

Hebrews 11:24-26

By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

When we left our story, Moses was just a baby; born during a time when Pharaoh had ordered a total genocide of all the Hebrew baby boys in Egypt. By faith, Moses' mother, Jochebed, risked her life to place her baby in a water proof basket near the part of the Nile River where Pharaoh's daughter bathed hoping that he would be rescued.

Sure enough, Pharaoh's daughter found the baby and was touched with compassion and like any spoiled palace queen decided that she had to have one of those; so she adopted Moses. And if it was not ironic enough to have the very child who would be the deliverer of Israel raised right in Pharaoh's own household, Pharaoh's daughter also hired Jochebed and actually paid her to nurse her own son.

When Moses grew up Jochebed brought him back to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son and she is the one who named him Moses because she drew him out of the water (***Exodus 2:9-10***). I love the Lord's passion for irony.

In addition, during the time in his early childhood when he was being raised by Jochebed, I am fairly confident, based on what we see happen later in his life, that

Jochebed leveraged that precious time to teach Moses everything she could about his heritage, about his purpose, about the promised deliverer.

And now the story jumps to a time when Moses was about 40 years old having been spent probably 30-35 years in Pharaoh's household being raised as part of the royal family. In doing some research I found that there are so many different non-Biblical stories that seem to speak about Moses being a prince of Egypt who led great campaigns of military victory for Pharaoh. He is also rumored to have led Egypt into a very brief period of monotheism (or the worship of one God). It is said that he introduced to the people an omnipotent God who had no image but was represented by a solar disk with downward rays. Moses was apparently famed as a great leader of the Egyptian people and there are ancient reliefs, statues, and even coins that are presumed to bear the image of Moses.

Now, how much of these stories are true, we don't know, but it is clear that he was raised as a member of the royal household with all its wealth, splendor, opulence, and privileges. **Acts 7:22-23** clearly tells us that "Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds."

Now we have to keep in mind that this entire time that Moses "walked like an Egyptian" he probably had the words of Jochebed, his mother, echoing through his mind—"you are the one." I am sure that Moses could not quiet her words, much less quiet the stir that it created in his soul, and finally one day it must have all erupted and he decided to embrace the call that was placed on his life.

We don't what happened or what caused the change, but one day Moses actually believed that he was the one who was chosen by the God of his ancestors

to lead his people to freedom knowing full well that it would mean a rejection of everything that he had loved, everything that afforded him such great opportunity for personal glory and success, everything that gave him comfort and ease in this life, and everything Egyptian. He knew the risk. He knew the power of Pharaoh. He knew the might of the kingdom; he knew it from the inside out. He knew how Pharaoh and his army would respond if he led the uprising; yet, he did not fear.

Let's tackle for a moment this idea that **by faith** Moses rejected the fleeting pleasures of sin. But to understand this properly we must first remember that whatever is not of faith is sin (**Romans 14:23; James 4:17**).

Accordingly, this reference does not mean that we should conclude that Moses was leading some kind of rampant immoral lifestyle; rather, I believe it means that he was leading a life other than the one that God had appointed for him. He was the one called to deliver his people, but he was living like he was still part of the ruling class that oppressed God's chosen people. He knew from childhood what he was purposed to do; but he was still a part of Pharaoh's entourage enjoying all the benefits that came with palace life.

Apply this truth to your life. Are you still invested in the fleeting pleasures of sin? Do you know what you are called to do? You are called to be an ambassador of Christ (**2 Corinthians 5:20**); and like a good ambassador you are to do only what the Father tells you to do, saying only what He tells you to say, and going only where He tells you to go.

As an ambassador you are to accurately represent the Lord here in this dark, dark world. So the obvious question must be asked. Do you know him well enough to represent Him accurately?

As His ambassador you are to understand that you are an alien and stranger in this land; you do not belong here. The world is not your home. You are to live as a temporary resident and foreigner in a foreign land. You are to live as one who will soon return to their rightful home; for you belong to another world that has been prepared for you. Therefore, while you are here in this world, you are to live, yes live, to do the will of your Father who sent you on this mission.

