

Hebrews 11:23
“Moses birth by faith”

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I. Introduction

We now move in Hebrews 11:23-40 to examples in Jewish history of post-patriarchal faith and here in verses 23-29 we will examine Moses with the emphasis upon his decisions of faith. Since time began life has been about choices: Adam was offered a choice and made the wrong one and all of his ancestors have been living under the consequences of that decision since. In Joshua 24:15 Joshua challenged the people saying, *“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve....but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”* Elijah asked the Israelites on Mount Carmel, *“How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.”* The Greeks had a statue to the god they called Caerus or Opportunity. The statue was represented as a young and beautiful god because Opportunity never gets old, and like beauty, flourishes for a season. It had hair hanging over its face but was bald in the back to illustrate that opportunity could only be taken when a person is arriving but once opportunity has passed, no one can grasp it and it cannot be recovered. The statue of Opportunity stood on its tiptoe because it was always running, and like Hermes, had wings in its feet to fly with the wind. It held a razor and was balanced on a sharp edge to illustrate the fleeting instant in which opportunities appear and disappear. ***Life is far more about making right decisions than it is falling into favorable circumstances!*** This

truth was particularly truthful to those Jews who were rejecting the words and works of Christ because the circumstances didn't fit their view of Jesus 1st coming. To use "*favorable circumstances*" to make decision about following Jesus was a wrong direction. To show this the writer of Hebrews is going to make this case while *examining five illustrations* through out the life of Moses. What if Moses the "*law giver*" (who they were choosing above Jesus) would have used "*favorable circumstances*" as the basis of making his choices? All of these points and more will be seen through the five illustrations of Moses life. *The point of this section by the author of Hebrews is to reaffirm that decisions or the lack of them have irrevocable consequences* and the some of the Jews decision to reject the finished work of Christ and go back to the Levitical sacrifices would as will. Through theses seven verses of Moses life choices you will see that they were made both in the positive and negative, what Moses chose to do and not do by faith:

1. Vs. 23 Faith chooses to accept God's plans
2. Vs. 24-26 Faith chooses reject the world's position, pleasure and prosperity
3. Vs. 27 Faith rejects the worlds pressure to conform
4. Vs. 28 Faith accepts God's provision
5. Vs. 29 Faith trusts God's promises

The life of Moses reflects the choices of of making the right decisions; positive and negative decisions he accepted and rejected. The first illustration of Moses life centers around his birth and is more about his parent's decision then it is his. The story is recorded for us in Exodus chapter 1 verse 8 through chapter 2 verse 3.

II. Vs. 23a Unfavorable circumstance

Vs. 23a "*By faith Moses, when he was born...*": The first thing that we notice in Exodus 1:8 is the situation under which Moses was born as we read, "*Now there arose a new king over Egypt..*" When Stephen told this story in Acts 7 he says that the people grew and

multiplied in Egypt “till **ANOTHER** king arose who did not know Joseph.” The word “**another**” in the Greek means **of a different kind**. The Pharaoh that was in power during Joseph’s time was Egyptian, but according to Isa. 52: 4 the Pharaoh of this time was Assyrian and was a different nationality and he ran out the Hykos who ruled during Joseph’s time. It appears according to Exodus 1:9-10, that God’s blessing upon the Israelites became obvious as the fear and jealousy of the people and Pharaoh was seen in their concern that the enemies of Egypt would exploit the blessing of Israel and join forces with the Israelite slaves. Some times you can tell God is blessing us in the direct proportion to how much warfare we are experiencing! Instead of thinking during trials, “*I don’t know what I’ve done wrong that God is punishing?*”; **perhaps it is not that we have done something wrong and instead God is preparing us for some greater blessing!**

The second thing we note in Exodus 1:11-12 is that the first phase of Pharaoh’s plan was oppression as he sat taskmasters over them. They put the Israelite men into work crews forcing them into slave labor into two supply cites where they were forced to make bricks from the straw supplied by the Egyptians. As a side note “*The pyramids were not built by the Israelites as they had already been in existence by this time but these two cites were*”. The problem for Pharaoh was that the more he afflicted the Israelites the more their numbers grew. Because of this according to Exodus 1:13-14 when they saw this they removed the straw from the process. ***The idea of Pharaoh was to get the Israelites preoccupied with the things of the world. And in so doing the children of God would stop trusting in the blessings of God and focus more upon the things that enslave them.*** Saint’s that’s still true today, the more people have the more

they spend so that they are still living pay check to pay check. That's what Pharaoh did, he just got them preoccupied with the things of Egypt.

In Exodus 1:15 we are told of the second phase of the enemy's plan, "*killing all the male Jewish boys.*" **This is not new**; satan tried it through Cain when he killed his brother, Herod would try it in Jesus' time killing all the male children two years old and under. There has always been enmity between Gods seed and satan's seed. To counter this God rose up two midwives who were over all the other midwives whose names mean "*beauty* and *splendor*". In Exodus 1:16-17 we are told the reason why these two midwives didn't head Pharaoh's orders as "The fear of the Lord". The question people want to know is: Was it all right that they lied to Pharaoh? There are *two things we need to realize*:

- 1.) We **don't know that they lied to Pharaoh**: Verse 19 tells us that they told him that the Hebrew women delivered faster than did the Egyptian women so the children were already born prior to their arrival. It could be that this was God's work or that they just decided not to arrive in any hurry; thus what they said was true.
- 2.) Second there is a higher law to obey, God's: What God rewards here is not the way in which they acted but rather the reason why they acted, (verse 21). It was that they feared God that the Lord looked upon. Which was a twofold blessing in verses 21-22:
 - 1.) Vs. 20 The nation was blessed by the obedience of these two ladies. Mothers must never think that their role is unimportant, because of your obedience our nation will have a future.
 - 2.) Vs. 21 These two midwives we believe were barren, yet because they feared God they also were blessed with children. Pharaoh was putting to death male children and the Lord places these gals right with the rest of the mother in Egypt. God often brings us through things that test our hearts.

