

# The faith of Moses – looking to the reward

Bruce Mackay

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## Introduction

During his life, both Moses and his parents made crucial and life-changing choices. These choices and decisions are recorded in the book of Hebrews. Heb 11:23-29. These faith decisions set Moses apart as an example of how to be delivered from the power and snare of this world, with its passing, deceptive pleasures of sin. These choices are also critical for each of us if we are to be joined to the fellowship of the body of Christ and to come to maturity as sons of God.

One of the vital choices that Moses made in being set apart to do the will of God was to 'look to the reward'. By faith Moses ... 'esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; *for he looked to the reward*'. Heb 11:26. Moses turned his heart, mind and eyes from that which was temporary and passing away to look toward the reward that is spiritual and eternal.

## Moses, when he was born

'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.' Heb 11:23. The king had commanded that every male child born from among the children of Israel was to be put to death.

The parents of Moses saw with spiritual eyes. They did not look at Moses with the eyes of natural parents. When they saw that he was a beautiful child, they were not making an assessment in regard to Moses' natural looks. Every parent thinks their newborn baby is beautiful. In contrast to the other parents of their time, Moses' parents saw their child as a son of God. They saw Moses as the heavenly Father saw him. 'At this time Moses was born, and was *well-pleasing to God*.' Act 7:20.

Likewise, today, each believing parent must view their children as sons of God. We must see the name that the heavenly Father has named for them. They are well-pleasing in His eyes. For this reason, and in obedience to the command of the Father, we dedicate our newborn babies as a clear act of obedient faith. Exo 13:2. Luk 2:22-23. To disobey this command means that we do not see our children with the eyes of the Father as well-pleasing sons of God. For those who think that it does not matter whether we dedicate them, consider Moses compared to the other babies born at that time.

## Trained in age-appropriate responses

Parents of sons of God have an accountability to train and discipline their children according to the heavenly Father's discipline. They are disciplined and trained in the way of righteousness. Parents are to train their children to make age-appropriate responses. Through such training, children are prepared for when they come of age. At the appropriate time, they will be equipped and prepared to make a choice; choosing to reject every other name and to embrace the name that the Father named them to be. When they come of age, they will choose to live by the faith of the Son, apart from their parents' faith.

By age seven, we would be looking for our children to be baptised into Christ, but it would be quite expected that they would be enquiring about baptism at an even younger age. This is when they should be baptised with the Holy Spirit and begin to speak in tongues.

Jesus was twelve when He was about His Father's business. Luk 2:49. Likewise, our twelve-year-olds should be making offering and serving in the body of Christ. This is vital for them, as it trains them to accept the Father's name for them. They are beginning to understand the way of a disciple of Jesus. Our twelve-year-olds are about to come of age and, like Moses, choose not to be named by any other name than the name their heavenly Father has given them.

Moses' parents did not fear the king. We are not to raise our children by making responses based on our fears. Many parents fear that their children will not choose to continue in the fellowship of the church. Out of such fear, they allow their children to participate in unhelpful, unsanctified activities with ungodly company. Such decisions, based on fear, will have the opposite effect, teaching them to love the world. We should be teaching our children the love of the Father. If we love the world, the love of the Father is not in us. 1Jn 2:15.

### Moses, when he came of age

'By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.' Heb 11:24-26. The decision that Moses made is the most vital decision every emerging teenager must make - to not be named as a son of this world. It is to choose, rather, to be named as a son of God and a member of the body of Christ, by looking to the reward. This is the difference between life and death; heaven and hell.

The reason why this decision is so vital is because there is conflict taking place. This conflict is between flesh and Spirit. 'For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things you wish.' Gal 5:17. The *flesh* is rewarded with the world and its passing pleasures of sin.

The *Spirit* is unseen and eternal, with the reward of eternal life both now and in the age to come. Both sides of this conflict offer a 'reward'. If we are to be sons of God, receiving an eternal spiritual reward, we must refuse the reward of the world. This is a full-scale spiritual conflict. It is won or lost depending on the reward we choose.

This 'war-like' conflict has absolutely nothing to do with God fighting Satan or with good versus evil. Christ has already overcome Satan, sin, death and the world. Rather, the outcome of this Spirit-flesh conflict is totally down to what we each *choose*. Daily, we are faced with choices. As Joshua said, 'Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.' Jos 24:15.

From the age of sixteen, we find ourselves making adult choices with an adolescent brain. This is not a demeaning statement, but both a medical and scientific reality. A human brain begins to develop during the first weeks in the womb, but it is not fully developed and mature until we are 25 years old. There is the potential for many devastating and eternal decisions to be made while our brain is still not fully developed. Therefore, we must not lean on our own understanding or feelings. We must be spiritual, and submit ourselves to seek the wisdom of God.

