

Hebrews Chapter Eleven (vv.24-29)

True Faith Satisfies (vv.24-28)

24 *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Moses knew **position** (11.24), **pleasure** (11.25) and **prosperity** (11.26) in Egypt, but these things did not attract him. He valued a *greater position* in association with the people of God. He took *greater pleasure* in suffering the reproach of Christ. He looked forward to far *greater prosperity* in eternity. Such are the values of a man of faith.*

Hebrews 11.24 describes the time when Moses was about 40 years of age (Acts 7.23), i.e. when he 'was come to years' and had reached maturity. At this point he 'refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter'. It is likely this decision is associated with the record of *Exodus 2.11: And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.* By intervening on behalf of a Hebrew slave and killing an Egyptian, Moses identified himself with his 'brethren' and effectively renounced his position as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. This was a great step of faith as Josephus suggests that Moses was the only (adopted) son of Pharaoh's daughter who in turn was the only offspring of Pharaoh. This meant that Moses was heir to the Egyptian throne. Moses refused status, position, riches and honour, the prized jewels of the flesh, in return for contempt, affliction and suffering, because it was the pathway of faith. The way Moses lived his life was dictated by faith, not the flesh. Let us be careful to identify and follow the way of faith, not the leading of the flesh.

25 *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;*

In the act of identification with his brethren, Moses once for all rejected a temporary enjoyment of sin's pleasures and chose to be mistreated along with the people of God who were living in oppression (Exodus 1.11). Moses reckoned that the choice was simple. On one hand were pleasures for a season followed by eternal suffering, on the other, suffering for a season, followed by pleasures for evermore (Psalm 16.11, John 15.20, 16.33, Acts 14.22, Romans 8.36, 2 Timothy 3.12). *Luke 9.24: For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.* Choosing to suffer hardship and pain for one's faith is not common or easy. How much would we be willing to suffer/sacrifice to earn a little more money for the passing pleasures of this world? How much would we be willing to suffer/sacrifice to serve the Lord? It is interesting to note that Moses chose to suffer 'with the people of God' whom he knew were 'his brethren' (Exodus 2.11). Faith chooses to associate with the people of God, no matter their position or worldly status, which is likely to be very low! Hypocrites tend to seek the company of those with riches and power in this world. Proverbs 13.20 teaches that we become like the company we keep. He who companies with 'fools' (unsaved) shall be 'destroyed', 'suffer harm' and 'be caused to cry out in distress'. A person who companies and fellowships with wise men (Christians) shall himself become wise. Let us choose our company and even our **Christian** company carefully!

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

Again, Moses' spiritual calculator is in overdrive. He made a once for all, decisive decision that there was much greater eternal and spiritual reward in suffering reproach for Christ than to have the temporal and physical rewards (treasures) of Egypt. 'Reproach' is act of ridicule that results in disgrace and insult. Although the OT saints fully expected the coming Christ (cf. Genesis 3.15, 49.10, Exodus 23.20, John 8.56, 1 Corinthians 10.4) and to afflict the people of God is also to afflict their Messiah (Isaiah 63.9), this is speaking not of reproach **for** Christ, but the reproach **of** Christ. Moses suffered the scoffing and mockery which Christ Himself would endure many years later (Romans 15.3, Hebrews 13.13). Albert Leckie: To Moses it was just reproach, but in the divine reckoning it was the reproach of Christ. Such reproach was wealth to Moses, being more valuable than the treasures in Egypt. He was laying up treasure of a different kind in heaven (Matthew 6.19-21). *FB Hole: If Egypt's glory is not to be compared to the reproach of Christ, how will it look in comparison with the glory of Christ?* In all this Moses 'had respect' or his 'eyes and attention fixed' with 'concentrated effort' on the heavenly 'recompence' (reward). This fixation with the heavenly allowed Moses to endure the earthly suffering and look beyond to eternal glories. John G Butler: Moses' faith could wait for spiritual rewards rather than have fleshly, physical and material rewards now. The flesh does not see heavenly rewards and thus does not give them any value. Like Esau, the flesh will sell its spiritual heritage for a bowl of soup. Faith has better eyesight and better evaluation than the flesh. It can see heavenly rewards and judges them as being of greater worth.

27 *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. 28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.* Verse 27 brings us 40 years further on in the life of Moses to the time of the exodus. Even though he has already endured much heartache, suffering and disappointment, he is still marked 'by faith'. It was by faith that Moses 'abandoned' or 'forsook' Egypt. Although this is mentioned before the keeping of the Passover (v.28) it is an overarching statement that embraces the exodus. In fact verse 28 can read 'by faith, having already instituted the Passover...' suggesting this was a prior event to forsaking Egypt (Exodus 12). There are many types of the world found in the OT. There is **Sodom** (the world *socially*, forsaken by **Lot**), **Egypt** (the world *politically*, forsaken by **Moses**), **Ur and Haran** (the world *commercially*, forsaken by **Abram**) and **Babylon** (the world *religiously*, from which **Daniel** was separated). Are we willing to abandon this world? To refuse its morals, character, idolatry, slavery, worship and religion? James 4.4: Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Moses forsook Egypt and consequently was rescued from its: **power** (11.23); **fame** (11.24); **pleasure** (11.25); **wealth** (11.26); **wrath** (11.27) and **judgment** (11.28). Praise God we have been separated (positionally) from the same through faith in Christ (Galatians 1.4).