So again, I have to ask you and more importantly you need to ask yourself: are you living for the fleeting pleasures of sin—leading a life other than the one that God has appointed for you?

We are told that Moses made a conscious choice to be mistreated with the people of God rather than enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. He made a very difficult choice.

Have you made that choice? Have you decided to abandon it all for the sake of Jesus Christ? Does it really matter how you will be treated when you consider how your Lord was treated? Practically yes, of course, it matters for all manner of suffering is not enjoyable; but deep inside where our faith is centered it should not matter. We should know that this life is brief, it is passing, and our reward is waiting for us in heaven; a reward that will be enjoyed for an eternity.

The Hebrews were oppressed, beaten down, and tormented. Moses knew that if he cast his lot in with them that he must also expect this kind of treatment; especially if his uprising failed and Pharaoh crushed his pathetic rebellion. He knew he could end up poor, crushed and part of a despised nation of slaves with no hope, no future, just mud, straw and the tearing of the flesh off his back at the hands of an Egyptian whip.

But Moses decided that the risk was worth it and **by faith** he made his choice for he was willing to endure the reproach, or the sufferings, of Christ for he was looking to a reward.

Paul tells us that “Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (**2 Timothy 3:12**). It is guaranteed. It is part and parcel with our decision to be aligned with Christ and become an enemy of those who are aligned with this world and the ruler of this world (including those who love religion). Peter explains it this way:

1 Peter 4:12-14

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

Moses thought it was all worth it. Is it worth it to you? Are you willing to endure the reproach or the sufferings of Christ? If you choose to align yourself with people who have chosen to live by raw and radical unbridled faith, believe me you will suffer; but I can attest that it is worth it. It is not very much fun and often it is quite depressing; but still it is worth it.

As Paul said in *Philippians 3:8*, truly all things pale in comparison to the surpassing value of knowing Christ. I simply would not exchange the life of faith for one of comfort and ease in this world; I would not do it.

I love what the Spirit said through Peter. If we choose to abandon our lives in order to share the sufferings of Christ, we are blessed for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon us. How cool is that. Yes, if we choose to live by a raw and radical unbridled faith we can expect suffering, but we can also expect amazing blessing having the Spirit poured out over our lives. That is what I want and I pray that is what you want. Imagine, the Spirit of glory and of God will rest upon you!

Now let's get back to Moses and Christ. Obviously there is no mention that prior to the time of the burning bush Moses had met Christ. So what could the Spirit be trying to convey by connecting Moses' decision to reject his upbringing with the reproach of Christ. I think we can look at this phrase a couple of ways and the text allows for either.

- 1) It could simply mean that he made his decision to walk away from the glory of Egypt relying on the teachings that his mother gave him regarding this unknown God (Jesus) who had personally appeared in the form of a man and made himself known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the one God who declared that the Hebrews were His special people. Moses decided to take

on the reproach of Jesus even though he did not learn his name until later on; and even then Jesus introduced Himself by His eternal name “I Am.” Just for the record, we know Moses did not meet Father God but His son Jesus, for no man has seen the Father (*John 1:18; 1 John 4:12*).

- 2) It could also just mean that Moses made the decision to be despised and rejected as a foreshadowing of the way that that Christ would ultimately be despised and rejected, by both his own people and the world (*Psalms 22*). And, we will soon find out, Moses was rejected by both his own people and the Egyptians (who are a type of the world). So maybe the Spirit is just saying that Moses and his decision was a type of Christ.

But either way, we know that Moses was looking to a reward. What reward do you think he could possibly have been looking forward to, especially considering that he had the wealth, opulence, and prosperity of Egypt at his fingertips?

Once again, I think we have to understand that his mom must have told him the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the promise that God would deliver to the children of Israel the Promised Land—the reward. For this prize, Moses was willing to walk away from all his wealth and splendor considering the promises of this unknown God to be of greater wealth and value than anything the Egyptians—or those in this world—could offer him.

