Moses - His choice

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[0:00] Let's turn to the epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 11, reading verse 23. Hebrews chapter 11, verse 23.

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.
Now we've come to our second study in the life of Moses. We saw last week that Moses is one of the great figures of the Old Testament. Indeed, he is a mediator of the Old Covenant.
He was a prophet. He was a servant of God. But above all, he was a man of God, whom the Lord knew face to face.
The Lord spake to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friends. And in his life, we will see in particular the making of a man of God, a man whom God uses in his kingdom and for his glory.
[1:23] God is working out his purposes of redemption in the nation, in the world. But God is also working out his purposes in an individual, a man whom he prepares for that work.

And that man is Moses. Now there are three periods in Moses' life. All periods of 40 years. The first 40 years when he was in Egypt, in the home and in the court.
And then the next 40 years when he was in Midian, and when he served as a shepherd in Midian.
And then the third 40 years when he goes back to Egypt and brings the people out of Egypt, and he is in the wilderness with the people as their leader and as their lawgiver.
Now each period of these three periods begins with a crisis, in which there is an exercise of faith, which in turn results in a strategic choice.
Now we saw the first crisis last week. The crisis that came at Moses' birth. And that crisis was a crisis in the land of Egypt, because the people of God were in bondage in the land of Egypt.
[2:43] They were in bondage to the Egyptians. But among the people that were in bondage, there was a faithful remnant. And in particular, two people that are mentioned, Amram and Jochabed, the parents of Moses.

They were two faithful ones in the midst of much apostasy. And very often God can do more with two faithful people than he can do with a hundred compromisers.
And here we see God working in the lives of these two faithful people. They married and they brought a family into the world. And what a great privilege that is.
And what a great opportunity. Aaron, Miriam and Moses. Moses. And they saw Moses, the third born, as someone special. They believed that God had some purpose for this child.
He was someone unique that God was going to use. And so we are told they hid him for three months. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents.
[3:54] They hid him in their home. And when they could no longer hide him, they handed him over to Providence. They handed him over to Providence. They turned him loose, as it were.

And they put him on that river, the River Nile. That very river which meant death to every other Hebrew boy that was born. But you see, faith takes risks.
This is always a feature of faith. Abram took risks. And Moses takes risks. And Moses' parents take risks. Faith always takes risks.
Faith makes one fearless. Because faith is shifting our confidence from ourselves to God. And therefore, it makes us fearless.

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And so they committed the child to the Providence of God. And in the Providence of God, this child was found by Pharaoh's daughter.
[4:55] And in the Providence of God, this child was nursed by his own mother. Take this child, said Pharaoh's daughter, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.

And you see, for what might have been three years, Moses' parents had the privilege of training up Moses. They were no doubt as they were able to tell him the stories of the heroes of the faith.
They would have told him the exploits of God. And above all, they would have made him conscious of his identity. That he was a Hebrew. That he had a mark of circumcision upon him.
That he belonged to the people of God. And you see the power of parental influence. They had an influence that was vast and profound.
And every parent has an influence on the child for good or for ill. And we must always remember that. The influence that we have is an influence for good or ill.
[6:04] It's going to determine the choice that they make in later life. As we will see in the case of Moses. And this influence that his parents had upon him was seen some 37 years later when he made the great choice.

And so we come to the second crisis. What we might call the crisis of coming of age. By faith Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. Now you might think it's a bit late in life to come of age at 40 and to make this choice at 40.
But that's what it appears to be. Moses had to make this choice. The second crisis in the life of Moses. And what was this crisis that came in the life of Moses?
Well it concerned self-identification. when Moses was come of age when Moses came to 40 years of age he found himself.
[7:15] In other words he found his true identity. You see this was the critical decision which was to determine the whole direction of his life.

he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Now he had the right to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
He was the rightful heir to the throne of Egypt. He had a possibility of ruling over the land of Egypt.
Perhaps he thought he could follow Joseph who was the prime minister of Egypt and he could influence the court of Egypt on behalf of the people of God.
Perhaps he thought I can stay as the heir apparent and become the ruler and then I'll be able to influence the court of Egypt and release the people of God.
But not only was he the rightful heir but he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He knew all about their astrology and their science and their philosophy and their history and their language.
[8:25] He was steeped in the culture of the land of Egypt and he had before him all the prestige all the wealth all the power all that lay within his grasp.

He had all that before him but there was another thing that he knew. He not only knew the wisdom of Egypt and the learning of Egypt but he also knew God's purpose and God's plan for his people.
He knew from the promise made to Abraham that God's plan for his people was to bring them out of Egypt and to bring them to the land of Canaan.
He knew his own identity as one of them. He had a mark of circumcision upon him. You see Egypt was an imposed identity.
His Egyptian identity had been superimposed on him without his consent. He was made the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
[9:32] He wasn't born a son of Pharaoh's daughter. So this came on him. It was an imposed identity. And what did he do at 40 years?