The gratification of the flesh produces a temporary reward, known as 'the passing pleasures of sin'. Our senses and desires are heightened, and the temptation to gratify our own desires is immense. The Scripture bears this out. 'But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.' Jas 1:14-15. During the adolescent phase of our life, Satan is making the world desirable to us; and each time we give in to temptation, our desire is gratified. We are being 'named' by the world. We do not have the

strength to not be tempted, but we can, like Moses, refuse to be called, or named, as a son of this world.

We cannot be complacent during this phase of our life. There must be crises of choice. It will depend upon your personality and circumstances to know what these crises will 'look like'. If you have, compliantly, without much fuss, joined your parents in church life, you and your parents will not realise that you are in need of making a clear choice. But if you do not make a clear choice, you will find yourself silently being named by the world and will become vulnerable to being drawn away.

If you are the sort of person who is always testing your boundaries, you are in danger of suddenly being overtaken. Therefore, don't neglect this choice. It is not enough to say, 'I'm still following Christ, so it's okay to have a bit of unsanctified fun.' Remember the warning – if temptation turns to desire, that desire will give birth to sin, which will lead to death.

Daily, at school, other students and teachers name us as they want us to respond. If we want to be accepted, we will receive these names. We will present our profile on social media and compare ourselves with others, accepting the name that offers us the most acceptance. This can happen through sport, education, music, and even in our families. They all have a voice that calls out their name for us. We, like Moses, must refuse to be called a son of this world.

Everyone must choose to reject the world. Everyone will be tempted with its rewards of temporary pleasure, leading to death. Specifically, if you are between the ages of 18 and 25, you have 'come of age'. You must make a clear and specific choice to refuse and reject the world's pleasures and its desires. Regardless of how minor these issues may seem, they are 'weeds of the world' and they are choking you spiritually. Mat 13:7,22. You must reject these thorny weeds.

The need to reject and to say 'no' is essential to being a disciple of Christ. With every call of discipleship, Jesus precedes the call, stating what we must forsake. Jesus said, 'So likewise whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.' Luk 14: 33. With a deliberate, conscious choice, we must join each of our worldly and fleshly desires and ways to Christ's wounds. Our desire for a name in education, sport, social media along with our relationships must all be rejected, and we need to acknowledge that they are crucified with Christ.

With our choosing to reject and refuse the world, we must choose the spiritual reward and join the people of God – the body of Christ – with its afflictions. We choose and esteem the reproach of Christ by being joined to the offering and sufferings of Christ. We cannot serve two masters. Luk 16:13.

### **Moses looked to the reward**

'[Moses] looked to the reward.' Heb 11:26. Setting our heart and mind on *the reward* is a key teaching of the Scriptures. Jesus said, 'Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.' Mat 6:19-21.

Paul, the apostle, said, 'Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.' Php 3:13-14.

It would be wrong to consider our spiritual reward as something belonging only to the future. There *is* a future, heavenly reward, but we are to participate in the reward *now*. Baptism into Christ is the entrance into our reward. In our baptism, we died with Christ and we were raised with Christ. 'If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are

above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.' Col 3:1-3. We are to experience, know and participate in Christ's resurrection life now, on earth. Paul was very definite that resurrection life in his mortal body while alive was the reward to which he was attaining. Php 3:11.

As highlighted before, we have no strength in ourselves to overcome. Do not trust in your own righteousness and goodness. Do not rely on the fact that you have been raised in the church. Do not put your trust in your past religious experiences. None of these activities will bring the reward. Each person who has come of age must look on Him whom they have pierced. Each one, individually, must join Christ in His death. We will not live by the reward of His resurrection life if we have not died His death. With a clear conviction, we must confess that we have been crucified with Christ. In that crucifixion in which we are participating, our sin was put to death. We are crucified to the world and the world to us.

Nothing of this world and its passing lusts will by any means enter heaven. In the same manner, on earth, we are not to have a mixed focus. We cannot love this temporal world and do the will of God.

'Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' 1Jn 2:15. 'For those who live according to the flesh set their mind on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.' Rom 8:5-8.

## Moses forsook Egypt

'By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.' Heb 11:27. Moses was living in Egypt and being raised in Pharaoh's palace as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and forsook Egypt. Egypt, in the Scriptures, is a type of *the world*, which we are to flee, be crucified to; and the world to us. Gal 6:14. 1Ti 6:11. 2Ti 2:22. Likewise, Pharaoh is a type of Satan, the god of this world and the father of lies. Joh 8:44. Joh 12:31.

