

Redemption by Faith
Hebrews 11:23-31

January 18, 2015

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^B Exodus 2:11-14a; Acts 7:23-25; John 8:56, 4:22; Matthew 5:10-12

^C Exodus 2:14b-15a; Acts 7:35

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^H Acts 16:21; John 1:12, 3:16

A. Instruments

1. By the Surgeon's Scalpel

- a. five years ago, there was an article covering a meeting of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, headed "Lung Cancer Survival Best When Thoracic Surgeon Wields Scalpel" -{2}.
- b. we speak of a person being saved by the surgeon's scalpel
- c. but, of course, what we mean – and what the article was saying – is that it is the surgeon that makes the difference
- d. the scalpel is simply an instrument in the hands that have been trained to use it, by the surgeon who understands how to employ it

2. Faith, God's Instrument

- a. God, the great Healer, the master Physician, has His instrument
- b. consider God in the matter of redemption or salvation
 - (A) He is the Almighty, Sovereign Ruler of the Universe
 - (B) we, humanity, are the helpless victims of the disease of sin
 - (C) God in His mercy and wisdom has chosen to use faith as His scalpel – His instrument of healing the sin disease – by His honouring those who put their trust in Him for redemption
- c. the passage before us today illustrates that this is not only the case for those who now put their faith in Jesus the Son of God for forgiveness from their sin – spiritual redemption and deliverance – but also those who then put their trust in God for physical deliverance from the slavery and bondage in Egypt.

B. Moses, God's Agent of Redemption Hebrews 11:23-28

1. Jochebed's & Amram's Faith

- a. here is an excerpt from a genealogy of Jacob's son, Levi as found in Exodus 6:16-20: "16 These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon and Kohath and Merari; ... 18 The sons of Kohath: Amram and Izhar and Hebron and Uzziel; ... 20 Amram married his father's sister Jochebed, and she bore him Aaron and Moses; ..."
- b. (keep your finger in Exodus; we shall return there from time to time.)
- c. Hebrews 11:23 – "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they

saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict."

- (A) let us consider how this couple demonstrated their faith in the risks they took for their new-born son; (back to ...)
 - (B) Exodus 1:22-2:3 – '22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born you are to cast into the Nile, and every daughter you are to keep alive." 2:1 Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi. 2 The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months. 3 But when she could hide him no longer, she got him a wicker basket and covered it over with tar and pitch. Then she put the child into it and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile.'
 - (C) don't you love that bit of irony? – Pharaoh didn't say anything about putting a wicker basket between the baby and the water!
 - (D) every parent thinks their baby is beautiful; exceptional
 - (E) but this was exceptional: the OT word is simply, 'good' but the NT explains this in context as being an extraordinary child
- d. a child that brought out the faith of his parents
- (A) this boy was marked in their minds as one through whom God would one day accomplish great things
 - (1) God had given a promise: Genesis 15:13, 16 – "God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. ... Then in the fourth generation they will return here, ..." – did you notice in that genealogy in Exodus 6 that Moses is of the fourth generation?
 - (2) Joseph reminded them of this promise in Genesis 50:24-25 – '24 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." 25 Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here.'"
 - (3) the time was now ripe for the promised deliverance
 - (B) it took faith to disobey the Pharaoh and disregard his orders – a king who would heartlessly slay innocent children would have no compunctions about slaying rebellious parents
 - (C) so Jochebed put Moses in a basket and then in a placid place in the Nile – by faith that the God who gave this remarkable child was well able to preserve him for His own service
 - (D) it is with similar faith that Christians today dedicate their children to God: trusting that He will preserve them for His own use

2. Moses' Acts of Faith (verses 24-28)

a. Moses Casts His Lot with the People of God

(A) Verses 24-26 – "24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward."

(1) Exodus 2:11-14a – '11 Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their hard labours; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. 12 So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one around, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. 13 He went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, "Why are you striking your companion?" 14 But he said, "Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" ...'