Well he became interested in his true identity. These are my true people who are suffering in the land of Goshen. My mother told me that.
My parents showed me the way. They showed me my true identity. Is this the way I want to go?
And he's faced with his choice.
He has to choose which way he's going to go. As everyone who comes to years of responsibility has to do. It's alright having the parents' example.
It's alright having the parents' instruction. It's alright having the mark of baptism. The mark of the covenant. But the time comes when you have to take it for yourself.

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[10:32] You have to make the choice whether it's to go in the way that they've taught you and pointed you or to go in your own way. Moses is at the crossroads.

This is the choice he has to make. And what choice does he make? Well we are told he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
You say it's something negative but it's a glorious negative or that we had that negative in our lives to be refused to be identified with the world and the things of the world.
And Moses had that choice and he made that choice a glorious negative. And you see he's persuaded in his heart to visit his brethren.
It came we are told to his heart and you see faith led him to action. By faith Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
[11:36] he decided to identify himself with his own people the people of God. He denied his right to the throne. He turned it down.

All the glory all the prestige that was associated with it he turned it down in order to find his true identity. He rejected the imposed identity and he accepted the true identity.
a negative decision in one sense and no in life. And what did it do? It changed Moses' life. It changed the history of the children of Israel and it changed the history of Egypt.
It was their doom. The fact that Moses said no to the throne of Egypt and decided to identify with the people of God. Oh what a no in the proper place can do.
And what a no did here in the life of Moses, in the life of Israel and in the life of the world outside. And so he chose his own identity.
[12:49] But then the second thing we see in this crisis is the basis on which he made the choice. He made a choice on a certain basis. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect and to the recompense of the reward.

He accounted, he balanced the books, he reckoned, he used his mind to do it, and on the one side he put the treasures of Egypt, and they were real treasures, they were immense treasures, they were astonishing treasures, and all these treasures, as heir to the throne, were within his reach, and everything that went with them, the power and the prestige and the luxury, were all within his grasp, and the treasures of Egypt, were immense, and they were attractive, and then also on the one hand, on that side he put the pleasures of sin, not only the treasures of Egypt, but the pleasures of sin, and make no mistake about it, there are pleasures in sin, stolen waters are sweet, remember last week we spoke about that woman who spoke about the pleasure of anticipation, the pleasure of engaging in the act of sin, and the pleasure of thinking of it afterwards, and a preacher who said you forgot one pleasure, and that is the pleasure of looking back on it on your deathbed, and you see there are real pleasures, as long as they last, there's pleasure in sin, there's no mistaking it, there are pleasures in sin, and there were these pleasures before Moses, he no doubt enjoyed some of them already, in the court of Egypt, and there was much more awaiting him, in that court that he stayed in it, he had all the pleasures before him, and so he puts these two things on the one side of the balance, the treasures of Egypt, the pleasures of sin, but then on the other side, what does he put, well he puts the reproach of Christ, the reproach of Christ, he's seeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt, and you might say to me, what has Christ got to do with it, he wasn't born into this world at that time, how has Christ got anything to do with him, what does he mean when he says the reproach of Christ, well you see the people of God at this time, in the royal line, they were a broken down, a despised, a downtrodden people, they were in abject poverty and misery, they were despised and they were denigrated, they were there in the land of Goshen in bondage, but nevertheless, although they were in that condition, God had his name on them, God was in covenant with them, and they were suffering exactly because they were the people of God, that's the reason why they were suffering, and you see Israel's God was the true God, the people in the land of Egypt, their, Jacob's descendants, believed in the one true God, and they worshipped the one true
God, against all the idols of Egypt, Egypt, and you see these people had within them the promise that was made in Genesis chapter 3, the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent, they were that seed, and they were Abram's seed, unto whom the promise was made, and the promise was of a messianic hope, of a saviour who would one day come and obey God and suffer for his obedience and redeem his people, and you see, Christ was with the church in the

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wilderness, and Christ was with his people in Egypt, long before he came into this world, and they were in that royal line of redemption, and they were suffering the reproach of Christ, the stigma as one translation puts it, the stigma that rests on God's anointed, no matter what age he lives in, no matter what generation, what century, what time, there was the stigma against God's anointed, and here was God's anointed in Egypt, they were the forerunners of the people of God, whom Christ was going to redeem, and upon them was the reproach of Christ, and you see they were in that pattern which was to have its perfect exemplification in the obedience and suffering of Christ, the one who was to come, who was in a unique sense,
God's anointed, they were objects of derision, of the scorn of the world, these people in the land of Egypt, they suffered the reproach of Christ, and what did Moses say in balancing out, well he said, God's worst is better than Egypt's best, best, the very worst that comes upon you as a child of God, the reproach of Christ, and we don't like reproach, we don't like people saying things about us, but you see that's God's worst in a way, and that worst is better than Egypt's best, and you see we can apply that to the present day, God's worst that you will suffer as a child of God, God, so identifying yourself with Christ, and with the people of God, is better than the world's best, it's better than all the glory of the millionaires, and the film stars, and the kings, and the prime ministers of this world, it's far better than that,
[19:25] God's worst, in that sense that will come to you as a child of God, in this world, is better than the world's best, and the world's riches, and any other thing, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, he was going to experience affliction, oh he didn't know half of what he was going to experience, he didn't know the depths of suffering that was going to be before him and the children of God, the people of God, but he realized that that was far better, and to suffer that was far better than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are for a season, they're all passing pleasures, they're all taking wings and going away, they're only here for a moment, but you see, there's something that makes

