

Devotional



*ipporah*

A Bible study series on  
Loyalty, Tenacity and  
Tough Love

Written and compiled by  
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A DEVOTIONAL

# ZIPPORAH SERIES

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Zipporah, knew the value of her position and maximized it.

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## **NOTE**

The story of Zipporah is not one emphasized on as much as that of her husband, Moses. However, her presence in his life was instrumental in the beginning of his ministry.

This is a reminder that we should be diligent in whatever capacity we find ourselves in, because we are all part of a bigger story.

This book is a compilation of the Zipporah series done on my blog.

This book has been modified from the original content on the blog.

I pray this devotional blesses you as read and engage with it, in Jesus name. Amen.

Onyiyechi Roseline Agwu

- Loyalty
- Tenacity
- Tough Love

ZIPPORAH 1

## LOYALTY

Exodus 2:16-22 (AMP)

Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came and drew water

[from the well where Moses was resting] and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. Then shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and helped them and watered their flock. When they came to [g]Reuel (Jethro) their father, he said, "How is it that you have come back so soon today?" They said, "An Egyptian saved us from the shepherds. He even drew water [from the well] for us and watered the flock." Then he said to his daughters, "Where is he? Why have you left the man behind? Invite him to have something to eat." Moses was willing to remain with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah [to be his wife]. She gave birth to a son, and he named him Gershom (stranger); for he said, "I have been a stranger in a foreign land."

Zipporah was the daughter of Ruel the priest of Midian. Her name has several meanings:



- Beauty
- Trumpet
- A Bird specifically a dove

## THE DOVE

Doves have a symbol of peace, serenity and loyalty attached to them.

They have a lifespan of greater than 20 years and are known to remain committed.

Using a dove as a metaphor will rarely suggest a negative statement.

....and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him as a dove...”

The Holy Spirit is often symbolically replaced by a dove.

## THE SHEPHERDESS

Shepherds are loyal to their flock. They guard them with their lives.

King David understood this well as he was a shepherd himself.

“...the LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want...”

Zipporah was a loyal woman, first to her father and siblings.

As shepherd in a desert area and with male competitors who also came to water their camels, the challenge to water their animals was always there.

Despite this opposition, Zipporah and her sisters still went to get their animals watered.

Zipporah was willing to do what she was supposed to do (feed the animals) and did not allow the persistent challenge deter her.

## STICKING CLOSER

Proverbs 18:24 A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. (KJV)

*Do you stick close?*

Loyalty is an expression of commitment.

**Commitment is a choice.**

This choice is not deterred by challenges because challenges are part of the package. We commit after taking into consideration the challenges ahead.

*Possible challenges as well*

It is not enough to say we are committed, do our actions agree with us?

PROVERBS 20:6

*Many a man proclaims his own  
loyalty and goodness,  
But who can find a faithful and  
trustworthy man?*

DEEPEERLOOK



## REFLECTIONS

Relationships are sustained on mutual commitment. Once it becomes one sided, the relationship starts to go downhill.

This presents itself either in communication, activities and various forms of mutual sacrifice.

Money, time and self are demanded for any commitment and one has to be certain they are willing to go the way before agreeing.

The absence of loyalty is unfaithfulness and the malicious withdrawal of loyalty is betrayal.

Unfaithfulness and betrayal are hurtful and none is a pleasant thing to experience.

However, they are bound to happen in the course of our various relationships and we have the choice to be the one who does not become unfaithful or betray another.

**Always remember the choice part.**

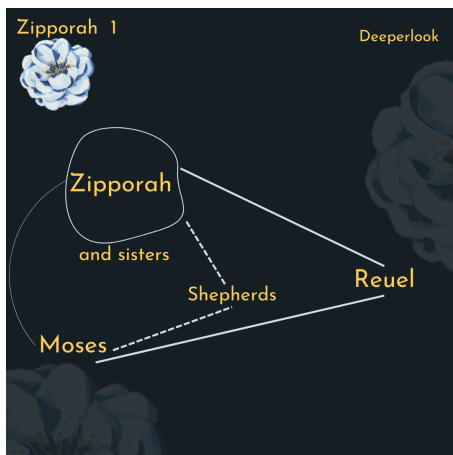
Moses had just been betrayed by the people he had tried to save and at this point in his life, he needed someone who would not repeat that cycle.

*Zipporah fit in at the right time*

## QUESTIONS

- Have you been betrayed before?
- Have you betrayed someone before?
- How loyal are you?
- Are you willing to go the extra mile or are you tired of doing such?
- Have you been faithful in your relationship with God?

## SUMMARY



ZIPPORAH 2

## TENACITY

Tenacity is the quality of being determined.

It expresses determination.

Another word for it is persistence.

Zipporah showed persistence and strength by remaining with Moses.

Living in the mountains, taking care of their children and staying with a man she had barely known, Zipporah exhibited tenacity in her daily affairs.

## THE STRANGER

Moses was a stranger.

A faraway stranger who came into Zipporah's life and became a part of it for a long time.

He was not a familiar person that she was used to but she had to know him for him and stick with him.

*Sticking to a stranger is risky*

There was no guarantee that Moses was going to stay.

*Because he was a stranger*

Many people come into our lives first as strangers but depending on the importance they play in our lives over time, they get different compartments in our lives.

It takes patience to relate with loved ones and sometimes greater patience with strangers.

Strangers do not know us as well as people we have come to know either as family or as friends.

We are guarded with strangers.

*We can pretend to strangers*

Moses was different from Zipporah but over the years he became more than a stranger but her husband with whom she had children with.

Interestingly many key people will come into our lives as strangers.

## ENDURANCE

The ability to patiently wait through difficult times.

As a shepherdess in a mountainous environment, years had trained Zipporah to be patient in uncomfortable situations and this was reflected years later when Moses responded to the call of God in his life.

Waiting tests us deeply and endurance tests us deeper.

### **Endurance tests the reason why we wait.**

Romans 5: 3-4 Moreover [let us also be full of joy now!] let us exult and triumph in our troubles and rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that pressure and affliction and hardship produce patient and unswerving endurance. And endurance (fortitude) develops maturity of character (approved faith and tried integrity). And character [of this sort] produces [the habit of] joyful and confident hope of eternal salvation. (AMP)

As Christians, endurance is a virtue we gain as we wait on God concerning different areas of our lives.



## **REFLECTIONS**

Sufferings though not desired happen one way or the other to us and their impact depends on our mindset about them.

Certain sufferings are avoidable and some are not.

However, importantly is knowing that all things work for our good as we remain in Christ Jesus understanding that He is moulding our lives.

We will meet strangers but we still have a choice to choose the impact they make depending on the values they offer to us.

We are strangers to others and we also have a choice to be an impact that will be meaningful to them.

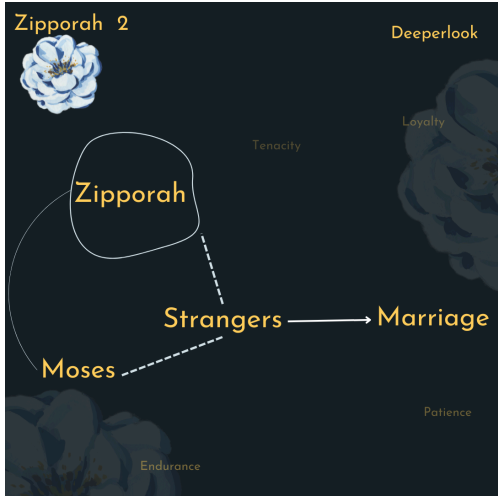
Finally, we are strangers on earth for it is not our final destination. With this in mind, we guard how dearly we hold onto anything temporarily.

## QUESTIONS

- Have you had to wait for long for anything? Did you get frustrated?
- Are you currently still waiting on something? Are you frustrated?
- How many strangers have you recently connected with?
- Has any stranger become very important to you in recent times?
- Do you believe we should endure?
- What is the true test of your character?
- How matured have you become in the last one year?

## SUMMARY





ZIPPORAH 3

## TOUGH LOVE

Exodus 4

Love can be tough

Love is sacrifice.

There is a kind of love that is tough. It goes against our sweet emotions. It is a kind of love that makes us take tough decisions.

Zipporah at a crucial point, where her husband's life was at stake had to make a drastic action even though it was highly uncomfortable for her.

She had to circumcise her child in the middle of the night and bear the pain of hearing her child cry in agony and clean up after even as she was unprepared to carry out the act.

Moses had been acting out with God and being unstable in making a decision to obey. He asked God for a sign one day and the next day he would pull out.

*Moses was playing hanky panky with God*

Zipporah after circumcising her son, and intercepting on her husband's behalf had to call him "**Bloody Husband**".

## TOUGH LOVE IS MORE

Than emotions.

### **Love is a decision**

Love comes with feeling a specific kind of emotion, and depending on the degree of these emotions we may be swayed to do different things in the name of love, however love is not made up of only emotions.

When we love, we are willing to care and sometimes showing this care involves making difficult decisions.

*Love is shown in the decisions we make*

Love is not irrational. We may make decisions when we are high on emotions but love, because it sees the bigger picture will not act irrationally. Love always considers the present and the future.

Love is more than fast beating pulsations, it is making decisions that give life.

**The long term effect of love is preservation.**

TOUGH LOVE IS LONG TERM

Tough love can be misunderstood because it is not swayed by emotions, however its effects are long term. It is love that is futuristic. It looks into the future and makes decisions from now.

*It not short fused*

Whatever will be long term needs patience and patience is a difficult price to pay.

**Tough love is uncomfortable because it is rational. It is not swayed by emotions and hence difficult to manipulate, however its core will remain preserved.**

To give an example will be:

Disciplining a child for a bad behaviour. Failure to discipline a child will only cause future harm to the child and whomever they meet in the future. There are values which can only be instilled through discipline and patience. A child should know how to take a no, to wait, to respect, to be truthful, be kind, be honest etc and this is taught through discipline.

A child who is not disciplined will become irresponsible and it may show lack of care by caretaker.

God corrects us. It is part of the process through which we learn and grow. Tough love is long term and during this time what happens is growth.

Proverbs 3: 11-12 My son, do not reject or take lightly the discipline of the Lord [learn from your mistakes and the testing that comes from His correction through discipline];Nor despise His rebuke, For those whom the Lord loves He corrects,Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights. (AMP)

## TOUGH LOVE IS NOT

### UNCONTROLLED

Now, tough love is not love that acts without discretion.

Because it is tough, does not mean it acts beyond boundaries.

It involves making difficult decisions but it is still contained.

The reason is that, it is meant for preservation and not destruction.

*Love is not meant to destroy*

Love gives life and tough love is not an exception.

Yes, the love God shows to man is a tough love. It is love that loves us despite of our sin, saves us from sin yet does not condone sin.



## REFLECTIONS

It is easy to think that love is only about fuzzy feelings or that it always makes us comfortable but truth check is that love is more than that.

Love comes with pains, however this pain is from the sacrifice we make for the future. Sometimes tough live may mean leaving.

There is no good and loving parent that enjoys discipling their child, it is painful even for the parent to discipline but because discipline will shape a child into a proper person, a reasonable parent will not avoid this important process in a child's life.

True, tough love can be manipulated and used to cause harm. It can be used as a tool of manipulation but that too is an adulteration.

When we go through life lessons, and learn patience, kindness, trust in God, hope, faith, love, we are built to be firm Christians that have been shaped by the word of God.

No Christian becomes firm without discipline.

1 Corinthians 13 is a chapter dedicated to describing what love and what love is not, with deeper study we will understand that the love described there is a tough one. It expresses the things we do inspite of ourselves.

There is also a place for showing ourselves tough love and this may mean telling ourselves no to many things even though we may want it.

That is why we wait to have sex in marriage. We do not live in reckless abandon. We do not eat like gluttons and sometimes fast as necessary. We give offerings when we want to keep the money for ourselves. We tell the truth even when it is uncomfortable and many other decisions we make because we love God.

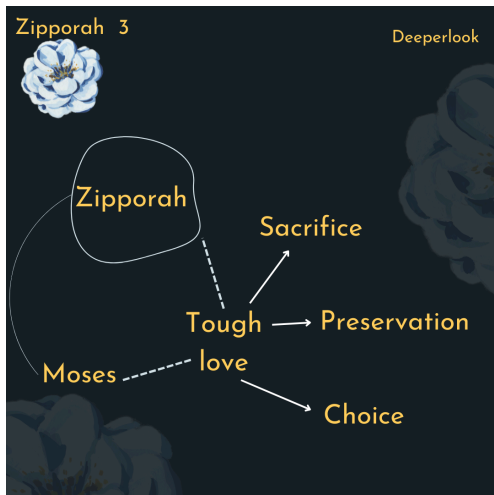
**Therefore we qualify tough love by how it glorifies God in our lives** because at the end of the day, God's plan for us is for good even when things are not good.



## QUESTIONS

- What is love to you?
- What is tough love to you?
- In what ways have you experienced tough love?
- Have you shown tough love before?
- How long can you wait in spite of your emotions or desires?
- How has love shaped your life?

## SUMMARY





## NOTE FROM AUTHOR

I completed this series in 2022 on my blog. Grateful I had the opportunity to compile it.

If you have reservations, questions, corrections and comments, you can send them to me via the contact links shared below.

Kindly share to a friend to be blessed.

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