(B) Stephen, speaking in Acts 7:23-25 explains the nature of this action, "23 But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel. 24 And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. 25 And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him, but they did not understand."

(1) note that Hebrews says by this act he was aligning himself 'with the people of God', not with the 'people of Israel'

(2) it was not a family affair, a national affair, or a racial affair

(3) all these were affected, but his faith was choosing God

(C) the NT considers this act of Moses as an act of faith, a renunciation of the privileged class in which he had been raised;

(1) likewise, by faith, Christians are call to renounce the world

(2) one pledge in baptism is, 'I renounce the works of the devil'

(3) so faith aligns a person with God and His people; Romans 6:4 speaks of this as our being 'buried with Him through baptism ...'

(D) faith is ready for persecution

(1) here it says he chose to share the reproaches of Christ – the Messiah – the paramount purpose for Israel was that they were to be the source of the Christ, the Saviour of the world

(a) Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." (John 8:56)

- (b) "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews."
(John 4:22)
 - (2) to suffer for Israel then, was to suffer for the coming Christ
 - (3) "10 Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:10-12)
 - (E) faith discerns true values – the treasures of Egypt were immense; the pyramids are one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, yet though able to house a hundred people they were but the tomb of one man – how valueless compared with God's riches in Christ
 - (F) faith concentrates its sight on what God has promised – Moses, it says, 'looked to the reward'– so should we, as Paul, focus our eyes on 'the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus' (Phil 3:14)
- b. Moses Forsakes the Known for the Unknown
- (A) Verse 27 – "By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen." This history is in ...
 - (1) Exodus 2:14b-15a – '14 ... Then Moses was afraid and said, "Surely the matter has become known." 15 When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, ...'
 - (2) it was all part of God's plan as Stephen explains in Acts 7:35, "This Moses whom they disowned, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?' is the one whom God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush."
 - (B) Moses did fear Pharaoh, yes, for the man was out to kill him
 - (C) but Hebrews says that fear was not the reason for his flight
 - (1) rather he feared God more
 - (2) as Esther many years later he recognised that, as it were, he had "... attained royalty for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14)
 - (3) it was by faith in God and God's purpose that he left Egypt – faith enabled him, and enables us, to wait for God's time
- c. Moses Leads Israel in Accepting God's Way of Salvation
- (A) Verse 28 – "By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them."

- (B) nine plagues had been cast upon Egypt and its people
 - (1) these plagues Israel had experience or witnessed
 - (2) the earlier plagues had been indiscriminate, falling upon Egyptian and Israelite territory alike
 - (3) the latter plagues had been only upon Egypt proper – Israel in the land of Goshen had been spared
- (C) but the tenth plague required action to be delivered from death
 - (1) Moses proclaimed and exhorted the God-give specified action
 - (2) in some ways it seemed a trivial, even meaningless action
 - (3) mix up dough for bread but don't add yeast
 - (4) have a family lamb supper; possibly invite in a neighbour
 - (5) take some of the blood of that lamb and use it to mark the posts on each side of the door and the lintel across the top
 - (6) BUT, to obey was life; to disobey, death, to the first-born
 - (7) for God said, *'when I see the blood, I will pass over you'*
- (D) by faith Moses did this; by faith he instructed the people to do it
 - (1) the Paschal lamb – the Passover lamb – was to be a perpetual memorial to God's people of their redemption from Egypt
 - (a) Jesus Christ is our Passover, the One delivering us from death
 - (b) *"The next day he (John the Baptist) saw Jesus coming to him and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'"* (John 1:29)

C. Faith of God's Redeemed Hebrews 11:29-31

1. Faith in Delivery from Pharaoh's Army

a. Verse 29 – *"By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned."* – let us return to read this history in ...

(A) Exodus 14:10-16 – *'10 As Pharaoh drew near, the sons of Israel looked, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they became very frightened; so the sons of Israel cried out to the Lord. 11 Then they said to Moses, "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt? 12 Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." 13 But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. 14 The Lord will fight for you*

while you keep silent.” 15 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward. 16 As for you, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land.”