Moses realize this, and that's the third thing we come to, how did he make this calculation of faith? Well he did it in this way, for he had respect and to the recompense of the reward, he had respect and to the recompense of the reward, at the beginning of this chapter we are told that faith is the evidence of things not seen, and we're told later on in this chapter that Moses forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible, now that's the great thing about faith, it sees into the future, it sees unseen things, it sees spiritual realities, and that's what influenced Moses' decision, he was influenced by the perspective of faith, and faith always penetrates beyond the present, that's the glory of faith, the pleasures of sin are for a season, but faith sees beyond that season, and it sees the end, it sees the reward, it sees the eternity, and he chose the way of faith, and the way of obedience, and the way of suffering, knowing that the goal and the end is a glorious one, he had respect to the recompense of the reward, he chose what was to count for eternity, he chose by the values of eternity, he chose by the values of judgment seat, he looked at the consequences, and if there's anything we as a generation need to do, it's to look at eternity, and to look at the judgment seat, there's so little sense of reality of eternity, and the day of reckoning that is to come, what's going to happen at the end of the day, that is not foremost in our thinking, that's not foremost in our living, because we've lost the sense of eternal reality, but Moses had that sense of eternal reality, and what influenced him to make this great decision at this crisis in his life, was the influence of eternity, the influence of the world to come, he penetrated by faith beyond the showy outward things of this world, and he saw that there's a day of reckoning, and if you're going to come to that day of reward, the only way to it is through obedience and suffering, that's the only way to it, there's no other way to heaven, but through obedience and suffering, and he weighed the present against the future, and he could see the future, and the reward that was awaiting for him, but what had he to do in order to get to that place, well he had to identify himself with the people of God, because they were the only people that were going there, they were the people that had
God on their side, they were the people that were in covenant with God, they were the people that had a messianic hope, they were the people that had a hope for the future, and if he is going to that future, then he must identify himself with the people of God, and he must do it by faith, and he must do it by works, it's not enough to say in my heart that I belong to the people of God, I've got to show it by my life, I've got to take the step of obedience, and I've got to identify myself with the people of God as Moses did, because there will be affliction in identifying yourself with the people of God,

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there will be reproach, but you see, what's the alternative?
Well, the alternative is to stay in the world, to see that the pleasures of Egypt are far more important, and the treasures of Egypt, to value them more than identifying with the people of God, and you see, that's the choice we all have to make.
Ultimately, it applies to every young person here in the church today, tonight, who was baptized, who was growing up in a Christian family, there's got to be a day of decision.
[25:28] Identify yourself with the people of God. Choose ye this day whom you will serve, the gods of Egypt or the living and true God, the gods of this world or the true God.

That's the choice that is before us. And you see, the Lord Jesus Christ is our example in one sense. Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
And we have to go through a similar crisis. We've got to endure suffering, but we have also to despise the shame, to despise that shame that will come to us by identifying ourselves with the people of God.
But it's all gloriously worthwhile. Faith tells us that there is a recompense of reward at the end of the day, and it's worthwhile going through with that decision that Moses made, the crisis that came in his life.
He didn't put off, he didn't compromise. He didn't sway between the two opinions. He knew his identity, and you know your identity tonight.
[26:50] You've been called into covenant. The name of God is upon you. You should really be a child of God, and people should see it. You should be identified with the children of God in this world.

You should be one with them. That's where you belong. Not the self-imposed identity of the world. That does belong to you. You're a child of the covenant, and your identity is with the people of God. And you have to come with Moses tonight, and make that choice, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.
May God bless to us our meditation. Let's pray. Our gracious God, we thank thee that thou art a covenant God. Thou are calling us into fellowship with thyself.
We pray, O God, that we may choose this day whom we will serve. Help us to recognize that the gods of this world are idols done, that they have no substance, and that they offer vain things to us.
[27:56] We thank thee that thou art a living God, who is offering us life, and life more abundant. We thank thee for that reward that is promised to thy people. And we pray that we might this day, this night, make that choice for thee and for eternity, that we might live in the light of eternity, and that we might indeed do all things in the light of that day.

Bless to us thy word, we pray thee, and cleanse us from all our sin. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

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