

"Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is *due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor" (Rom. 13:7).

Last Monday, May 12, 2025, was designated International Day of the Nurse. National Nurses week was also celebrated from May 12-18. On this occasion, the World Health Organization (WHO) joins hundreds of partners worldwide to highlight the importance of nurses in the healthcare continuum and thank nurses for what they do. The theme for this year is "The Power of Nurses."

On behalf of Scarborough Baptist Church (SBC), I would like to honor all nurses and health care providers by thanking them for their sacrifice. Whether you provide care for those who reside in hospitals, retirement homes, nursing homes, their own homes, or those who have no homes, you are essential workers, and we honor you. Some of you are caregivers to your family members, your neighbors, and loved ones. You too are essential workers.

In addition to honoring nurses this week, I would like to share the stories of two nurses found in the Bible: (1) Deborah, Rebekah's nurse and, (2) Jochebed, Moses's mother. Other nurses mentioned in the Bible are Naomi (Ruth 4:16); Mephibosheth's nurse (2 Sam. 4:4); Joash's nurse (2 Kgs. 11:2). Paul compares his apostleship to the Church at Thessalonica to that of a nursing mother who cherishes her children (1 Thess. 2:7).

The first nurse I want to highlight is Deborah, Rebekah's nurse. Deborah was her nurse before Rebekah was married (Gen. 24:59). After Rebekah married Isaac, they gave birth to twin brothers (Esau and Jacob). Due to family dispute, the brothers were alienated from each other for many years. After they reconciled, the LORD told Jacob to go up to Bethel (Gen. 35:1). Deborah had dwelt with Jacob's household during the years when the brothers were estranged. A touching incident is recorded immediately on their arrival at Bethel: "Now Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the oak; it was named Allon-bacuth," which means "oak of weeping" (Gen. 35:8). Thus, Deborah's long and faithful service in the household of Isaac, and the family-mourning over the old, tried family friend, are deemed worthy of perpetual memorial in the Book of God! Nothing else is known about this Deborah. A tree was named after the more famous Deborah, a heroine of the book of Judges. We are thankful for nurses like Nurse Deborah, who have devoted their lives to caring for others.

The second nurse is Jochebed, Moses's mother (Exo. 2:1-10; Exo. 6:20). Ironically, through unusual circumstances Moses's mother became his nurse. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt gave a decree to the Hebrew midwives as follows: When a Hebrew woman gives birth to a child, if it is a son, they must kill it, but if a daughter they shall live (Exo. 1:16). However, Moses's mother bravely defied the king's edict and hid her son for three months (Exo. 2:2; Heb. 11:23). But when she could no longer hide him, she made a wicker-basket, put her child in it, and laid it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile River (Exo. 2:3). When Pharaoh's daughter came to wash in the River and saw the basket, she sent one of her housekeepers to retrieve it. When she opened the basket, she saw the child as he wept, and she had compassion on him. Meanwhile, Moses's sister, Miriam, who was watching from a distance, inquired whether she can find her a nurse among the Hebrew women to nurse the child. Pharaoh's daughter approved her request, and Miriam recruited the child's mother to be his nurse. Then, ironically, Pharaoh's daughter told Moses's mother that she will give her wages to nurse the child! Thus, Moses, an Israelite, was raised in Pharaoh's palace. When he had grown up, however, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter (Heb. 11:24). Surely his nurse who was his mother tutored him in the Hebrew Faith. At the proper time Moses became Israel's great deliverer. May our God bless all those who provide care for both the young and the elderly. You may be nursing another Moses.