

HEBREWS 39
(Hebrews 11:22-29)

THE OPERATION OF FAITH IN MOSES
By Ron Harvey
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INTRODUCTION

- I. The faith of Moses parents. (Their names were Amram and Jochebed. Ex.6:20)

Now here we aren't given much information about Moses' parents.

- They believed God.
- They hid Moses for three months.
- They saw that he was handsome.

Now you remember that Pharaoh had ordered that every male child born to the Hebrews should be killed.

Now the parents of Moses were subject to death themselves if they were caught hiding their child. And so, they risked their lives. And the question is, why did they do it? And we don't have much information. But it says they did it by faith. In other words they believed God.

Now remember our definition of godly faith – believing the testimony of God.

Now it is possible that God spoke to Moses' parents and told them to hide Moses. Perhaps God revealed to Moses' parents that Moses had a special mission in the plan of God. And therefore, they were not to comply with the King's orders but they were to hide the child. And since they believed God, they hid the child and therefore they hid the child by faith.

This would not be inconsistent with the way God revealed such things to parents before.

Example: Abraham. God told Abraham that he would bear a son.
Example: Samuel. God told Hannah
Example: John the Baptist
Example: Jesus

And so, I tend to believe that there was some pretty specific information given to Moses' parents. And therefore, they obeyed God and hid the child.

But look what else it says,

Because they saw that the child was beautiful . . .

Now it says that they hid the child because the child was beautiful. Now Phillip Hughes in his commentary on Hebrews suggests that this passage implies that there was something more than just the natural affection that a parent would have for his child. Every parent thinks his child is beautiful. Every parent loves his child and wants to protect him. But apparently there was something about the exceptional beauty of this child that stirred up their faith even more and caused them to believe the promises of God. When they saw their child and saw how proper he was, their faith was confirmed and they said, "Surely God has chosen this child for a special purpose."

Now Moses' parents were moved with faith when Moses was born and they had a sound conviction that what God had said was true and that there was a special purpose for Moses.

And they were not afraid of the king's edict.

Principle of faith: True godly faith is obedient in the face of risk.

Now Pharaoh had commanded that the parents of any male child should surrender their child for execution. And I am sure that any violation of that decree would have subjected the parents to execution. But because Amram and Jochebed believed God, they obeyed God in the face of great risk.

Christians in every century have risked their lives because of faith. They believed God and they did not count the risk. Now in our country, we

don't face much physical risk in worshipping God. We do face certain risks however.

1. We face the risk of being ostracized.
 - By family members
 - By employers
 - By neighbors and friends

And so Moses parents, willing to face the risk of death themselves, hid the child for three months.

If I can expand on the story just a little bit. After about three months, it became impossible to conceal the child without being found out. So, they place him in a basket among the reeds by the bank of the river. And I suspect that they also did that in faith.

It was not likely that an infant child would survive more than a few hours lying in a basket in the river. The mere exposure to the elements would have soon killed the child. But, being God-fearing parents, and believing the testimony of God concerning this child, they placed him in the basket and kissed him goodbye. And they must have said to God, "Into thy hands we commend our son."

And they posted a watch by the river to see what would come of Moses by the providence of God.

Sometimes this is all that we can do. When we can no longer control our circumstances, we turn our hands loose from that which we otherwise would cling to, and we turn it over to the only One who can control circumstances. And when we come to those times in life, it is good to watch to see the hand of God and to see how he will deliver you.

And so Amram bundled her little infant son into a basket and placed it in the river and she put all of her trust in a sovereign God.

And that's why it says,

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

Now let's take note here that Moses was a great type of Christ.

See Deut: 18:15

Moses was not afraid to call Israel his brethren.
Christ was not afraid to call us his brethren.

Moses delivered his people from bondage.
Christ delivered his people from bondage.

Moses delivered his people to the land of rest.
Christ delivers his people to the land of rest.

But, notice another similarity here. When Moses was born, the King of Egypt issued an order that all Hebrew male infants would be killed. This was another prefigure of Christ. When Christ was born, his parents had to hide him in Egypt to protect him from Herod's decree that all males under two years old should be killed.

So, we have seen the faith of Moses' parents. Now let's consider

II. The faith of Moses himself.

Read 11:24-26

A. We have here an account of Moses leaving Egypt and joining the people of Israel.

This was an act of faith.

It says, by faith, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

This would indicate to me that Moses had some indication from God that he was not to forever associate himself with the Egyptians but that he had a mission with respect to Israel. How much did God reveal to Moses? We don't know. But we do know that Moses left Egypt by faith.

Now Moses had become a man of great status in Egypt. He was raised by Pharaoh's daughter. So, Moses had great privilege and ease of

living. Look at Acts 7:22.

Now it says that when he was grown up (Acts 7:22 says he was forty) he made a choice.

Choosing rather . . .

Principle: True godly faith makes choices consistent with the will of God.

If you are a Christian, there are choices to be made in life. And there will come times when you will make momentous choices. And faith will cause you to sometimes to do what no one else in the world would do.

No one in their right mind would leave the comforts of the royal palace, for a life of toil and affliction. But Moses left because he had an eye of faith.

This was a great temptation for Moses. But Moses chose to suffer ill-treatment with the people of God rather to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

Principle: True godly faith looks beyond trials and afflictions of the present time to the glory that lies ahead.

For he looked to the reward . . .

If all we see are the things of this world, then it is very difficult to obey God when he asks us to suffer for a time. But all of the great men of faith looked beyond this world. They saw something by faith that made the afflictions of this world seem but a minor distraction.

And Moses, looked to the reward.

Moses, being a wise man, calculated the benefits of remaining in Egypt against the benefits of obeying God, and he saw by faith that obeying God results in a much greater reward.

Notice that the benefits of remaining in Egypt were temporary.

For a season. (v.25)

But the benefits for those who obey God are eternal.

Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

By faith, Moses took out his calculator and he crunched the numbers and he said, "Let's see, a few earthly pleasures for a short time OR heavenly joy forever." And by faith, Moses gave up a life of sinful pleasure in exchange for a life of service to His God.

B. Moses left Egypt at the time of the Passover.

Now we saw in verses 24, 25 the faith of Moses when he first left Egypt when he was forty years old.

But now we come to another reference to him leaving Egypt in verse 27. And the question is, which event is this? Is it still a reference to the first leaving when he was 40 years old? Or is it when he left Egypt with all Israel when he was about 80 years old?

Do you see a hint in verse 27? It says he left, "not fearing the wrath of the king."

When he left Egypt the first time, he left in fear for his life. He had killed an Egyptian and he feared this had gotten back to the king's ears. And so in some respect Moses fled Egypt the first time fearing the king. Now he left in faith. He defended his Hebrew brother in faith. Still, he did not go to Pharaoh boldly and tell him he was leaving.

But when he came back to Egypt what did he do? He marched right in to see Pharaoh and he demanded that Pharaoh let the people go.

And so, it appears that this reference in verse 27 is to the second time he left Egypt. It refers to the leaving of Egypt for that final time with the people.

And Moses did this by faith. God had told Moses to deliver the people out of Egypt. And Moses believed God. Now humanly speaking, it was

impossible to believe that Moses could walk into the palace and demand such a thing from Pharoah without being executed. But by faith, Moses walked in. And by faith Moses walked out of Egypt – believing what God had said.

When they got to the Red Sea, they appeared to be trapped. But by faith, they passed through the Sea on dry land.