

Hebrews 11:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king:
for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

Analysis

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Moses' departure from Egypt demonstrated faith conquering fear. 'Not fearing the wrath of the king' shows faith in God overcomes fear of human authority. The verb 'endured' (ekarteresenem, ἐκάρτερήσεν) means 'persevered with steadfast patience,' indicating sustained courage through long trial, not momentary bravery.

The phrase 'seeing him who is invisible' (ton gar aoraton hōs horōn, τὸν γὰρ ἀόρατον ὡς ὁρῶν) captures faith's essence: perceiving spiritual realities more clearly than physical circumstances. Though God is invisible to physical eyes, faith sees Him with greater certainty than visible things. This paradox—seeing the unseen—characterizes all biblical faith. Moses oriented his life around God's invisible presence and promises rather than Pharaoh's visible power.

This teaches that genuine faith produces courage in adversity by fixing attention on God rather than threats. The same God who is invisible is also immutable, omnipotent, and faithful—therefore infinitely more reliable than visible, mutable circumstances. Christians today endure persecution, suffering, and opposition by 'seeing him who is invisible' through faith, enabled by God's Word and Spirit to perceive eternal realities clearer than temporal ones.

Historical Context

Moses' departure from Egypt could refer to his initial flight to Midian (Exodus 2:14-15) or the Exodus itself (Exodus 12-14). Context suggests the Exodus, where Moses confronted Pharaoh repeatedly despite threats, led Israel out despite Egyptian army pursuit, and trusted God's invisible presence symbolized by the pillar of cloud and fire. Ancient Near Eastern kings wielded absolute power; defying Pharaoh required extraordinary courage grounded in faith. Moses' endurance through forty years wilderness wandering further demonstrates sustained faith in God's invisible presence despite lack of visible evidence of promised land inheritance.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What visible threats or circumstances tempt you to fear rather than trust God's invisible presence and power?
2. How can you cultivate seeing 'him who is invisible' more clearly than your visible circumstances?
3. In what areas do you need Moses' enduring faith to persevere despite opposition and lack of visible progress?

Interlinear Text

Πίστει	κατέλιπεν	Αἴγυπτον	μὴ	φοβηθεὶς	τὸν	θυμὸν	τοῦ
By faith	he forsook	Egypt	not	fearing	G3588	the wrath	G3588
G4102	G2641	G125	G3361	G5399		G2372	
βασιλέως·	τὸν	γὰρ	ἀόρατον	ὥς	ὁρῶν	ἐκαρτέρησεν	
of the king	G3588	for	him who is invisible	as	seeing	he endured	
G935		G1063	G517	G5613	G3708	G2594	

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 11:13 (Faith): These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

2 Corinthians 4:18 (Parallel theme): While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Hebrews 11:1 (Faith): Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Exodus 4:19 (References Egypt): And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.

Exodus 11:8 (Parallel theme): And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.

1 Timothy 1:17 (Kingdom): Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

James 5:11 (Parallel theme): Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Hebrews 10:32 (Parallel theme): But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

Exodus 12:11 (Parallel theme): And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover.

1 Peter 1:8 (Faith): Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: