

Risk It All

Hebrews 11:23-27

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I. Unafraid v. 23 - Exodus 2:2

- a. By Faith - **state of believing on the basis of the reliability of the one trusted, trust, confidence, faith** in the active sense='believing'
 - i. His Parents
 1. The courageous action of Moses' parents in preserving their newly born child is celebrated in v 23. In flagrant disobedience of the royal edict of the pharaoh that all male babies were to be thrown into the Nile, they hid their child for three months (Exod 1:15–22; 2:1–2). The text behind the account in v 23 is Exod 2:2
 2. The second explanation is a deduction from the text, which finds considerable support in the action of the Hebrew midwives, whose fearless response to the cruel mandate of the pharaoh is reported in Exod 1:17–21.
 - ii. Hidden
 1. Three Months
 2. They saw a beautiful child (reward)
 - a. In the version of the tradition preserved in Stephen's speech, a causal connection is not drawn between Moses' appearance and the three-month period in which he remained in his parents' home, but it is stated that he was ἄσπεῖος τῷ θεῷ, "beautiful in the sight of God," or "well-pleasing to God" (Acts 7:20).
 - b. The evidence indicates a well-established tradition of interpretation that found in the word ἄσπεῖος an indication that the infant possessed a visible sign of God's elective favor. According to v 23, Moses' parents found in the extraordinary appearance of their son a basis for faith in the as yet unseen purposes of God; his unusual attractiveness was to them a visible sign that he enjoyed God's favor and protection.
- b. They were Not Afraid
 - i. Afraid- **to be in an apprehensive state, be afraid**, the in the sense **become frightened**
 - ii. Of the king's edict "

1. and they did not become afraid of the king's edict." They chose to fear God rather than the might of the pharaoh

II. Refuse and Choose vs. 23-26

- a. Refused - The basic meaning is "to say no," "to deny," in description of a negative attitude towards a question or a demand, a. "To say no" in relation to a question, either with or without object
 - i. Called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter
 1. For Philo, this clearly signified not only formal adoption but that Moses had been designated the heir apparent. This assumption may reflect the Roman practice of adoption, which conferred upon the adopted son the legal status of a natural son of the family; this would indeed have made Moses the pharaoh's heir. If this is the legal background presupposed in v 24, a moral choice was clearly forced upon Moses, for the Roman practice of adoption also abolished the status of the adopted son in his natural family. The stage would then be set for Moses' exemplary renunciation of power and status (so D'Angelo, *Moses*, 42-43, with reservations). It is clear from v 24 that Moses enjoyed every advantage privileged status could procure.
 2. The declaration that Moses acted in faith μέγας γενόμενος, "when he had grown up," constitutes an allusion to Exod 2:11 LXX where these words occur. What is described there, however, is not a formal renunciation of Moses' privileged status as the son of the pharaoh's daughter, but his experience with an Egyptian who was striking a Hebrew.
- b. Choosing
 - i. Endure - Ill-treatment **suffer/be mistreated** One of the virtues of the Christian life cited in the New Testament, produced during suffering and which itself could produce character (Rom. 5:3-4). The Greek term suggests "tolerance," "forbearance," "patience" and "perseverance"
 - a. With the People of God
 - ii. Enjoyment
 1. Pleasures of Sin
 - a. In retelling the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, Josephus uses similar expressions. Joseph "chose rather to suffer unjustly, even to endure the supreme penalty, than to seize the pleasure of the present upon which indulgence he knew he would be condemned by his conscience justly"
 - b. Exod 1:11 LXX, which reports that slave masters were appointed over the Hebrews ἵνα κακώσωσιν αὐτοὺς ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις, "in order to oppress them with [forced]"

labors.” Moses chose present suffering and identification with the people of God in preference “to enjoying the temporary advantage of alliance with a sinful nation

- c. He recognized that the advantages that accrued to him as the son of the pharaoh’s daughter were obtained through the oppressive enslavement of the Hebrew nation. That is why they are designated “the temporary enjoyment of [the benefits of] sin” in v 25

c. Considering

i. Reproach of Christ

1. Reproach - **act of disparagement that results in disgrace, reproach, reviling, disgrace, insult**

2. Greater Riches

- a. Like Christ, Moses exchanged the joy he could have had for the endurance of hardship with the people of God (cf. 12:2–3). The reproach he incurred was abuse endured for the cause of Christ, in the specific sense that he identified himself with God’s people, sharing their hardship and contempt

ii. Treasure of Egypt

iii. Looking to the Reward-

1. Reward- **recompense**, whether favorable or unfavorable, ‘payment of wages’
2. Moses had been motivated to make his choice in faith, ἀπέβλεπεν γὰρ εἰς τὴν μισθαποδοσίαν, “because he was looking ahead to the reward.” The expression ἀπέβλεπεν εἰς, “looking ahead to,” suggests concentrated attention, while the imperfect tense denotes the habitual stance of Moses
3. implies that Moses “looked away” *from* the present experience of suffering *to* the reward. The impf. tense emphasizes the continuous disposition displayed in the past time.
4. The explanation for Moses’ response of faith in v 26b illustrates the earlier characterizations of faith in vv 1 and 6b. Moses’ action was regulated by a perspective on the future which found its ground in a vibrant faith in God and in the reward he confers upon those who please him. His faith thus bears witness to the reality of God as the rewarder of those who earnestly seek him. The perspective of faith enabled Moses to make the appropriate moral choice and freed him from a debilitating fear of identifying himself with the people of God

III. No Fear v. 27

- a. He Left
 - i. Not Fearing the King
 - 1. Moses did express fear when he knew his violent action had become public knowledge (Exod 2:14), but by faith he overcame his fear of reprisals and left Egypt, finding in faith a substantiation of hopes as yet unrealized and events as yet unseen (v 1). The emphasis upon faith overcoming fear is indicative of the pastoral intention of the writer in bringing this example before the community he addressed
- b. He Endured
- c. Seeing who is Unseen
 - i. he kept seeing continually.” The idiom has frequently been missed with the result that v 27b is translated “for as seeing the invisible one, he endured” (The verb ἐκατέρησεν (now rendered “he endured”) then becomes the basis for finding in v 27 the example of faith as endurance
 - ii. The emphasis, however, falls not on endurance but on continually seeing, as it were, the unseen God. The reference is not to the awesome event at the burning bush
 - iii. In the context of Exod 2:11–15, the reward must ultimately be related to the deliverance of the oppressed people of God. Moses looked beyond the events of the present to the yet unseen events of the future. From the pastoral perspective of the writer, the firmly entrenched habit of Moses in keeping God continually in view establishes a standard for imitation by the community in its experience of fear and governmental oppression