

## Lesson 17 Hebrews 11:23-29

## VERSE 23

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

1. This is speaking of the faith of Moses' parents who were not afraid of the consequences they might face for not obeying the king's command to allow their son to die.
2. While Paul instructed believers to obey the laws of their land, this would never include going against the will of God.
3. Parents today might be forced to allow their children to be exposed to immoral information. Will we have faith to suffer the reproach of protecting our children from ungodly indoctrination?

*Exodus 2:1-10*

*And a man of the house of Levi went and took as wife a daughter of Levi. <sup>2</sup> So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months. <sup>3</sup> But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. <sup>4</sup> And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.*

*<sup>5</sup> Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. <sup>6</sup> And when she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children."*

*<sup>7</sup> Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?"*

*<sup>8</sup> And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. <sup>9</sup> Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. <sup>10</sup> And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water."*

*The faith of Moses' parents was shown in their concealing him for three months after his birth and thus evading the law that male children were to be killed. The word "commandment" is the translation of *diatagma*, namely, "a mandate." We might say in passing, that the children of God are by God obligated to obey the laws of the country in which they reside, and disobedience to these laws is sin against God. But they are obligated to obey these laws only up to the point where obedience to these laws would mean disobedience to God. The parents of Moses were entirely within their rights in this case, for the reigning Pharaoh was violating the law of God which forbids murder. In view of the fact that Moses was such a handsome, well-favored child, the parents naturally looked forward to a great destiny for him, an exceptional career, and that God would use him for an outstanding service. They had faith that God would thus save him from the*

mandate of the king. - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

## VERSES 24-26

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, <sup>26</sup> considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

1. As Pharaoh's daughter's son, Moses had the right to enjoy the pleasures offered to him, but instead he lay aside his privileges and chose instead to identify with Israel.

### *Philippians 2:5-8*

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

2. The riches of Christ far out-weighed the passing pleasures of sin.
3. Paul is using the example of Moses to encourage the Hebrews. Would they also have faith to esteem the reproach of Christ as greater riches than remaining under the law?

*(11:24-26) With respect to the action of Moses in renouncing his relationship to Pharaoh and his court, and choosing to cast his lot with Israel, we cannot do better than quote Expositor's: "The significance and source of this refusal lay in his preferring to suffer ill-usage with God's people rather than to have a short-lived enjoyment of sin... It was because they were God's people, not solely because they were of his blood, that Moses threw in his lot with them. It was this which illustrated his faith. He believed that God would fulfil His promise to His people, little likelihood as at present there seemed to be of any great future for his race. On the other hand there was the **hamartias apolausis** (the pleasure of sin), the enjoyment which was within his reach if only he committed the sin of denying his people and renouncing their future as promised by God. For 'the enjoyment to be reaped from sin,' does not refer to the pleasure of gratifying sensual appetite and so forth, but to the satisfaction of a high ambition and the gratification of his finer tastes which he might have had by remaining in the Egyptian court. Very similarly Philo interprets the action of Moses, who, he says, 'esteemed the good things of those who adopted him, although more splendid for a season, to be in reality spurious, but those of his natural parents, although for a little while less conspicuous to be true and genuine'... That which influenced Moses to make this choice was his estimate of the comparative value of the outcome of suffering with God's people and of the happiness offered in Egypt... 'He considered the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he steadily kept in view*

the reward.' The reproach or obloquy and disgrace, which Moses experienced is called 'the reproach of the Christ because it was on account of his belief in God's saving purpose that he suffered . . . The writer uses the expression . . . with a view to his readers who were shrinking from the reproach of Christ (13:13).'" Wuest

*Translation: By faith, Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter, having chosen for himself rather to be suffering affliction with the people of God than to be having sin's enjoyments temporarily, since after weighing and comparing the facts in the case, he considered the reproach of the Messiah, greater wealth than Egypt's treasures, for he looked away (from the treasures of Egypt) to the recompense.*

- Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

*No, he was guided neither by reason nor sentiment: it was "by faith" that Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. It was the clinging of his heart to the Divine promise, the apprehension of things not seen by the outward eye, the confident expectation of future reward. A.W. Pink*

*Moses might have argued to himself that he could do much more for the Israelites by remaining in Pharaoh's court and using his influence there on their behalf than by renouncing his Egyptian citizenship and becoming of a depressed group with no political rights. But for Moses to do this, when once he had seen the path of duty clear before him, would have been sin-the crowning sin of apostasy, against which the recipients of this letter needed so insistently to be warned. Even if (as some have imagined) the crown of Egypt was within Moses' reach had he remained where he was, and his name had been perpetuated in history as the greatest and wisest of the rulers of that land, he would never have attained such a reputation as he did by making the great refusal. F.F. Bruce*

*Moses weighed the issues in his mind and decided that the temporal wealth of Egypt was far less valuable than "the stigma that rests on God's Anointed"<sup>182</sup> (NEB). F.F. Bruce*

*The identification of Christ with his people is noteworthy. The words which the God of Israel put in Moses' mouth when he went to Pharaoh to demand his people's release, "Israel is my son, my firstborn" (Ex. 4:22), are as applicable to Jesus personally as they are to Israel corporately. F.F. Bruce*

## VERSE 27

By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

1. This seems to contradict the record given in Exodus when he left Egypt in fear.

### **Exodus 2:14**

*But he said, "Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and said, "Surely the matter has become known."*

## 2. Wuest explains that what he did not fear was the anger of the king for leaving Egypt.

*(11:27) Moses' act of forsaking Egypt referred to here is not that connected with the Exodus, but is his flight consequent upon his killing the Egyptian. The writer states that he did not fear the wrath of Pharaoh. But Ex. 2:15 states that fear was the motive of his flight. This seeming contradiction is cleared up by Expositor's in the following: "But what is in the writer's mind is not Pharaoh's wrath as cause but as consequence of Moses' abandonment of Egypt. His flight showed that he had finally renounced life at court, and in thus indicating by this decisive action that he was an Israelite, and meant to share with his people, he braved the king's wrath. This he was strengthened to do because he saw an invisible monarch greater than Pharaoh. Vaughan seems to be the only interpreter who has precisely hit the writer's meaning: 'the two fears are different, the one is the fear arising from the discovery of his slaying the Egyptian, the other is the fear of Pharaoh's anger on discovering his flight. He feared and therefore fled: he feared not, and therefore fled. Having fled and so cutting himself off from all immediate opportunity of helping his people, ekarteresen (he endured), 'he steadfastly bided his time,' because he saw the Invisible... The aorist gathers the forty years in Midian into one exhibition of wonderful perseverance in faith." It was during those forty years in Midian that Moses kept before himself his great destiny, that of leading God's people out of Egypt, and kept trusting God in spite of his flight from Egypt and his enforced absence from that land, that He would yet bring him back there and effect the deliverance of the Chosen People.*

*Translation: By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he was staunch and steadfast, as seeing the Invisible One. - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.*

## VERSE 28

**By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them.**

1. He had faith in the instructions given to him by God regarding the first Passover. Moses believed/obeyed, and the Children of Israel believed/obeyed. Those who did were saved. Those who did not, namely, the Egyptians, experienced destruction. **Exodus 12:1-13**

*Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, <sup>2</sup> "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. <sup>3</sup> Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. <sup>4</sup> And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. <sup>7</sup> And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. <sup>8</sup> Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with*

unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. <sup>9</sup> Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. <sup>10</sup> You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. <sup>11</sup> And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover.

