

The Book of Hebrews

מְאֹנְשׁ מִנְמָה דָא מִנְהָת אַקְלָא
צְמַאַלְלָא נְתַחְצְרָה דְרַחְסָנָה סָקָה
אַחֲ פְּקָלָא תְּסִנְ סְרְבָּאַלְלָה
רַרְתָּא סָקָה תְּאַקְסָנָה דְמַמְצָה
תְּאַתְּפָלָשָׁה נְתַרְדְּנָה הַרְפָּרָה נְרַלְדָה
תְּאַגְּשָׁה רַלְדָה מְלַלְצָה סָסָה תְּלָשָׁה



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Outline of Hebrews

“Jesus is Better”

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Outline of Hebrews

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 - 1. Don't Abandon Confidence but Persevere in Faith (10:32–39)
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Outline of Hebrews

2. The “Hall of Faith” – Description and Examples of Persevering Faith (11:1-12:3)
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The Faith of Moses and Those Entering the Land – Part 1 (11:23-26)

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. ²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

The Faith of Moses and Those Entering the Land - Part 1 (11:23-26)

- Moses has already been presented as a stellar example of faithfulness in Heb 3:1-6.
- In that passage the author uses the lawgiver as a picture of “servant faithfulness,” who fulfilled his duty to God as leader of the Israelites.
- Moses was especially venerated by Greek-speaking Jews of the first century as one who was unusually close to God.
- In certain Jewish traditions he was considered to be the greatest person in history.
- Therefore, it is not surprising that the writer gives sustained attention to Moses in his example list (Heb 11:23-28).

²³ *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.*

- The “*faith*” which was shown at Moses' birth was, of course, **not his own** but **his parents’**.
- He was born in Egypt, soon after the reigning Pharaoh had issued a decree ordering that all male children born to them should be put to death at birth.
- But, according to the Exodus account, when Moses' mother *“saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months.”* (Exod 2:2)
- After that she placed him in a waterproofed basket which she then placed among the reeds along the bank of the Nile, where he was later found by Pharaoh's daughter.
- While the **Hebrew** text makes his **mother** the active party in circumventing the royal decree, the **Septuagint** (LXX) says that **both** his parents hid him for three months, and it is the Septuagint account that is followed by our author.

²³ *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.*

- Nature itself might suggest that his mother took the initiative, with the acquiescence of his father.
- Had their defiance of the law been discovered, the penalty would have been severe; but “*they were not afraid of the king's edict.*”
- What exactly was it that they had “*faith*” in?
- Probably the statement that Moses was a “*fine*” child means more than that he was a “*beautiful*” baby.
- Stephen, when recounting these events in Acts 7:20 describes the baby Moses as “*beautiful in God's sight.*”

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- There was apparently something about the appearance of the child which indicated that he was “*no ordinary child*” (NIV), but one destined under God to accomplish great things for his people.
- In any case, an appreciation of the divine purpose to be fulfilled through Moses seems to be implied in the “*faith*” the author attributes to Amram and Jochebed (Moses parents – Exod 6:20).

²³ *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and **they were not afraid** of the king's edict.*

- Presumably the author recounts this story because his readers were fearful of trusting in the Lord and of not doing anything that might put them at odds with authorities who could do *them* harm.
- And so he sets forth Moses' parents as an example of doing what was right though they had good reason to be fearful.

²⁴ *By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;* ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

- When Pharaoh's daughter found the infant Moses by the Nile, she adopted him and brought him up as her own son.
- But “*one day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens*” (Ex 2:11).
- According to Stephen, Moses presented himself to his fellow-Israelites as their ***champion***, supposing that they “*would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand.*” (Acts 7:25).

²⁴ *By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,* ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the *people of God* than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

- Here the author illustrates how faith can, in *some* cases, motivate a person to choose *suffering over pleasure* in an act of self-denial.
- In this case, Moses “*refused*” what would have been the *dream* of many people in his day: “*to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter*.”
- *Instead*, he chose to identify with the suffering of the “*people of God*” (Exod. 2:11f.; cf. Acts 7:23ff.).

²⁴ **By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God **than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.****

- It was "*by faith* " that Moses made his great refusal, with all that it cost him in material terms.
- God's people were being ill-treated, but he chose to share their ill-treatment rather "*than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin*".
- The privileges and advantages which are attached to high rank and political power are **not** sinful in and of themselves; they can indeed be used very effectively to promote the well-being of others and to help the underprivileged.

