

A Vision for Your Child's Future

“At that time Moses was born, and he was no ordinary child. For three months he was cared for in his father's house”

(Acts 7:20, *NIV*).

“By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict” (Hebrews 11:23, *NIV*). See Exodus 2:1-2.

There was something extraordinary about the little Moses. It was more than just “beauty.” Every baby is beautiful—especially to the parents. I’ve never heard anyone glance at a newborn and say, “That is one ugly baby!” Moses’ parents were convinced Moses was marked for divine favor, and future greatness.

How did they know? There is no evidence of a divine visitation or revelation; any earth-shattering visions or spine-tinkling prophecies. They just “saw.” They had faith. What is faith? It is the confident guarantee that what we hope for is going to happen” (Hebrews 11:1, *NLT*).

This Levite couple—in faith—held on to hope despite nearby sounds of Hebrew newborn baby boys being thrown in the River Nile, and the screams of mothers that could not be comforted wailing, “My baby! My baby!”

The curse cloud hung drearily over the Hebrew race. With persecution at its height, and desperation at its darkest, the light of God’s opportunity glimmered through.

Ray Stedman said, “When man wants to change history he usually uses a battle or a ballot, but when God wants to change history He begins with sending a baby.” Some African cultures count a pregnant woman as the most important person in the village. Why? She holds within her body the future of the village. Someone has remarked that children are God’s way of saying the world should go on.

Jochebed crafted a floating crib for her precious parcel. Pharaoh’s daughter found the child in the makeshift boat that was Moses’ parents’ act of faith and belief that God would watch over the child. Ten-year-old Miriam was standing by and volunteered to call a nurse—the little boy’s own mother.

How long did he remain at home? The answer is simple: long enough.

Long enough:

- To understand the principles of truth.
- For deep impressions to be made.
- To understand that he was a Jew and different from the Egyptians.

- To know that he was set apart from the rest of the world.
- To learn and never forget his patriotic feeling of being a Hebrew.
- For his mother to repeatedly recount his survival.
- To tell him over and over, “God has a special plan for you!”
- To remind him that he was chosen for blessing. This blessing was not the prestige, prosperity and power of the king’s palace but that he would be a blessing to God’s people.
- To consistently confirm he was marked for favor.
- To understand that he was destined for greatness.
- To discern he would one day deliver the Israelites.
- To show that all of the wisdom and teaching of Pharaoh’s palace could not shake or shape his convictions.

Truth is foundational to fulfilling vision. What profit is there in gaining the whole world but losing your very soul (Luke 9:25). Moses would have received an outstanding education in Pharaoh’s palace. He would have been also trained in military strategy. Undoubtedly, he would have been tutored in religious studies so he could be aware of the duties and supposed powers of the Egyptian gods. Every godly parent, I hope, longs to look at grown children and say: “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” (3 John 4).

“My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity” (Proverbs 3:1-2, *NIV*).

Jewish customs and feasts (like the Passover) were designed to remind families of God’s goodness, deliverance, and kingship. Life on the way to the Promised Land revolved around the Tabernacle (the tent of God’s presence). All the tribal tents were arranged in order around the Tabernacle. The father was designated as the teacher in the home.

A Jewish father would take his baby and dip his finger in honey and place it in the baby’s mouth. This reinforced that God’s Word is sweet. It became second nature—like the air one breathes. It’s always there. (However, these words were strange in the midst of cultures that worshipped hundreds of gods.)

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates” (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, *NIV*). See also Deuteronomy 11:18-21.

This section of God’s Word, called the “Shema,” speaks directly to the family. It was to be observed in every aspect of life, taught diligently to children, and reinforced with constant reminders. God’s Word was to be continually in the midst of the family. The “Shema” or “Hear, O Israel” was used in both morning and evening prayers. It echoed the monotheistic message

that God is One. As soon as a child began to speak, he was taught to repeat the words of the "Shema." The verses (or at least the first several words) were the last words used before dying and in times of danger.

Gordon Dryden and Dr. Jeannette Vos in their fabulous book *The Learning Revolution* explained, "Fifty percent of a child's ability to learn is developed in the first four years of life. This makes parent's the world's most important educators."

Small children are like wet cement. It is easier to make a lasting impression. Older children become like dried cement. It is more difficult to make an impression. The mold has been cast.

The Jesuits used to say, "Give me a child until he's five and I will have him the rest of his life." They have a vision for their children: Make them Catholic! How is this possible? They begin at infancy. They are deliberate and consistent.

"CatholicCulture.org" stated: "Here is a principle emphasized by experienced educators and teachers: one small act repeated faithfully is imprinted on the mind. Repetition is all-important. 'Day by day' and 'A little at a time' are our mottoes. If you want to learn a language, you master a few expressions a day and keep using them. To learn to play the piano, you practice faithfully with a few new scales and a few new keys added gradually."

A family should demonstrate the basic functions of the church at home:

1. Dedicate children to the Lord in a dedication service.
2. Study the Word of God together.
3. Pray together. An old adage says, "The family that prays together stays together."
4. Worship together.
5. Model the Christian life.

The secret to the success of passing truth along to the next generation:

1. Just do it.
2. Do it bit by bit.
3. Keep doing it.

Some things are better caught than taught. It has often been said, "We teach what we know but reproduce what we are."

Many times a child's talents, inclinations, and abilities are discernable early in life. The Wise Man encourages us to identify these early and to train the child accordingly.

"Train up a child in the way he should go [and in keeping with his individual gift or bent], and when he is old he will not depart from it" [Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:15.], Proverbs 22:6, AMP).

Here are seven be-attitudes for bringing the vision for your child's future into reality.

- Be consistent
- Be deliberate
- Be committed
- Be faithful
- Be a hard worker
- Be an example (lead the way)
- Be focused

Study Questions

1. Express biblically how we know Moses' parents had a vision for his future.

2. According to Ray Stedman, what does God do when He wants to change history?

3. Why is a pregnant woman considered to be an important person in many African villages? _____

4. According to this lesson, who are the world's most important educators? _____

5. What does every godly parent long to look at their grown children and say?

6. What was the purpose of Jewish customs and feasts? _____

7. Why would a Jewish father dip his finger in honey and place it in his baby's mouth?

8. What is the Shema? _____

9. Illustrate how important it was to the Jews. _____

10. What percentage of a child's ability to learn is developed in the first four years?

11. List three of the seven be-attitudes for bringing the vision for your child's future into reality. _____

12. In which way can the family demonstrate the basic function of the church at home?

13. Explain the implications of Proverbs 22:6. _____

Additional Notes