<sup>12</sup> 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

*"The institution of the Passover was an act of faith, similar to that of Noah's preparation of the ark (verse 7). To realize what this faith must have been, we have to go back to 'that night,' and note the special circumstances, which can alone explain the meaning of the words 'by faith.' God's judgments had been poured out on Egypt and its king, and its people. A crisis had arrived, for, after nine plagues had been sent, Pharaoh and the Egyptians still remained obdurate. Indeed, Moses had been threatened with death if he ever came into Pharaoh's presence again (Ex. 10: 28, 29). On the other hand, the Hebrews were in more evil case than ever; and Moses, who was to have delivered them, had not made good his promises. "It was at such a moment that Moses heard from God what he was to do. To sight and to sense it must have seemed most inadequate, and quite unlikely to accomplish the desired result. Why should this last plague be expected to accomplish what the nine had failed to do, with all their cumulative terrors? Why should the mere sprinkling of the blood have such a remarkable effect? And if they were indeed to leave Egypt 'that same night' why should the people be burdened with all those minute ceremonial observances at the very moment when they ought to be making preparation for their departure!" A.W. Pink*

*It would, to human sight, be a difficult if not impossible task to persuade the people, and convince them of the absolute necessity of complying with all the minute details of the observance of the Paschal ordinance. But this is just where faith came in. This was just the field on which it could obtain its greatest victory. Hence we read that 'by faith' every difficulty was overcome; the Feast was observed, and the Exodus accomplished. A.W. Pink*

*They might have spent the entire night in fasting and prayer, in penitently confessing their sins and crying unto God for mercy, but none of those exercises would have stood them in any good stead. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Ex. 12: 13) made known the all-essential requirement. So it is now; nothing but the blood of Christ can cleanse from sin and deliver from the death-penalty of God's broken law. A.W. Pink*

*It is by a spiritual "sprinkling" or applying of Christ's blood that all the benefit thereof redounds to us. A.W. Pink*

*The blood of Christ is "sprinkled" on the soul in two ways. First, by the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 6: 11), who inwardly persuades the soul of a right that it hath to Christ and to all that He did and suffered for our redemption. Second, by faith (Acts 15: 9), for faith is the hand of the soul which receives all spiritual benefits. Faith*

*moves the regenerated soul to rest upon Christ for a personal benefit of His obedience unto death. On this ground the apostle exhorts, “Let us draw near with a true heart in a full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil (guilty) conscience” (Heb. 10: 22). A.W. Pink*

## VERSE 29

By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.

1. Fear would have dictated that the children of Israel NOT step into the Red Sea even though it was held up and the land below it was dry. Yet, at the command of God they crossed. It likely took 3-4 hours for that many people to cross. At any moment, they might have doubted, but they didn't.

### **Exodus 14:21-23**

*Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. <sup>22</sup> So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. <sup>23</sup> And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.*

*That is, it was only by confidence in God that they were able to do this. It was not by power which they had to remove the waters and to make a passage for themselves; and it was not by the operation of any natural causes. It is not to be supposed that all who passed through the Red sea had saving faith. The assertion of the apostle is, that the passage was made in virtue of strong confidence in God, and that if it had not been for this confidence the passage could not have been made at all. Of this no one can entertain a doubt who reads the history of that remarkable transaction.*

2. However, the Egyptians acted not in faith but in presumption calculating that if the Israelites could do it, so could they. Their motives were to kill or capture the Children of Israel. As they began to cross, the waters remained. So great was their arrogance that it did not occur to them that they were walking into a trap. As soon as those walking in faith finished crossing, the waters returned, and the enemy of Israel was drowned in the sea.

### **Exodus 14:241-29**

*<sup>24</sup> Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the Lord looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. <sup>25</sup> And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians.”*

*<sup>26</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen.” <sup>27</sup> And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.*

*<sup>28</sup> Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. <sup>29</sup> But the children of*

*Israel had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.*

*Rashness and presumption mistaken by many for faith; with similar rash presumption many rush into eternity. The same thing when done by the believer, and when done by the unbeliever, is not the same thing [Bengel]. What was faith in Israel, was presumption in the Egyptians. -Jamieson-Fausset-Brown*

**3. The author of Hebrews was making a point to the readers of this letter. Don't let anything keep you from believing in Jesus.**

**Hebrews 12:1-2**

*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*