Heb. 11:23; Exodus 2:1-10; By Faith, Moses’ Parents I. The Act of Faith II. The Motivation of Faith

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we think of the great power couples of the faith, we tend to think of people like Adam and Eve; Abraham and Sarah; even Joseph and Mary the mother of Jesus. Well known couples who are called to go through a challenging time but respond and obey by faith. But today we are going to consider the faith of Moses’ parents. Now it is interesting that Moses’ parents are not even given a name in our passage- and not in Ex. 2 either. They are the unnamed parents of Moses. They are lessor known to be sure- but their act of faith is none the less moving. We do know their names- they are found in the genealogy of Moses as listed in Exodus 6. Moses’ father was Amram and his mother’s name was Jochebed. So Amram and Jochebed were parents who lived by faith. We remember that true faith is an assurance and conviction- to have a true and living faith is to know the truth, to believe this in your mind and to feel it in your heart- which manifests itself in how you act with your hand. So true faith is made evident in what you believe, confess and in how you live- what you do is the proof of your faith. So today we consider the parents of Moses- how their faith moved them to spare and save their own child who will one day be called upon to lead God’s people out of slavery. We consider this theme: by faith, Moses’ parents saved their child because they feared the LORD.

**I. The Act of Faith**

In our first point, we consider the act of faith. What did Amram and Jochebed do that proved they had a true and living faith? Well, the fact of faith is this- Amram and Jochebed hid Moses. Now hiding is not usually and act of faith- unless you are hiding someone else in order to spare their lives from an evil ruler. Like those living during WWII who hid Jews from the Nazis in order save their lives. Notice that Amram and Jochebed did not hide themselves- they did not think first of their own lives- but rather the life of their child. Now hiding here is not like a game of hide and seek- this was truly a matter of life and death. Remember the context of Exodus 2- Pharaoh has issued a decree that every male child born of the Hebrew shall be cast into the Nile. As we saw a few weeks ago- Satan’s attack on the church comes in two ways- either Satan tries to kill the church, or he tries to assimilate the church. The attack of the Devil on Jesus takes this same form- first Herod tries to kill all the baby boys born in Bethlehem. And second, the Devil temps Jesus to give up his mission. Bow down to me and I will give you all the nations of the world- the Devil said. So the attack is clear- either I will kill the chosen seed or I will make the Son of God to be my follower. This is the same line of attack that happens today- persecution comes in the form of overt hostility- kill the church. Or it comes in the form of trickery and deceit- to make the church to act, live and believe as the world does. Turn the followers of Christ into followers of the world. So the Devil has not changed his tactics at all. And in our text, the Devil tries to kill the line of the woman by killing all the sons born to the Israelites. Now why would Pharaoh do this- why would he want to kill all the Israelite baby boys? Well, the boys are the future leaders- the leaders of the church and the soldiers in the army. Without a generation of men to lead church, the people of God will be easily manipulated and assimilated. Without the men to stand in the army and fight- the Israelites will put up no resistance when the battle breaks out as Ex. 1:10 states. That is what Pharaoh feared- it was the power and strength of men who stand to fight in the day of battle. So Pharaoh’s solution is to simply kill the baby boys to gut the future army and hamstring the leadership of the Israelites. As a pawn of the Devil, Pharaoh knows that the best way to attack the church starts by taking out the leaders. Even today- if we do not have young men who lead in the home and the church, what will the future of the church look like? But how did Amram and Jochebed respond to this threat? Well, they simply ignored the king’s edict and they kept their son alive! Instead of throwing their son into the Nile to be drowned, they kept him alive. Now Moses was the younger brother of Aaron and Mariam. But the decree was clear- all baby boys born were to be killed. The midwives were the first to defy this order- for they too feared the LORD- and God was kind to the midwives and He blessed them. Now the command went to all the people- kill your baby sons. Do not spare them- but toss them in the river. But Amram and Jochebed did not! They hid their son and kept him safe for 3 months. Now any mother here can testify- this was no easy task. Babies make noise- and a 3-month-old boy is not a quiet member of the house. But God was faithful and he enabled these parent to be successful- to spare their son’s cries from the ears of the enemy. For God not only hears the cries of His people- as Ex. 3 says- but God can also close the ears of his enemies so that they cannot hear! So by faith, Moses’ parents hid him for 3 months. Later on, a basket will be made and Moses will be placed in the care of Pharaoh’s daughter. But today the focus is simply this- by faith, Moses was hidden by his parents.