The third and final part of Pharaoh's plan is in Exodus 1:22 and it involved getting the rest of Egyptians into his plan. These three parts of Pharaoh's plan only led up to God bring forth a redeemer in Moses.

III. Vs. 23b Saving faith

That is where Exodus 2:1 starts. Remember that Moses is the one who wrote his own story and he does so with out any fan fare. He doesn't even tell us the names of his parents until the sixth chapter. Where in verses 18-20 we are informed that his fathers name was Amram, "*High people*" and his mother's name Jochebed or "*Jehovah*

glorified'. In Exodus 2:2 The scene is now set for the birth of Moses, the deliver. We are NOT told here that Moses' parents already had two children, the sister of verse four, Miriam whom we are not even told her name until chapter 15, was most likely 12 years older. And also Aaron who we are not told his name until the 4th chapter, who was three years older (Ex. 7:7) and was **born before the decree of Pharaoh**. Here verse 2 the Bible declare the fact that Moses' mother declared him as beautiful. Clearly she saw some wonderful qualities in Moses at his birth that caused her to notice. When we look up all the verses about Moses birth we are told that:

Ex. 2:2 "*She saw he was beautiful*"

Acts 7:20 "*well pleasing to God*;"

Heb. 11:23 "*because they saw he was a beautiful child*;"

Do these descriptions mean as some suggest that Moses was: A "beautiful baby" and that it was the outward qualities that spurred the faith of his parents to hide him some

three months? Or does it mean that some how they were told by God that Moses was to be an instrument of God therefore he was worthy of saving? The key to understanding

this lies in the original language and how that word is used else where. Literally the verse reads that "**she saw that he was good**". The word is used frequently in the O.T.

specifically in the writings of Moses where **it carries the idea of goodness as the result of being made or declared good by God**. It is the same word that is used in the creation account where God declared what He had created "**good**".

Stephen's words in the Acts 7:20 passage points to this fact where we are told again that Moses was, "**well pleasing to God**." It was not that Moses parents recognized some

inward or **outward** significance's in Moses, **instead by FAITH they recognized that Moses was God's child and this prompted them to act in faith**.

God does not value us based upon outward or inward qualities He does so because of Who He is and the fact that He created us. We are special to Him because we are His creation. **Moses parents acted in faith because they saw him as God saw him.** In Exodus 2:3 the faith spoken here and else where is that of the hiding of Moses for three months and not the of placing him in the basket in the Nile. Again go to Heb. 11: 23 says, **“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.”** **The high point of faith that the author of Hebrews points to is not the placing of Moses into the water but rather the hiding of him for three months.** The passage on faith in Heb. 11:23 does not even mention the placing of Moses into the basket and on to the river. Acts 7:18-21 is the same where we read, **“he was brought up in his father's house for three months.”** In fact, when Stephen tells this story he uses a word to describe the act of the parents as **“putting Moses out to die”** What this suggests is that the remarkable story of Pharaoh's daughter saving Moses has much more to do with God's faithfulness and goodness than it does the faith of Moses parents. God is the One who is faithful, He is the savior of His people, all the more we ought to look to Him and not the faith of others!

Moses was placed where other baby boys were placed right by the river bank. **Moses mother fulfilled the intent of Pharaoh's law but not the letter of it.** The word **“basket”** is the same word used for Noah's craft, **“Ark”**. From his parent's perspective hope as well as desperation was what led them to place their three-month old son in a basket. They made sure that it would float and that Miriam Moses sister watched not his mother. **She could not bear the thought of watching her child float down stream, but neither could she stand the thought of not knowing what had become of her son.** In Exodus 2:4-10 the story takes an interesting twist as Moses floats along in his ark and his sister looks on. Ask yourself the question in light of the story who would be the worst person to find baby Moses? **It would have to be the family of Pharaoh who made the decree to begin with, that would have meant instant death.** Yet we are told that it was Pharaoh's daughter who went down to wash that the ark came floating towards. **Can you imagine Miriam's horror?** **“Oh God no not this woman! Please God not this woman!”** Yet we are told in verse 6 that at Moses weeping Pharaoh's daughter's heart melted. Yet she clearly knew that this was a Hebrew child. I marvel at God, who takes the worst of possible situations and turns them into a glorious blessing. We are so tempted to rule God out based upon the situation rather than trusting in His ability. We read of Paul's words in Eph. 6:20 **“to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us”**. How does this story of Moses' parent's faith in this decision speak to the Hebrews that the author is writing too? Well it tells them they are to make a decision not upon the the present circumstances but only upon God's word!