In so doing, Moses sets for us a great example. As we have studied in the book of Hebrews, the Promised Land has definite meanings for us as believers. It is the promise that in Christ we can conquer our enemies. It is the promise that we can dwell in the land in peace and rest protected and fully provided for by the Lord. It is the picture of life in the Spirit. It is a picture of our living by faith from our **New**

Creation without significant interruption or interference from our enemy, the *Old Sinful Nature*. It is symbolic of our conquering the territory of our mind such that it is transformed by faith and renewed to be in alignment with the mind of Christ.

Jesus promised that in Him we would experience peace, rest, joy and God's agape love. This sounds like a wonderful reward. However, as we know from our study in the gospel of John, these are all attributes of Jesus Himself; for He is our great reward. While others have to endure this time on earth with stress, anxiety, paranoia, worry, selfishness, and greed, through faith in Jesus Christ we can enter into His promised rest in our here and now (**Hebrews 4**) despite all the trouble and difficulty that goes on around us.

For those who live by faith, our peace, our rest, our joy, and our ability to love with God's love is not dependent upon our own set of personal circumstances; for our circumstances always change. Rather, it is all dependent upon a person, a man, Jesus Christ. As we get to know Him better, as we trust ourselves to His love and Lordship over our lives, as He takes up more and more rooms in our heart, then we will experience these qualities of peace, rest, joy and love in abundance. It all comes with Him and it is all experienced as we trust Him with our lives.

Now, this next part of the story gets really interesting. It conveys to us a lot about God and as usual exposes areas of wrong belief with which we all seem to still struggle. We will start in **Exodus 2** but then we will also include in the text a critical part of **Acts 7** which will enable us to get the "rest of the story" in terms of Moses' mid life crisis.

Exodus 2:11-15

One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand (*Acts 7:25*).

When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong, "Why do you strike your companion?" He answered, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid, and thought, "Surely the thing is known." When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. And he sat down by a well.

Wow did you catch that. Moses believed that he was the deliverer and was supposed to provide salvation to his people; but the Israelites did not understand. It seems that although Jochebed had thoroughly taught Moses, the rest of the Hebrews were lacking in their understanding regarding the chosen one. They had no idea that he had come. I am sure they just saw Moses as some ego-inflated traitor who was full of himself. Look what they said: "who made you judge over us." They had no idea what God had called him to do.

Who knows maybe they were indignant that he had spent all those years walking like an Egyptian and not doing more to attend to their ongoing oppression. Maybe they had high hopes for Moses early on, but after years and years of ongoing abuse by the Egyptians the dream just faded away. They must have concluded that Moses was just another man would look out first for his own personal interests and not the interest of others.

Think about how this is consistent with Moses being the type of Jesus. When Jesus came, despite the miracles surrounding his birth and all the Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled by His early childhood, by the time He was an adult no one seemed to care. He came to earth with an accompaniment of angels and wise men but by the time He was 30 the Israelites all seemed to forget the stories. As the clock ticked on, as the Roman oppression continued, and their practical and physical circumstances never changed, they just assumed that Jesus would only take care of himself and not others.

That is possibly the line of thinking behind the anger and offense that was felt by the people of Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. If you remember, when He finally stepped up and started doing miracles and stuff they were furious with Him (**Mark 6:1-6**). They probably were angered that He had been so busy making furniture when they were all suffering and all along He had the power to heal them and to free them.

As usual, it seems that time and the ticking of the clock is one of the greatest killers to our faith. Time even seems to erase our memories of the great things God has done for us. It's so sad how weak we can be in our flesh.

So it is clear that Moses knew who he was and he knew what he was appointed to do. The training of his mother, as brief as it may have been, was more than effective. This seems consistent with what Solomon would later say: “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it (*Proverbs 22:6*). This is a lesson for all of us.

But Moses, at the age of 40, was still so incredibly arrogant. He grew up in such privilege that he really did assume that they would all just be so thankful that he came to their rescue and that they would all instantly get behind him and follow.

It does not seem that he even had a plan or a strategy to accomplish his uprising or his great deliverance. He just kind of impulsively jumped at the opportunity to show his people that he was for them. He did not start a campaign against the Pharaoh and he built no prior support or alliances; he just arrogantly assumed it would all be there—all delivered to him on a platter just the way it had been his entire life. He just assumed they would know and would naturally follow; after all, he was this great leader in Egypt.

