

Mothers – Rare and Precious

“⁵I recall the genuine faithfulness within you, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure it is within you as well” (2 Tim. 1:5)

Mothers are a rare and precious but endangered species. Endangered species are any species that are at risk of extinction because of a sudden rapid decrease in its population or a loss of its critical habitat. While the emphasis in the definition is for plants and animals, the number of women choosing motherhood decreased rapidly in the previous two decades and with the disappearance of a classical home, so has their habitat. While endangered their disappearance is not imminent for there have been some baby steps made in our society to restore the family unit and the corresponding roles of mothers and fathers. *Kol Simcha* is absolutely committed to this restoration though our emphasis in restoring fathers (and mothers) and fulfilling the *Elijah Generation* call detailed in *Malachi 4:5-6* (*Malachi Chapter 4* is *Chapter 3, verses 19-24* in the Jewish *TNK*, including the TLV): *“²²Remember the Torah of Moses My servant, whom I commanded at Horeb – statutes and ordinances for all Israel. ²³Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of Adonai. ²⁴He will turn the hearts of fathers to the children, and the hearts of children to their fathers—else I will come and strike the land with utter destruction.”* As we approach the end times the *Elijah Generation* is raised up by fathers and mothers (parents) who *remember the Torah of Moses*, and whose *hearts are turned toward children*.

When I first arrived in the US in the mid 1960’s families depicted in TV shows like *Leave it to Cleaver* showed us a mom who: cooks, cleans, comforts, and corrects. She had six pairs of hands, and eyes in the back of her head. Mother. Complete with lace apron and pearls – singing lullabies, baking brownies, kissing away a child’s hot tears. Today many envision one who drives a minivan and whose life is work. Whatever the type, no one has more influence than a mother. For better or worse, she will forever impact the life of her child.

Tough and tender, wise and warm, a mother must be all things to all her family..., at all times. That’s quite a job description, and anyone who is a mother or has watched one in action knows there’s no career more demanding ... or more endangered in today’s society. What are the increasingly rare qualities of *Elijah Generation mothering* that are essential to building and preserving the home? Can the Bible help?

All homes must be built on a firm foundation. In *Proverbs 24:3-4* we see some of the tools needed to establish a rock-solid home: *“³By wisdom a house is built, by understanding it is prepared, ⁴and by knowledge its rooms are filled with every rare and pleasing treasure.”* *Solomon* suggests that homes are built with three primary tools: *wisdom, understanding, and knowledge*. *Wisdom* is the ability to see with heavenly discernment, to view life through *The Almighty’s* eyes. *Wisdom* is what you would do if *you had all of the information, past, present, and future* (only *The Almighty* has that information). *Understanding* is the skill of responding with *insight, reading between the lines*. *Knowledge* is learning with *perception* – having a *teachable spirit*, a *willingness to learn* even from our children and others.

Tenderness: *Paul* first mentions *Timothy’s* tears in *2 Timothy 1:4* followed by *Timothy’s* tenderness, *a trait likely passed down from his mother*. In fact, most of us learned tenderness from our mothers, while our dads taught us diligence and toughness. From Dad we learned the value of a dollar, the significance of honesty, the importance of standing alone when everything turns against us. But we learned transparent tenderness from Mom. Mom, don’t lose that quality – it’s one of your greatest contributions to your family. Your warm embrace, eager smile, and soft reply will be a safe harbor for the child who’s tossed and battered by life’s stormy seas.

Faith (Trust): In *2 Timothy 1:5* the Greek term for sincere means *un hypocritical*. Nothing phony here; it’s real, lived-out faith. *Paul* knew the sincere faith modeled in Mama Eunice and Grandma Lois had impacted

Timothy: *“¹⁴You, however, continue in what you have learned and what you have become convinced of. For you know from whom you have learned, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to make you wise, leading to salvation through trusting in Messiah Yeshua” (2 Timothy 3:14-15).* That’s the way real and authentic spirituality works. Congregations, schools, and friends can give children facts, even the words to say. But those words won’t fit reality unless *Yah’s* truth is translated and lived at home.

Inward Confidence: *“⁶For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift[a] of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of timidity (fear) but of power and love and self-discipline (a sound mind)” (2 Timothy 1:6-7).* In the Greek language, the word power includes “inherent strength” and “inner might.” Notice that timidity or fear *is not* a desirable trait – it’s a synonym for insecurity and inferiority which results of fear. It’s amazing how our children can sense our own attitude toward self – and how they will emulate it, for good or for bad. One of the reasons Timothy stayed true to the Scriptures and stood strong in his ministry was because he had learned inner confidence and faith from his mother.

Mom, do you know that *The Almighty* wants to use you to build healthy self-esteem in your child? Note these words from family expert and psychologist Dr. James Dobson: *“It is a wise adult who understands that self-esteem is the most fragile characteristic in human nature, and once broken, its reconstruction is more difficult than repairing Humpty Dumpty.”*

Although our task is more difficult for some children than for others, there are ways to teach a child of his genuine significance, regardless of the shape of his nose or the size of his ears or the efficiency of his mind. Every child is entitled to hold up his head, not in haughtiness and pride, but in confidence and security. This is the concept of *human worth* intended by our Creator. *How foolish for us to doubt our value when He formed us in His own image and likeness!* When a child is convinced that he is greatly loved and respected by his parents, he is inclined to accept his own worth as a person. Inner confidence, like transparent tenderness and authentic spirituality, is passed down from generation to generation – as in Timothy’s life, from grandmother to mother to son. How’s your self-esteem, Mom? Are you taking the time to cultivate a positive self-image in your child?

Unselfish (Genuine) Love: Verse 7 contains another gift from *The Almighty* – a gift every one, and especially mothers, can emulate: *“the Spirit of Love...”* This kind of love – Greek *agape* – seeks the highest good of the other person. It needs to be evident in every facet of your life, Mom. And your love shows through in two ways especially. First, in your sense of humor – when you laugh in the midst of pressure and refuse to take yourself too seriously, which gives your child a more positive and unthreatening environment to grow in. And second, in your sense of insight – when you listen to hurts and hear what isn’t said, showing your child that you care and want to help. *Paul* devoted an entire chapter to the subject of genuine love (*1 Cor. 13*).

Self-control (a Sound Mind): Good moms balance tenderness and love with discipline. They set parameters and know when it’s time to say, *That’s it; that’s enough.* Mom, don’t underestimate the value of teaching self-control. In your discipline, you are building your children’s character, enhancing their self-esteem, and helping them learn to be responsible for themselves. Children see what *The Almighty’s* love is all about through their parents, especially their mothers, since they spend the most time with them. Mom, when you laugh, your children hear *The Almighty* laugh. When you cry, they see Him cry. Never doubt the value of your role. Without your positive, supportive partnership, the family could not survive. *Shabbat Shalom!*

To all the courageous and outstanding moms in Kol Simcha, we salute you! May you have a most blessed mother’s day. ‘Adonai bless you and keep you...’