The world is a system that has been masterfully designed and crafted by Satan himself. He is the god and ruler of this system. Satan designed it for the sole purpose of enslaving the human race. The world, as an organised system, did not exist before the fall of Adam and Eve. When Adam and Eve rejected God's order of life and chose to live by their own understanding, they began to live by their 'other law'. This other law is a law other than the Law of love. This other law was and is motivated by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

Satan observed that Eve walked away from fellowship with Yahweh through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. 'So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food [*lust of the flesh*], that it was pleasant to the eyes [*lust of the eyes*], and a tree desirable to make one wise [*pride of life*], she took of its fruit and ate.' Gen 3:6. Noting this, Satan fathered this system and designed it to deceptively enslave every son and daughter of Adam. The Scripture calls this 'the world'.

The world is so deceptive that you cannot see the chains that enslave you. In fact, Satan has so deceptively designed his system of slavery that he makes a person feel as though they are embracing freedom. In your perceived freedom to gratify your fleshly desires, you are in fact being bound by the chains of the world. These chains begin to choke every bit of spiritual life out of you. This world's system is so deceptive that you feel as though you are entering bliss. In fact, you are being dragged through the filth of the kingdom of darkness, charging headlong into eternal darkness.

The world promises happiness, approval, acceptance and success. Yet, it delivers none of these promises in any lasting measure. It is only for a season because, as you accept these 'trinkets', another 'chain' of slavery wraps around you. Ultimately, the world delivers its true currency: 'a pig pen' of filth, full of emptiness, anxiety and despair.

This story is forever repeated. Just as you feel that you are about to be satisfied with the treasures of this world, they turn to dust and leave you 'gasping for spiritual air'. Satan mocks and laughs because, once again, a son of Adam has accepted his lie, and the result is anger and frustration. It is not anger at Satan, but anger with God. God is yet again blamed for the world's lies and failures.

Just as Moses forsook Egypt, we must forsake the world. 'But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.' 1Ti 6:11. 'I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one.' 1Jn 2:13.

Our forsaking the world and its passions is not found through prohibition and fleshly regulations. Yet we are not to be conformed to this world. Rather, by the mercies of God, we present our bodies as a living sacrifice, participating in Christ's offering and finding His provision to live in this world by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Rom 12:1. Rom 8:2.

### **Moses kept the Passover – communion**

'By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.' Heb 11:28. For every household to escape the judgement of God, we must 'keep the Passover'. Every household must *choose to make Christ their Lamb* of God, choosing to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God that was spoken at the communion table.

We keep the Passover by assembling ourselves to *gather with other believing households* to eat and drink of Christ. We must not forsake this privilege and invitation by Christ to eat with one another at His table. Heb 10:25. This communion meal is a meeting of families with families, household to household, face to face, heart to heart, and bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. Eph 5:30. In the eating and drinking, each household is proclaiming the Lord's death. 1Co 11:26. This proclamation is saying, 'I am joined to Christ's offering and sufferings. I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of another.' Php 2:17.

We keep the Passover by *taking up our cross daily*. We do this by joining every event of every day to Christ's dying and living. This can take place in the family around the evening meal, in a *fellowship discussion* together, sharing our response to the word we have heard at communion. In the same fellowship, we share the events of each one's day with one another, so that it all can be gathered up into Christ's death. Each is able to confess their faults and, by praying for one another, each member of the family is being washed and healed.

Each new morning, we keep the Passover by meeting the Lord with His new mercies, submitting ourselves as His slaves to do His will. We are ready to be led by the Spirit, so that we may be sons of God, doing the will of God. We keep the Passover by pouring out our life for another, knowing that our life is 'hidden with Christ in God' and that Christ is being revealed. Col 3:3.

### **Passed through the Red Sea – the doctrine of baptism**

'By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.' Heb 11:29. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul likened Moses and the children of Israel passing through the Red Sea to us being baptised into Christ. 1Co 10:1-2.

We must continue in the doctrine of baptism, to daily die with Christ. In our baptism, we are participating in the circumcision of Christ, enabling our other law to be circumcised. With this circumcision and co-crucifixion, the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life are put to death. 'As many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death.' Rom 6:3. Christ took the law of sin, which is the spirit of Satan and of the world, and He nailed it to the cross as the corporate identity of sin. When Christ died in the flesh as the body of sin, the Law was nailed to the cross, sin was killed, and the power of Satan was destroyed. Thus, the world and death were put to death. Joh 12:31. Heb 2:14-15. Col 2:14. Gal 6:14. This is the doctrine of baptism in which we participate.

If we do not forsake sin and the world, and continue our life with a love of the world, we are not living in our baptism. Like the Egyptians, we will attempt to journey with God's people but, because of our love for the world and its ways, we will perish. Only in Christ are we not overcome by the world's sea of destruction. 'For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.' 2Pe 2:20.

By continuing in the doctrine of baptism, we live as a son of God by the faith of the Son. We set our mind on the Spirit and are being led by the Spirit. This is what it means to 'look to the reward'. By looking to His reward, we will live by the resurrection life of Christ in our mortal body, now.