Are you starting to realize why Moses had to be exiled and spend all that time in the desert? He had to be broken; he had to be humbled in order to be an instrument which could be effectively used by the Lord.

So what we see in this story is the strange but usual mixture of faith with flesh. We are told that it was **by faith** that Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh. He must have totally believed the words of God as spoken to him by his mother; yet, he still stepped out in his flesh and in his pride. He did not wait for God to raise him up, he did not wait for God to lead his actions, and apparently he

did not even seek God before he rushed out to be the people's savior. He probably did not even know he had to seek the Lord.

Moses figured that it was the time; and so he sprung into action killing the Egyptian and burying him expecting that his brethren would know that he—yes “wonderful he”—had now arrived. The time had now come and he would be the man; the savior of Israel. But things did not turn out so fine for this well intentioned but premature savior.

The people rejected him, Pharaoh heard of his treachery and sought to kill him, and Moses had no other option but to run away and hide. His ego was writing checks that his body could not cash. And instantly Moses, this prince of Egypt, was wanted for murder; and as he ran away you could almost hear him cry out to Jochebed: oh mamma I'm in fear for my life from the long arm of the law.

The jig was up, the news was out, they finally found him; well actually they didn't find him; they found out about him. But he fled and he made it safely out of Egypt all the way to Midian. There he stayed for another 40 years until he personally met the true Savior of Israel—Jesus Christ, otherwise known as “I Am.”

So we have to ask, why is this story included in the Hall of Faith? Moses acted out of his flesh and he ended up as a renegade, a murderer, a fugitive, exiled in a distant land. How is that worthy of the “Hall?”

What this tells us is that we don't have to be so freaked out about the fact that so often in our expressions of faith we find that our actions are also mixed with

our flesh. We try and avoid it, we don't like it, we don't plan for it, but still our ugly flesh somehow finds a way to spring up and cause us so much trouble.

However, the fact that we still struggle with issues of our flesh does not, in God's eyes, invalidate any of our great acts of faith. Moses believed the truth. Moses believed that God had called him to be the one—the deliverer of Israel. Therefore, God was willing to honor Moses and declare this act of belief, this rejection of the world, this rejection of his life, as a monumental act of faith and record it in the great "Hall" as a testament for all eternity. The killing of the Egyptian was a horrific act of the flesh; but even that did not nullify his great act of faith.

We must take note of this truth and imprint it into our brains; ***God always honors our faith*** even if we blow it in our ridiculous attempts to fulfill our faith.

I think it is also worth noting that God did not hide Moses' deeds of the flesh nor did he try and hide Moses' arrogance and pride; no they are all laid out for us to see. Nevertheless what ***Hebrews 11:24-26*** tells us is God does not identify us with our flesh but only by our faith.

We often errantly think that if we do not do things perfectly that everything will be permanently messed up; but that is simply not the case. God used Moses' disaster in the flesh to make him into the man that he needed Moses to be (remember God causes all things to work out for our good). Moses' time in Egypt was just the prep, the time in Midian, the time in exile, would be where God would forge Moses into a real man of faith.

When I think about the journey of my life, God worked with me in a very similar way. He gave me some moderately significant achievements (nothing like Moses—don't get me wrong—but still from the world's perspective respectable achievements). Then through a series of crazy events he exiled me to the desert so that I could be trained in my faith and, through suffering and patience, learn to trust myself to Him. He has used my time in the desert to build and strengthen my faith. And praise Jesus that all my failings and struggles (both before the desert and in the desert) have not thwarted God's purposes for my life.

We have to understand (once again) that no purpose of the Lord's can be thwarted (**Job 42:2**). Despite our sin and our failure God can (and will) take our kernel of faith and water it and protect it and grow it into the tree of faith that is necessary to accomplish His purposes. Moses was a murderer, he committed treason, he betrayed his family who loved him and raised him and gave to him everything he could imagine, and even that did not disqualify him from the ministry or the job that the Father had appointed for him. How is that for radical sovereignty?

