

# Magnificent MOTHERS WITH A MISSION

—by Dr Peter Hammond

**W**omen have an honoured place in the Bible, just look at Rebekah, Miriam, Deborah, Queen Esther, Ruth, Mary, Dorcus, Lydia. Women were last at the Cross, first at the tomb, first to proclaim the Resurrection and the first converts in Europe. This Mother's Day we celebrate the Biblical mothers who impacted and affected the destinies of nations.

## Jochebed

Jochebed, the mother of Moses, refused to comply with Pharaoh's edict. She defied the baby killing culture of Egypt and devised a bold plan to save her baby's life, right under the household of Pharaoh himself. The Exodus of Israel from bondage in Egypt was led by Jochebed's son. The Law of Moses - the Ten Commandments - continue to be the foundation of Western Civilisation.



## Ruth

A woman of commitment, Ruth forsook the pagan culture of Moab and travelled to Israel to find a Kinsman Redeemer. She became the great grandmother of King David, whose descendants continue to rule. "Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God."



## Hannah

Hannah, though jeered at for being childless and misjudged by Eli as being drunk when praying, determined to seek a child from the Lord, in order to consecrate him back to God. She gave birth to the prophet Samuel who at an early age learned to say: "Speak, Lord, Your servant listens." Samuel grew to be one of the greatest of Israel's prophets and the one who anointed David as the next king of Israel. Hannah kept her word and gave Samuel back to the Lord for His service, and the Lord blessed her with more children.



## Elizabeth

Childless Elizabeth, sought the Lord and had the privilege of giving birth to John the Baptist, whom Jesus described as "the greatest man born to women." It was John who prepared the way for the Lord, fulfilling the prophesy of Isaiah: "The voice of the one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.'" Matt 3:3. "He must increase. I must decrease." "I baptise you with water, but He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire!"



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## George Whitefield's mother

George Whitefield's mother, an inn keeper, said to her son: "I expect more from you than from all the others". George Whitefield grew up to become one of the most effective evangelists in history. Revival blessings accompanied his open air proclamation of the Gospel throughout the British Isles and North America.

## Mary

Mary, the most blessed of all mothers who humbly submitted to God's Will: Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to Your Word" Luke 1:38. What an honour Mary had of being the earthly mother of our Lord Jesus Christ. As Mary instructed: "Whatever He tells you to do, do it!"

## Eunice

Eunice who brought up Timothy in the "sincere faith" (Acts 16:1 and 2 Timothy 1:5), raised a dedicated Christian who became the Apostle Paul's right hand man and indispensable co-labourer in the mission of winning Europe to Christ.



## Susanna Wesley

Susanna Wesley gave birth to 19 children, including John and Charles Wesley. They credited her prayerful instruction and Godly example as shaping the whole direction of their lives dedicated to holiness and revival. The Great Evangelical Awakening that they were part of transformed England and ensured that the Revolution that wrecked France did not destroy Britain. »



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## Ann Judson

Ann Judson, the mother of modern missions, gave her life winning the people of Burma to Christ.



## Robert Moffat's Mother

Robert Moffat's devout mother beseeched him, as he headed off to the world to become a sailor, to promise her that he would begin each day with God and that he would end each day with God. She then kissed his forehead. Robert Moffat testified that: "It was that promise, and that kiss, that made me a missionary."

Robert Moffat went on to be the first to translate the whole Bible into an African language. Robert also had the privilege of inspiring David Livingstone to come as a missionary to Africa with his stirring speech of "the smoke of a thousand villages where the Gospel of Christ has not yet been heard." Moffat and Livingstone opened up Africa for the Gospel of Christ. What an impact Mrs Moffat had on the history of Africa through her faithful discipleship of her son. Robert Moffat later testified that it was his mother who had filled his mind and heart with the exciting exploits of missionaries and Gospel pioneers across the seas.

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## Mary Slessor's mother

Mary Slessor's mother dedicated her two sons to missions to Nigeria, but they both died before they were old enough. So Mary Slessor went as a missionary to Calabar, Nigeria, in their place. She was called 'Eko Kpukpro Owa' (Mother of all the people) for her tireless work in adopting abandoned children, fighting the slave trade and ending the practice of killing of twins. Mary Slessor of Calabar transformed Nigeria through the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Courageous and fearless, she confronted witchdoctors and saved countless lives.



## Amelia Taylor

Amelia Taylor prayed above the chemist shop her husband ran: "Dear God, if you should give us a son, grant that he may work for You as a missionary to China." Their home schooled son, Hudson Taylor, who was reading by age 4, grew up to do just that, launching the China Inland Mission, which mobilised over a thousand missionaries to China in his lifetime. CIM became the largest mission organisation of the Greatest Century of Missions, the first truly inter-denominational Faith Mission.

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## The privilege of motherhood

There can be no greater privilege than raising the next generation. There can be no more strategic priority than giving life and raising children to love, honour, obey, worship and serve our Lord. Do you have a vision of what God can do in, with and through you and your children?

Do not settle for less than God's best. Make the fulfilment of the Great Commission your supreme ambition. Make disciples, teach obedience to all things that the Lord has commanded. Pray that the Lord of the Harvest would use your children to advance His Kingdom.

The safest place in the world is in the centre of God's Will. Intercede for your children, even before they are born, like Amelia Taylor did. Bring up your children in the sincere faith, like Eunice raised Timothy. Consecrate your children to the Lord's service, like Hannah gave Samuel back to the Lord.

"Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren." Deut 4:9

## Your role as a parent

This is God's instruction to you as a parent: "Train up a child in the way he should go" Prov 22:6. Teach your children from the first thing in the morning to the last thing at night (Deut 6:7). To care for, provide for, nurture and love children is a most rewarding and vital calling.

Mothers have a great privilege and great responsibilities. Families are the basic building bricks of society. As goes the home, so goes the Church and the nation. From their earliest years children need to be taught to fear God, to love

His Law, to read His Word, to honour and worship Jesus Christ and to desire the triumph of His Kingdom on earth.

Parenthood is so fundamentally important that God's Word comes to all of us to honour our mothers: "Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you." Exo 20:12. "Everyone of you shall revere his mother..." Lev 19:3. "Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt." Deut 27:16

## Children, respect your parents

Egalitarianism is a curse. Failure to respect our parents is a terrible sin (many often have greater respect for secular Humanist Hollywood stars and actors than for their own parents).

"The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out and the young eagles will eat it." Prov 30:17

"Honour your father and mother' which is the first commandment with a promise." Eph 6:2. "Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly..." Lev 19:32.

We need a revival of respect for the elderly and we need to value and prize mothers, and grandmothers for the precious jewels that they are. We need to rise up and become a blessing to our mothers who sacrificed and served us so diligently. What does God want you to do to show honour, respect and appreciation for your mother and grandmothers? Let us be careful to be doers of the Word and not hearers only (James 1:22). ■

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