**II. The Motivation of Faith**

Now why is this considered an act of faith? I imagine that most parents would try to do the same thing. No one would willingly kill their baby unless they had some mental disorder. But Amram and Jochebed were not just moved by normal, parental love. No, they were moved by faith. Specifically, v. 23 says that that by faith they were not afraid. They did not fear Pharaoh or his wicked law. They had no fear. Now back when I was in high school, this was a common phrase put on bumper stickers. The NO FEAR campaign was targeted to young people as way to show your boldness. I have no fear- I am not afraid to try new things and I am not afraid to make some waves. And on the basketball court- it would mean that I am not afraid of you- you do not intimidate me. No Fear! But here, Moses’ parents did not fear a wicked law nor did they fear the consequences of being caught. Why? How could they live with such boldness? Well, the fact is they had a deeper fear- a greater understanding of what it means to have a proper fear. It is not that the Bible is telling us to be reckless- I have no fear so I can jump my bike over this canyon or drive my car at a reckless speed. That is not what it means to have no fear. Rather, for Moses’ parent to have no fear means that they did no fear the unjust and wicked ruler because they feared God! They were not afraid of the rules of man because they feared the Law of the LORD! To be clear, being a Christian does not mean that do not fear anything, rather that we fear rightly. We have a proper direction to our fear- we fear something and someone as is fitting. So to apply this, God’s people are called live lives without fear of men. Read with me from Matthew 10:26-31. Note that we are told not to fear men because they can only kill the body. Pharaoh could at his worst kill Amram and his wife- could at worst take the life of their child- but that is not a reason to be afraid of these kings and their laws. Rather, fear God! Fear Him first! As Psalm 115:11 puts it, you who fear the LORD, trust in Him! Or as the LORD said to Joshau in Joshua 1:9- be strong and courageous, do not tremble, for the LORD is with you! The fact is, fear of this world, the rulers of man and the powers of this order, is debilitating. Those who live in fear of this world are paralyzed. There are so many things that people are afraid of today. People were afraid of Y2K- what would happen when the new millennium began. People were afraid during the Pandemic- a new unknown sickness that going to wipe out ¼ of the population. People are afraid that they might lose worldly possessions- that the stock market might crash or some other world event might catch them off guard. People are afraid of conflict or of loss- afraid of others so they hide in their homes. Now to be clear- being unafraid is not the same as being foolish! Jochebed did not flaunt the fact that her baby was alive. But rather, God’s people are called to have courage! Courage is the ability to act with wisdom in the midst of conflict! Courage is the ability to stand in a time of trial! There is a country song that put is like this- tough times make tough people. So it is, that true faith is a tested faith- with courage Moses’ parents acted upon their faith and hid their child because they feared God more than man! God’s law above Pharoah’s decree! They hoped in the promise of the covenant and looked forward to His fulfillment! Let me try to illustrate this. Imagine for a moment that we would get a president and congress who would pass a law that states- every child born in the US must be educated in state run grade school where they would be taught to believe and act like the world. So Christian Education and homeschooling would become illegal. Would it not be an act of faith to hide your children from the government in order to protect them- in order to defy the rule of the state because you feared God first? Perhaps that illustrates what parenting by faith might look like. So do not give in to your fears- do not be afraid of the arrow the flies by day or the pestilence that stalks by night! Be strong and courageous- do not fear man but rather honor the LORD!

So the first motivation evident is that Moses’ parents feared God and His Word over Pharaoh and his decree. But Heb. 11 points to one other motivation- they saw that their child was beautiful. They spared their son because they saw that he was beautiful. Now to be clear, Amram and Jochebed did not just save Moses because he was a good-looking child. Thinking that they would not have spared Moses if Moses was an ugly baby is to miss the point. Added to this- it is true that almost every parent thinks that their own children are good looking. No- remember that Moses’ parents were living by faith! So by faith, Amran and Jochebed saw something in their child. They saw that Moses was a beautiful child. His face shone brighty! Not that he was better looking than most children, but rather that Moses had a royal dignity about him. The word- beautiful- here means comely, fair, proper- even fit for nobility. So they have an added ability to see that this child is special. Interestingly, in Acts 7:20 we read that they perceived that this child was beautiful to God! Moses was beautiful in God’s sight! So by faith, Amram and Jochebed perceived that this child was special- perhaps chosen by God to be something more. Set apart by God for a sacred task- dearly loved and chosen by God for a noble work! So Moses is not just a normal, regular baby boy born in Egypt to a Hebrew mother. He is different- set apart from the others. How much did his parents know? What could they see in the face of their son? Well, this child will rise to be the greatest in his generation! God will use him- as Moses will be a man of extraordinary faith and unequaled humility! God will speak to Moses face to face- Moses will be the giver of the Law- the leader by whose hand the water would part, and the water would flow. By his staff, the people would be lead. The ministry of Moses will point to Christ in a unique and unparalleled way- a prophet raised from among his brothers. Even as Moses himself would say in Dt. 18:15; the LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers- it is to Him that you shall listen. I will put my works in His mouth- and He shall speak to them all that I have commanded Him. So Moses would foreshadow and foretell of the coming prophet of the LORD- the one in whom we place our faith!

To conclude, God’s people are called to live by faith and not fear. Or even better- to live by faith and fear of God and not of man. Heb. 11 includes not just the well-known- but the equally important, lessor-known, heroes of the faith. Even if your own name is not remembered many years from now, you can still play an important role in the community of faith! In fact, godly parents have a vital responsibility to teach and instruct their little ones in the life of faith! Although you cannot change the hearts of your children, you can give them a wonderful example of faith! Your life can be a testament- this one lived by faith! Before Moses would be the ruler of Israel who led God’s people out of bondage; Moses’ parents would first live their life of faith which sets the stage for Moses. By faith, Moses’ parents saved their child because they feared the LORD. When the laws of man contradict the law of God- we must obey God before men!