John 3:27 tells us that "God in heaven appoints each person's work" and so as we saw with Abraham and with Moses, if you choose, by faith, to be identified with the reproach of Christ, God will take His time, as long as is necessary, to prepare your heart to live by faith so that His purposes will be accomplished in your life. This is good news. In fact, this is great news. We don't have to be tortured by our failures; we can live in the grace and mercy of God and expectantly know that He will be faithful to finish what He started in our journey of faith.

But you first have to choose. Sadly, too many people (too many believers) don't make that choice. They like the comfort of Egypt and they hide within the confines of religion so that they can placate their spiritual conscience. They want to say they believe but they have never really decided to take on the reproach of Christ and risk total rejection by everyone—to risk losing everything.

But that is the choice that the Spirit puts before us in this passage. He wants each of us to consider the pathway of faith and to count the cost knowing that our Dad is the creator of the universe, the Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as well as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Sarah, Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, Jochebed, Amram, Miriam, Aaron and Moses and so many others who themselves counted the cost and decided that it was entirely worth it.

One other point I want to draw from this passage is how we should be wary of the danger of acting on an immature faith. Moses knew who he was and what he was supposed to do. Moses decided to embrace his destiny and he was willing to risk it all for the reproach of Christ; but his faith had not matured and so he reacted in the flesh and then had to deal with the consequences of his flesh.

Moses became a murderer; and I am sure that was a difficult one to live down. Taking someone's life with your bare hands is an extreme act of violence and aggression that comes from deep within a person's soul. Jesus said that it is from the depths of the heart that murder comes forth and defiles a man (**Matthew 15:10-20**). These were some pretty hefty consequences and we need to learn from this.

When God gives you a word for your life, a vision, a future, a hope, an assignment even, you must be willing to wait on Him to bring it to fruition. He will; you can rest on that. God always does what He says. But He will always bring it to fruition by faith and not through our acts in the flesh. We saw that with Abraham and Ishmael. God rejected Abraham's attempt to fulfill the promise through the flesh. But later on, in His timing, when Abraham and Sarah were ready, God did exactly as He said He would do.

I know it is always so exciting when God reveals something to us, but we must not jump out and try and complete in the flesh what God insists on doing in the Spirit. Oh and your good intentions; they really don't mean that much to God. Remember, whatever is not of faith is sin and without faith it is impossible to please God. So good intentions are, well just that, good intentions nothing more.

In addition, we must know that God's work always happens in God's timing and not our timing. It seems like that is a universal truth that we can all depend upon. So we have to wait; patiently wait. I know it is hard and I know this is the part of God that we least understand but we must wait.

I know that we think things have to be done now; after all, there is so much work to do and so little time. But our God is way bigger than that. Remember, He does not need us to accomplish His work; He could just make it happen instantly. But He just loves for us to be a part of His work, and so He will wait for us to be ready. He will wait for us to become men and women of faith. And He is really, really, really patient. He is not worried; He has it all under control. Time to Him is just time; no biggie.

By faith; that is the key in this whole chapter. All has to be by faith, for without faith it is impossible to please God (**Hebrews 11:6**). Amen!

I am thankful that God is patient with us and waits for us so that way we can experience His glory and power. I am so thankful that it is not left up to our impetuous selves but our future is all dependent upon God's character and nature.

So to sum things up:

- 1) We must believe who God is and who we are.
- 2) We must believe what He has appointed for our lives (that we are an ambassador of Christ) and thereby reject the fleeting pleasures of sin.
- 3) We must believe and **by faith** choose to risk it all on a raw, radical and unbridled faith that is willing to take on the reproach of Christ.
- 4) We must expect to be treated as all God's people have been treated throughout time realizing that in our suffering we are blessed.
- 5) We must keep our eyes on our reward—both our temporal and eternal reward.
- 6) We must not jump from faith into flesh; but we must wait on the Lord to bring His promises for our life to fruition knowing that He will always do what He says He will do.
- 7) We must wait and we must be patient and let God be God; and He will never cease to amaze us.

Let's Pray.