

Israel: The Risk of Faith**Hebrews 11:29-30****Introduction**

Moses made choices of faith because he was willing to take the risk of faith. In addition to making personal choices of faith, Moses transferred his faith corporately. In verse 29 of Hebrews chapter 11, we move from Moses' personal risk of faith, to that of the whole nation of Israel. Moses led the whole congregation of God's people in taking risks with God. The Passover involved the nation as a whole coming together on one accord to believe God for the salvation of their families. The people of Israel were willing to follow Moses in believing God. That first risk of faith involved putting blood on the doorposts. It was a small step, but it was a very important first step in learning to believe God.

Later, at the Red Sea, God's people were caught between Pharaoh's army and the body of water. They were between a rock and a hard place. They couldn't understand why God would miraculously free them from slavery in Egypt only to have them get to the Red Sea and either be killed by Pharaoh, or drowned in the sea. Sometimes, God puts us in between a rock and a hard place so that we are forced to trust Him. He knows that many times we won't trust Him unless we have no other option. So He will allow us to be situated where we can't go forward or backward unless we do it His way.

In the Battle of Jericho, God instructed His people, through Joshua, to walk around the wall of Jericho for seven days instead of fighting a traditional battle. Israel had to take a risk of faith in order to follow what seemed to be a ridiculous plan for military victory. Not only was the plan hard to believe, it also made them sitting ducks for the enemy as they walked around the wall.

Like the nation of Israel, believers must take the risk of faith and believe God's Word when it doesn't make sense, or when His way may seem completely ridiculous. When God puts you in a situation that is not natural to your understanding, He wants you to gamble on Him. He wants you to take the risk with Him. He wants us to believe Him personally as individuals but also as a group so that we can see the collective power of God at work.

Getting Started

1. Reflect on your own personality. Would you describe yourself as a risk-taker? Why or why not?
2. When was the last time you took a risk? How did things turn out? Share your story with your group.

Let's Get Personal

1. Where in your life are you currently in between a rock and a hard place?
2. God asked the people of Israel to go to war on Jericho His way. His way left them vulnerable to the attacks of their enemies. Has God ever asked you to do something that meant you were vulnerable to the ill intentions of others?
3. In addition to each individual deciding to take the risk to follow God, the nation of Israel took risks as a group. A group could be your church, your small group, or your family. Why do you think God wants us to take risks with other Christians? Do you have any experience of taking risks with others?

Take the Next Step

1. If you are between a rock and a hard place, what do you believe God is asking you to do? What risk is He asking you to take?
2. God sometimes asks us to put ourselves in vulnerable positions. Where this week will you stop fighting "your way" and start fighting "His way"?
3. God wants us to see His collective power at work. Is God asking you to take a risk as a part of a larger entity? What risk might you be facing as part of your family, work group, church, or other community of faith?

Renew Your Mind

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen...” Hebrews 11:1