor and obey) one’s parents certainly is (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Mothers’ influence upon their children demonstrates their importance. About half of the kings of Israel and Judah are identified, in part, by who their mothers were. Some of these were good kings whose fathers were wicked. Might they have been influenced by godly mothers? We know for certain that at least a few of the wicked kings emulated their corrupt mothers.

Whether a child seeks relief from physical pain, or understanding and forgiveness for a blunder, who can comfort better than Mother? God likens His own comfort to that of a mother (Isaiah 66:13 “*as one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem*”). What a grand compliment to mothers everywhere!

Along with his grandmother, Lois, Timothy’s mother, Eunice, illustrates the importance of a godly mother’s influence. Timothy’s father was a Greek (Acts 16:1) and evidently had refused to allow Timothy to fully

embrace the Jewish faith. Nevertheless, Eunice and Lois ensured that the boy knew the Scriptures from earliest childhood (2 Timothy 3:15). We are not surprised that Paul saw such potential in him that he took him along on the second missionary journey. Countless souls whom Timothy influenced for Christ can thank Eunice and Lois for a job well done.

Mothers, our hats are off to you, not only on this traditional holiday, but every day. In many ways, you are our unsung heroines. Thank you for your dignity, your godly examples, your teaching, and your comfort. May you realize how precious you are, and may our Lord exalt you in due season!



Fast Or Far?

An African proverb states: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” As is often the case with proverbs, this one contains much practical wisdom.

Likely, we all know something about how geese fly, Each one takes a turn in the front of the V formation. The whole flock shares the burden of leadership.

Furthermore, when they are not leading, they are honking support for the one that is. They may not fly as fast this way, but they certainly fly farther. Of course, the same is true for us as Christians. We need one another’s support to fly farther.

Solomon wrote, “*Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but owe to him that is alone when he falls, for he has not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone?*” (Eccl. 4:9-11).

Let’s resist the urge to fly solo. Let’s team up so that we can go farther.

--Wade Webster (Southaven, MS) via Jacksonville, AL

Spring or Winter

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1).

For the last two weeks, our temperatures were seventy to eighty degrees during the day. Robins played in the yard, and tulips and daffodils spread their brilliant colors. I pulled dandelions out of our grass and gathered seeds for planting. Spring is here!

Today it is cold, we have three inches of snow on the ground, and the snow is still coming. The sky looks like it could snow all day. The weather forecasters say we might get six or more inches. What happened to spring?

Sometimes our lives feel like spring. We have no major problems. Our health is holding up. Our loved ones and friends are doing well. We have enough money to be comfortable. We are happy with God and feel spiritually fulfilled.

Suddenly, everything changes. Our health deteriorates, a loved one becomes ill or dies, or we lose our job. It is easy to give in to despair. Why did it happen? Does God still love me? Or is He as fickle as the weather?

Our answer comes through faith. The Psalmist believed in God’s help. He said, “*Therefore will we not fear, though the earth do change*” (46:2). Our ultimate belief and statement of faith is “God knows, and He is in charge. No matter what happens.”

Yes, Satan may attack us, but he cannot destroy us. The world may try to harm us, but God is stronger than the world. And if God is for us, who can be against us? Our Father will keep us and defend us. What can separate us from His love and protection? Absolutely no one can take us from Him. Nothing can get in the way of Our Father’s love, whether it is spring or winter.

--Donna Richmond Wittlif (Denver, CO)