25 ...choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

- Moses might well have argued that, like Joseph, he could serve God and help his own people by **remaining** in power.
- Under Joseph's exalted authority, the family of Jacob was enabled to find refuge, survival, and prosperity in Egypt.
- But in Moses day, the family had become a nation and was now meeting with **hostility and oppression** from their Egyptian overlords.
- The time was ripe for the Israelites to move **out** of Egypt and to possess the land that God had promised to Abraham's offspring.

25 ...choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of **sin**.

- Moses' calling was to give up his position of privilege and, “*by faith*”, cast aside the earthly security he had known for so long to lead an undisciplined crowd across the wilderness from bondage to freedom.
- The great “*sin*” of Moses would have been to *disobey* his heavenly *calling* and choose instead the fleeting pleasures of the ease and affluence of the palace.

25 ...choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the ***fleeting pleasures*** of sin.

- By ***siding*** with the Israelites, Moses ***renounced*** the pleasures and joys of Egypt with all its luxuries and comforts.
- The author acknowledges here that sin may indeed bring intense delight and pleasure.
- But such “***pleasures***” are ***temporary***, and Moses recognized that the enjoyment of sin is “ ***fleeting***”.

²⁶ *He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.*

- Up to this point, the author has described Moses' alternatives in terms of his *physical* and *social* experience: either mistreatment or enjoyment.
- *Here* the alternatives are described using a *financial* metaphor – either:
 - Egypt's “*treasures*”
 - *Or* the “*greater wealth*” and “*reward*” on which Moses' sights were set.
- Our author identifies the “*greater wealth*” that Moses chose as “*the reproach of Christ*.”
- It is a *shocking* paradox to equate “*reproach*” to “*wealth*” – wealth *exceeding* that of Pharaoh's court!

²⁶ *He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.*

- The phrase “*reproach of Christ*” may be understood more accurately as “the disgrace experienced by Christ.”
- This disgrace was not simply the reproach Moses accepted by identifying himself with the people of God but, more precisely, the reproach of the coming Messiah with whom Moses was united “*by faith*”.
- You may recall Moses’ assurance to the Israelites: “*God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers*” (Deut 18:15 cf. Acts 3:22, Acts 7:37)
- And also, the rebuke of Jesus Christ to *his* adversaries: “*For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for [Moses] wrote of me.*” (John 5:46).
- Thus Moses experienced the same kind of reproach experienced later by Christ – rejection faced by a prophet standing on the side of God, proclaiming the word of the Lord in boldness against an ungodly generation.

²⁶ *He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.*

- As we've already seen, the original Jewish-Christian hearers of the letter to the Hebrews had *already* suffered “*reproach*” for *their* faith *and* had identified with others who had suffered in a similar manner (Heb 10:32-34).
- And, they will be encouraged by the author to do so again (Heb 13:3).
- But for the readers, the choice was *not* between the luxuries of Egypt’s royal court and the helplessness and exhausting toil of a nation of slaves.
- Rather, it was between status in the Jewish community and family circles, on the one hand, and shunning by synagogue and family, with related social and economic ramifications, on the other.

²⁶ *He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.*

- For every generation, bearing the reproach of Christ in solidarity with his faithful followers has its price, and the cost of enduring faith is not negligible.
- But Moses' reckoning was correct: Christ's reproach is wealth that sin's pleasures and society's acceptance cannot rival.
- The reward is nothing less than drawing near and dwelling with God in the heavenly country and city to come (10:34-35; 11:6, 10, 16; 12:22-24, 28; 13:14).

Class Discussion Time



*Class Discussion Time

- In Romans 13, the apostle Paul encourages his readers to *“be subject to the governing authorities”* (Rom 13:1) and later goes on to say *“Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval”* (Romans 13:3b)
- In our passage today, Moses' parents are commended because *“they were not afraid”* to *disobey “the king's edict”* (Heb 11:23) . How do these two passages fit together?
- In the book of Genesis, Joseph is *faithful* to God while serving as vice regent under the Egyptian Pharoah of his day, yet Moses is commended for *not* becoming vice regent under the Egyptian Pharoah of *his* day. Why the difference? Is there a lesson to be learned here?

*Class Discussion Time

- Moses walked away from an opportunity to be prosperous and comfortable in order to bear the “*reproach of Christ*”.
- Have ***you*** ever walked away from an opportunity to be prosperous and comfortable in order to be faithful in ***your*** service to Christ? If so, would you be willing to tell us about it?
- If you have not, ***as of yet***, had to do this, can you envision a scenario ***in the future*** where you might be called upon to do this?