In all this, Moses did not fear the 'wrath of the king' (cf. Proverbs 16.14, 19.12) but dealt in courage throughout the period of the plagues and beyond (Exodus 14.13). In this most frustrating of times, Moses 'endured', 'persisted' and 'persevered' along the pathway of faith. What gave him the strength to do so? Moses averted his eyes from the circumstances and focussed upon the invisible God (note Exodus 33). Faith makes the invisible visible (Hebrews 11.1)! What an appeal this would be to the Hebrews. They were not to be attracted by that which was **visible** and tangible in Judaism, but focus on the **invisible**; that which was real and eternal.

By faith Moses also 'instituted' or 'kept' the Passover and the 'sprinkling of blood'. Keeping the Passover involved *slaying* the lamb and was for Moses' **own** enjoyment as he fed upon it (Exodus 12.8). Sprinkling involved applying the blood to the door posts and lintel (Exodus 12.7) and was for the eye or satisfaction of God (Exodus 12.13). This demonstrated the faith of Moses as he fully obeyed the divine instructions of Exodus 12 and had total confidence that this obedience would avert the judgment or 'touching' (cp. Exodus 19.12-13) of 'the destroying one' (Exodus 12.23). This was primarily the judgment of Jehovah, possibly through the instrumentality or agency of an angel (cp. 2 Samuel 24.16, 1 Chronicles 21.15). Men and women of faith keep and maintain (perfect tense) the institutions and commandments of God. Let us be **convicted** about *where, when and how* we gather and maintain it.

True Faith Sanctifies (vv.29-30)

29 *By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.* The emphasis now moves from the faith of Moses to the faith of the nation. In v.28 faith is associated with passing **over** (acceptance with God, redemption by blood). In v.29 faith is associated with passing **through** (separated unto God, redemption by power). All this was accomplished on the basis of the shed blood of the Passover lamb. By the grace of God the people are credited with faith as they 'passed through' the Red Sea. When all seemed lost and surrounded by mountains, enemies and water the people initially cried out in unbelief (Exodus 14.10-12). Yet, at the critical moment, and in response to the word of God through Moses, they were willing to 'go forward' (Exodus 14.15) and even **walk** in an orderly procession through the midst of the towering walls of water (Exodus 14.29). What's more, all was done on 'dry land'! This was a miracle of *parting* and *drying*. Faith **stands still** to wait upon God when things are *uncertain*, but confidently moves **forward** when God's word is *revealed*. How much have we moved forward along the pathway of faith in 2014? Note. The Egyptians attempted to do in the flesh what Israel did by faith and met with divine judgment. They had **no** divine command to walk where Israel walked. John G Butler: What **others** may do by faith is not something **you** are to do unless you have a biblical premise for doing so.

We should take encouragement. What the nation experienced is still promised to us today as it was to the Hebrew readers of the epistle in their day. *Isaiah 43.2: When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*

30 *By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.*

Now the writer leads us on from the Red Sea to Jericho, omitting the whole wilderness experience. This is not surprising given the discussion concerning the unbelief which characterised the nation in the wilderness years (Hebrews 3.12, 19, 4.6). If God was recording our acts of faith, how many chapters and years would be missing from the book?

It was by faith that the walls of Jericho fell down; the faith of Joshua (Joshua 5.14), the priests, the warriors and the people as a whole (Joshua 6.1-21). And what faith! God's commands in relation to the taking of Jericho appeared strange at the very least. A city had never been conquered by walking and shouting before. Until now. The commands of God appear very strange to the natural and carnal eye (e.g. Naaman). However, God's ways are very different to our ways and this can very often test our faith. Many Bible methods are being forsaken today in the preaching of the gospel because they are perceived as outdated and lacking in power. But God's ways are not our ways. 1 Corinthians 1.21: It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 1 Corinthians 9.16: For I take no special pride in the fact that I preach the gospel. I feel compelled to do so; I should be utterly miserable if I failed to preach it. (JB Phillips)

Jericho was 'compassed about seven days', once for six days and seven times on the seventh day. Not only did this demonstrate **consistency** and **constancy** of faith, it showed the **effort** that is required to live by faith. Sweat and faith go together as much as obedience and faith! Joshua and the people rose early, even at the dawning of the day, such was their fervency. **That's 04.43AM in June, but 08.06AM in December!!**

True Faith Saves (v.31)

31 *By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.*