

# A time of little things

*12 Stories Of Women In The Bible and One Woman Today*  
*Moses' Mom*



NOT THE FORMER THINGS | DIFFERENT BY DESIGN

*Shawna Wingert Barnhart*

---

# GETTING STARTED

Welcome to the second month of our year long, monthly study. Our approach is same each month, designed to be simple and personal.

1. Woman or Women in the Bible
2. Me
3. Research and Commentary
4. You

This month, we are studying the story of Moses' mom.

NEED PRAYER? HAVE QUESTIONS?

*Please feel free to email me directly.*

*nottheformerthings@gmail.com*

---

# MOSES' MOM

We find the story of Moses' Mom and her circumstances at the beginning of Exodus. We also learn in later passages that her name is Jochebed.

**Read: Exodus 1:8 - 2:10**

With help from the midwives, Jochedbed manages to hide her newborn son from the threat of Pharaoh's decree to kill all male Hebrew children until he is 3 months old.

She is then faced with an impossible choice: let him be killed, or place him in a basket on the Nile river in the hopes he might be saved.

**She knows that she cannot save him herself.**

She lets her precious child go, there in the reeds and the water, releasing him into the vast, terrifying unknown.

# ME

There are two competing aspects of life, and especially motherhood, that have defined the last 22 years for me.

**Loving  
And letting go.**

Loving fiercely, protectively, with everything I've got.  
Letting go, reluctantly, fearfully, and fighting all the way.  
It has been, by far, the greatest paradox of my life. It's also where I've learned the most about myself and the grace of God.

There have been too many times in my life when my love for my children has absolutely rendered me frozen and unable to let go, even when I knew it was time.

Leaving my youngest's bed at the hospital, not sure if he would live or die.

Leaving my oldest in a college dorm room and driving away, never having really spent more than a handful of nights away from each other.

Staying in an abusive marriage for far too long, sure that it was in my children's best interests to keep it all together.

In all of these instances, I had to be forced, sometimes literally, mostly figuratively, kicking and screaming to loosen my grip and let go.

***“Everything I've let go of has claw marks on it.” Anne Lamott***

The story of Moses' mom is one that haunted me when my children were younger. Would I be able to do it? Could I put my baby in that basket and watch him float away?

Honestly, I used to think I would rather let us both die than let go in such traumatic and spectacular fashion.

I am not proud of this.

The truth is, Moses' mom is an example of loving a child so much that you are willing to take chances, terrifying chances, to help them live. It's channeling love into something that does more than defend and protect.

**Loving, I'm learning, is always at one point or another about letting go.**

***“Let it go. So something new can grow.” Beth Moore***

For years, I have battled with the metaphor of that papyrus basket, sitting on the bank of the Nile, waiting for something precious to be placed inside.

It began with my youngest and all of his medical complexities and concerns. At one point, I ran out of options to help and had to place him in that basket gently, lovingly, but with a flood of tears and anxiety. One of the hardest things I've ever done is push him out into the river and let it all drift into the hands of God.

I did the same when my oldest went to college and when my marriage was failing.

The basket on the Nile is where I come to the end of myself and finally, despite all my best efforts to the contrary, realize that some things are beyond my control. That sometimes, the most loving thing to do is to push that basket out past the reeds and into the current.

Sometimes, the most loving thing to do is to let go.

As I studied more about Moses' mom this month, another, very different thought has welled up in my spirit.

Maybe there are things I am clinging to that have nothing to do with anyone else and have everything to do with me. Maybe these things need to be placed in that basket too.

**What I need to let go of:**

- My willingness to allow myself to be mistreated in order to be loved.
- My constant doubting of myself and my ability to support my children on my own.
- My fear of the future.
- My fear of the past.
- My desire to keep things as simple and non-threatening as possible for my children, no matter what the cost.
- The threat I feel when I finally allow myself to rest.

I want to put this list, like one big, dark, messy bundle, into that basket and kick it down the Nile. But I can't. Not like that.

FEBURARY

*Moses' Mom*

**I know from hard lived experience that letting go is a practice, not an event.**

It's showing up at the banks of the river and doing it over and over again. It's been true for my children. It has certainly been the case with my marriage.

Studying these women in the bible is helping me to let go of what no longer serves me, a little at a time, over and over again.

# RESEARCH AND COMMENTARY

What surprised me most in my deeper dive this month actually had nothing to do with Moses' mom. As I read the story again, and considered the commentaries, I was struck by all the women.

Jochebed certainly faces an incredibly difficult, brave decision as she places her child in that basket.

But there are other women in the story who all make choices of their own. Their actions make a tremendous difference despite so many obstacles stacked against them.

The Two Midwives  
Pharaoh's Daughter  
Moses' Sister, Miriam

The actions of these women combine with the choice Moses' Mom makes and together, they change the course of Hebrew history.

They were creative and smart. They were bold and caring. These five women did the very best they could in seemingly impossible circumstances. Moses' mom saved her child. Collectively, they saved a nation.

Perhaps, we can all do the same.



FEBRUARY

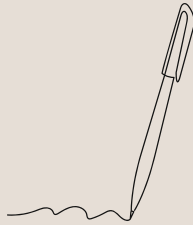
*Moses' Mom*

# YOU

Our study this year is about women of the bible and their individual stories, and, perhaps most importantly, how these women can influence our own lives and personal connection to The Divine.

I've shared my own reflections. Now, it's your turn.

## THOUGHT STARTERS



*What are you holding onto right now? What do you need to consider placing in that basket by the river and letting it go?*

*Women, working together, change history. Are there circumstances in the world right now that feel threatening or wrong? What are seemingly small, daily actions you can take to show love and bravery, no matter what is happening in the world around us?*

## WHAT'S IN YOUR BASKET?

Make a list of the things you are holding onto that are not serving you well,  
or that are simply out of your control.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

HOW CAN I BE GOOD TO  
MYSELF THIS MONTH?

- 
- 
- 
- 

HOW CAN I HELP OTHERS?

- 
- 
- 
-

# FEBRUARY REFLECTIONS

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# I AM SO GLAD YOU ARE HERE!

Thank you for doing this with me, this month, and hopefully, all year long.



Wishing you a February filled with chances to let go and love well.

*With so much love,  
Shawna*

*“Trusting God is holding loosely the parts of my life  
I want to hold most tightly.”*

LYSA TERKURST