

## **Biblical examples show how God has used adoption to provide for children and to further his purposes and kingdom**

*This is the fourth in a series of six articles PPL highlighting Adoption Month in November. The series is reprinted from “Partakers of the Grace: Biblical Foundations for Adoption,” written by June Ring and published by PPL in 1997.*

There are a number of examples of adoption in Scripture. Not all were cases of providing for orphans, although God specifically calls his people to care for orphans. Some were occasions of placing a child in adoption for a specific purpose, but all were cases of providing for the well being of the child.

### **Pharaoh’s Daughter and Moses**

Moses was born to Israelite parents, Amram and Jochebed, at a time when all baby boys were being killed by an edict of Pharaoh. As the result of a plan by Jochebed to save Moses’ life, Pharaoh’s daughter took Moses from the river at three months of age. She recognized his heritage and knew that his birth parents had placed him in the river to save his life. Pharaoh’s daughter gave the baby to Jochebed to be nursed, probably until about age five. At that time, “she took him to Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son” (Exodus 2:10).

However, we read that “Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter” (Hebrews 11:24). The book of Exodus describes Moses’ subsequent forty years with his in-laws, his meeting with his birth brother Aaron, and his return to his birth family. Moses’ adoption enabled him to have influence with Pharaoh yet identify with God’s people, not only because of his genetic ancestry but also because of his faith. Moses did not so much reject his adoptive family as he did their sinful and unrepentant ways as a nation.

We can summarize Moses’ adoption by seeing it in the context of two loving mothers whose first concern was a child—

Jochebed, who parted with her child knowing that his life was at stake if he remained with her; and Pharaoh’s daughter, who felt compassion on a child she knew by edict was to be killed. God used these two women to save Moses’ life and provide him with a safe and secure childhood.

Jochebed's decision is a great example of a birth mother's love for her child. Her godly example sets straight the misconception that birth parents don't love their children. Her love for Moses prompted her to make the adoption plan.

### **Mordecai and Esther**

Esther, an orphan, was adopted by her cousin Mordecai. The story of Mordecai and Esther is a beautiful example of respect and care between a father and daughter. We see simultaneously his love and concern for her—"Every day he walked back and forth near the courtyard of the harem to find out how Esther was and what was happening to her" (Esther 2:11) —and her respect and obedience toward him— "but Esther had kept secret her family background and nationality just as Mordecai had told her to do, for she continued to follow Mordecai's instructions as she had done when he was bringing her up" (Esther 2:19-20). Their cooperation while Esther was in the king's favor saved the Jewish nation.

### **Biblical Types of Adoption**

The two highlighted above, and Joseph and Jesus, are not the only examples of adoption in the Scriptures. Here are some other examples that are sometimes mentioned as *types* of adoptions. References are included so that you might explore them further.

Jacob's adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh—Genesis 48

Abram and Eliazar—Genesis 15

Eli and Samuel—1 Samuel 1

The overarching theme in the examples above, as it continues to be today, is two-fold. Adoptions take place for the well-being of the child and with his best interest at heart, and as a means of accomplishing God's good purposes for his people.

*Presbyterians Pro-Life* - 3942 Middle Rd., Glenshaw, PA 15116 | 412-487-1990 - Email: [ppl@ppl.org](mailto:ppl@ppl.org) - Web: [www.ppl.org](http://www.ppl.org)

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**Allison Park, PA 15101**  
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