- (B) it is Moses' faith is that is in the forefront – Israel's was feeble
 - (1) it is Moses who exhorts and encourages the people
 - (2) it is to Moses that the Lord gives instructions
- (C) nevertheless, it was the people who had to move forward in faith
- b. how did the miracle of the parting of the Red Sea take place?
 - (A) the faith of Moses in stretching out his hand over the sea (14:21)
 - (B) the strong east wind blowing all night sent by God (14:21)
 - (C) the people setting out by faith between walls of water (14:22)
 - (D) God honouring the faith of His leader and people; faith in God
- c. what was the proof of Israel's faith? ... the enemy's defeat:
 - (A) the Egyptians saw the same path through the sea
 - (B) the Egyptians were bold to enter the path (not from fear of God, but more likely from fear of Pharaoh)
 - (C) but the Egyptians, not having faith in God, drowned

2. Faith in Conquering Jericho

- a. Verse 30 – “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.”
 - (A) this is recorded in Joshua 6 but we shall not read it now
- b. it was all such apparent foolishness
 - (A) each morning the army of Israel arose to walk around Jericho
 - (B) it would have taken a number of hours each day: to assemble themselves, to approach, to circle, and to leave Jericho
 - (C) walking in complete silence around the city
 - (D) what were the thoughts of the people of Jericho on the walls
 - (1) curiosity at first, certainly; in some, apprehension
 - (2) after a day or so, some would hoot in derision, others join in
- c. but on the seventh day, by faith, derision turned into defeat
 - (A) the walls fell; our brother Gordon Struve will tell us more on this in one of his messages
 - (B) the army outside scaled over the ruins and captured the city

3. Faith of the Harlot, Rahab

- a. Verse 31 – “By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.”
 - (A) attempts to soften the word ‘harlot’ into hostess or innkeeper
 - (B) Greek word is root of English words such as “pornography”
 - (C) Hebrew means a secular (vs pagan temple) prostitute
 - (1) in pagan Canaan, not just accepted but honoured
 - (2) in a twisted society the “sex trade” becomes respectable
- b. God considers all sin to be evil; God equally able to save any sinner
- c. in the Scriptures, disobedience is akin to disbelief: it is disbelief in practise – those who do not trust God, show this in the way they live

D. Redeeming Faith

1. God Still Redeems by Faith

- a. to the Philippian jailer, Paul and Silas ‘... said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”’ (Acts 16:31)
- b. John 1:12 has a similar message, “But as many as received Him (Jesus), to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,”

2. You Can Trust in This God

- a. read God’s promises, accept them as true; encompassing your mind
- b. obey God in believing His promises; encompassing your will
- c. adore the Christ who died for you; encompassing your emotions
- d. believe on Jesus and know eternal life

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AV	Authorized (King James) Version of 1769
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation (usually the 1995 edition)
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Some of the commentaries and resources used in the preparation of this message are identified as follow:

- Barnes – *Notes on the New Testament, et alia*, by Rev Albert Barnes, Gall & Inglis, Edinburgh
- BM – *Biblical Museum*, Editor James Comper Gray, ca 1870
- EBC – *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, © 1986 Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 49530, Michigan
Hebrews, by Leon Morris
- EGT – *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, Hodder & Stoughton
Hebrews, by Marcus Dods
- Gill – *Exposition of the Old Testament, Exposition of the New Testament*, by John Gill, D.D.
- Kerux – The sermon & illustration data base compiled by Rev. David Holwick at the web-site, www.holwick.com.
- NICNT – *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*
The Epistle to the Hebrew, by F. F. Bruce
- RWP – *Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*, by Dr. A. T. Robertson
- TYN – *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*
Hebrews, by Donald Guthrie

2. Found at <http://www.medpagetoday.com/MeetingCoverage/STS/12613>