

A Model Mother

Genesis 6:5-10

Pastor Paul

HUMC, May 9, 2021

How God Made Mothers: By the time the Lord made mothers, he was in the 6th day and working overtime. An angel asked why he was working so hard?

The Lord said "Have you seen the specs on her? She has to be washable, but not plastic and run on black coffee and leftovers. She must have a lap that can hold three children at once, a kiss that can cure anything from a scraped kneed to a broken heart, the ability to see what is going on behind her, and six pairs of hands.

She must be able to feed a family of five on a pound of hamburger and get a 9-year-old to take a shower." The angel moved closer. "You have made her so soft." The Lord agreed. "She is soft, but I have also made her tough. You have no idea what she can endure and accomplish."

The angel said, "It looks like you have a leak with this model." The Lord said, "That's a tear. It is her way of expressing joy, sorrow, disappointment, pain, loneliness, grief and pride." The angel said, "You have thought of everything. You even created a tear."

The Lord smiled, "I have created the mother, but she has created the tear."

This morning for my sermon topic, I would like to speak about a woman in scripture whose love and support to her family is what distinguished her from others.

We don't know her name, but Jewish tradition identifies her as Naamah, which means "the beautiful or pleasant one". So, who was she? She was Noah's wife. My text is Genesis 6:1-5, 18.

⁵ The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. ⁶ The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. ⁷ So the Lord said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them." ⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. ⁹ This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. ¹⁰ Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. ¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.

This is the Word of God.

In our scripture text, Noah is the main character, but it was his wife, Naamah, who was the unseen partner. To get a glimpse of her character, what we have to do is read between the lines and we can already see she was a mother, a farmer, a zookeeper, a fellow ship builder and a woman of God.

In verses 5-7, Noah had been warned by God of the judgment that was to come and the message he was to deliver was a difficult one. But it was his wife's spiritual strength that helped him to endure despite the years of hostility and ridicule by his neighbors.

I also believe that it was behind the scenes where Naamah did her best work. She was the one who gave comfort and support to Noah. And if she did not believe in what her husband was about to do, the construction of the ark would never have succeeded. But in the end, it was her devotion and support who truly defined who she was.

Several years ago, Janet and I traveled to Williamstown, KY to see a life-sized replica of Noah's Ark and it was breathtaking; it was 450 feet long, 75 feet high and 45 feet wide. There were 3 decks, divided into compartments with a window on the top. It was the largest ship ever built until modern times. However, it is my personal belief, it would never have succeeded had it not been for the background support of Naamah.

In our churches, it is the little jobs or tasks that get the least amount of recognition that is vital to the ministry. For example, my job as pastor is one of high visibility. But the success of ministry also depends upon who greets the visitor, the one who counts and deposits the money, the one who writes the checks to pay the bills, the one who cuts the grass and so on.

I would say the same is true in our families. Marriage is an equal partnership. To have any success in any endeavor or project, both spouses need to be in agreement. The husband should be able to support the wife in all of her endeavors and the wife needs to do the same. If there are differences of opinion as I am sure there was with Noah and Naamah, couples need to talk, to work out differences; otherwise, there will be some issues.

There is a tradition that Naamah was called upon by God to gather the seeds of every type of plant and bring them safely into the ark. It was here that she organized a fabulous array of growing things such as seeds, bulbs, cuttings, spores and

roots. And she filled every available space of the ark with all kinds of wonderful plants of God's creation.

The Genesis story tells us that Noah, Naamah, their sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth and their wives all lived in the ark for about a year. It was a difficult time and no doubt, Naamah was the nurturer. First there was the 40 days of rain, then floating on the ocean for 300 more days. And no doubt it was a time of difficulty, But Naamah, ever the nurturer was the one who created harmony and helped solve family conflicts.

On the ark, this family of eight encountered smelly things, crawling slugs and bugs. up after animals. Naamah cooked, she cleaned, she encouraged and she soothed any of the family disagreements. It was not easy to stay encouraged in those confined and cramped quarters of the ark.

Again if we are to read between the lines, the novelty of living on the ark for that period of time must have worn off quickly. I believe Naamah; the ever nurturing one must have kept the eight members of her family in harmony with one another. And that is a tribute to her.

Let me share several inspiration quotes about mothers.

- What a mother sings to the cradle, it goes all the way down to the coffin-Henry Ward Beecher.
- God could not be everywhere and therefore he made mothers. Jewish proverb.
- Mothers are like glue. When you can't see them, they are still holding the family together. Susan Gale.
- My Mother was a role model before I even knew what that word was." Lisa Leslie.
- To describe my mother would be to write about a hurricane in its perfect power. Maya Angelou.

- A mother's hug lasts long after she lets go.
- Mother is the one to whom you hurry when you are troubled. Emily Dickinson.
- Mother's hold their children's hands for a short while, but their hearts forever.

Here is a list of "I owe you. Dear mom:

I owe you for your time. Day and night.

I owe you for your example. Consistent and dependable.

I owe you for your support. Stimulating and challenging.

I owe you for your humor. Sparky and quick.

I owe you for your counsel. Wise and quiet.

I owe you for your humility. Genuine and gracious.

I owe you for your insight. Keen and honest.

I owe you for your flexibility. Patient and joyful.

I owe you for your hospitality. Smiling and warm.

I owe you for your sacrifices. Numerous and quickly forgotten.

I owe you for your faith. Solid and sure.

I owe you for your hope. Ceaseless and indestructible.

I owe you for your love. Devoted and deep.

Mother's Day is one of those odd days where we honor our mothers for their love and sacrifice, but it is also a sad day for those ladies who were unable to have children. I know it is difficult for those mothers who have not heard from their children in many years. It is also a hard day for children who lived in a difficult home.

On this Mother's Day, I think of Naamah who was truly a wonderful helpmate for her husband. A wonderful partner in the work of the Lord. I also think of my mother who is deceased and my mother-in-law who were/are wonderful examples of motherhood. May God be with all of our ladies.