

# Gain the Reward

by Alphaus Mdlalose

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of growing up spiritually, discerning between good and evil, and making a choice between the world and Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:15:58

**Scripture:** Exodus 3:2-6, Exodus 3:10, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 11:24, Hebrews 11:26

**Topics:** "Spiritual Renewal", "Faithfulness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a mother who neglects her child and loses him. The mother is filled with regret and sorrow, realizing that she didn't take care of her child properly. The preacher then relates this story to Christians who may be in danger of losing their spiritual fervor and becoming weary in their faith. He warns that those who become tired and burdened may be vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy. The preacher encourages listeners to renew their commitment to God and choose to serve Him wholeheartedly. He also references the story of Moses, who made a choice to identify with God's people rather than the privileges of his position. The preacher concludes by sharing a story about a man who lost his sight but believed that God loved him more than others because he had overcome temptation. He emphasizes the importance of not being led astray by our own desires and urges listeners to be vigilant in their spiritual walk.

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## Transcript

Shall we open our Bibles to Hebrews chapter 11? Hebrews chapter 11 Hebrews chapter 11 And we start reading from verse 24 Hebrews chapter 11 By faith, Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

He was looking ahead to his reward. He was looking ahead to his reward. And we pray that you will be merciful to us and speak to us through your word.

For you, Lord, know the need of each and every one of us here this morning. For you, Lord, know the need of each and every one of us here this morning. All this we ask only because of your grace.

Amen. Now, this which I read to you about concerns Moses. Now, this which I read to you about concerns Moses.

Moses is an amazing testimony when you read about it. When he had grown up, he refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. When he had grown up, he refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

As you know, the name Moses means he who was lifted up out of the water. How did it come about that Moses, as a Hebrew, was brought up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter? I'm not going to relate it in detail. I'm sure all of us know about how it came about and about the birth of Moses.

We know that the nation of Israel was there in Egypt. The nation of the Hebrews lived for many years very well there in Egypt. Because the ruling Pharaoh there loved the Hebrews because of Joseph.

But after that Pharaoh had passed away, another Pharaoh, another ruler, took over in Egypt. And at that time Joseph had already also passed away because it was now many years since that time that he was there. And the new ruler that took over in Egypt didn't know Joseph.

And one day he looked at the nation of God. He looked at the children of God. And he spoke to the others that were with him there.

And he said, just look at the children of Israel. They are more numerous and more powerful than we are. Now, those were words of that Pharaoh, of that ruler, and they actually contained so much.

He says, these people are more powerful than we Egyptians. And they are more numerous than what we are. Now it's amazing when the enemy looks upon the children of God.

Looking at the host of God, looking at the children of God, and seeing how many they are. And also taking note of the fact that these children of God are not the same as they are, they who are from Egypt. But they had to take note of the fact that they are more powerful than what we are.

And then they said, we should take certain steps now, and we should have a strategy to go against them. And they started enslaving them. They started to oppress and enslave them where they had to mix the mud, they had to make the bricks to build pharaoh cities.

And after Pharaoh had started oppressing them and treating them very harshly, they increased even more until the Egyptians became afraid of the Israelites. We as the church of God, we as the people of God, the enemy should look at us, and when they look at the church and the people of God, they should tremble. And they should see and take note of the fact that the church of God is on the increase.

As we also mentioned about the brethren in France that had a meeting there, and where many of them had come together, their number had increased. The church of Jesus Christ should have the power to conquer and overcome whatever stands in its way. However, the church should be watchful and should realize and understand that it has got an enemy against it.

As we are here, the enemy is busy strategizing concerning you and me as to how he can get hold of us, how he can oppress us and cause us to be defeated. But whatever they did against the Israelites, they only increased in power. Eventually, this ruler of Egypt made a law and he said to the midwives that whenever you assist at the birth and you see that it's a girl, then that child will live.

But if it's a boy, it has to be killed. But amazingly, these Egyptian midwives would allow these Hebrew boys to live and so they increased even more. You cannot go against the church of God.

And when Pharaoh realized that they increased as they did before, he then called these Egyptian midwives. He said, what are you busy with? I said, you should put them to death and you are not doing that. And then they said, but O King, these Hebrew women are strong and when we get there, they have already given birth.

And so he commanded his soldiers to go around and to take hold of these Hebrew boys, baby boys and to go and drown them. And in that dispensation, we find that Moses was born, born to the house of Levi. And when his mother brought him into the world, she looked at him and saw that he was a baby boy.

The Bible says, when she looked at him, she saw that he was beautiful. When the mother looked at her baby boy, she saw that he was beautiful. And the Bible says, when she saw how beautiful he was, she denied her own life and put her own life at risk for the life of this baby.

And she said, even though the king has made this edict and passed this edict that all baby boys should be put to death, because this child of mine is no ordinary child, I will not do that. I will risk my life. Even though my neighbours have lost their children, because this child of mine is no ordinary child, it is beautiful, I will hide it.

And so, despite the edict of the king, she hid that child away for three months. You know that mothers are amazing people. You know a mother, when she has a child, she does something amazing.

A mother does not continue leading a life that she led before she had a child. There are certain places to which you will no longer go, because she says, if I go there, who will look after my child? And they even change their diet, and they look at everything that they eat, and even though there are certain things that they like very much, because of their child, they won't eat that, so that when the child is suckled, it will not get ill. She will, in everything that she does, consider this child, and put this child first, and deny her life.

And that was exactly the same with this mother who brought Moses into the world. Now, if an ornery mother will look after a child to such an extent, and care for a child to such an extent, how much more should we not take care of the Lord Jesus within us? If mothers deny themselves, and in everything, consider this gift that has been entrusted to them, how much more should you and I not take care of the gift that has been entrusted to you and me? You ought to remain far away from any way that you would walk that might harm the Lord Jesus within you. And anything that you might say that might harm the one whom you have received.

But it's amazing that people that say they have received the Lord Jesus, they just live any old hell. The Bible says, do not quench, do not grieve the Holy Spirit. If you live in just any old way, the Holy Spirit within you is quenched.

You need to keep that which has been entrusted to your care. You need to look after it, to watch over it, that the Holy Spirit within you might do the work for which it has been sent. And that's what this mother did.

She said, even though the others have lost their children, but I will look after my child. I will guard over it. I will hide this child away, that I might always be brought joy because of this child.

It's something heartbreaking, very sad if you lose a child. Especially if a child dies because of your neglect. A certain young mother on the other side of the Tugela River did something very strange.

She wasn't able to have children. And she was prayed for, eventually she had a child. And when this child had grown up a little bit, was able to run around, was able to start speaking, an older boy came to visit.

This boy was quite a bit older than the boy, this other boy. And he said, I've come to ask that this other boy can come and play with me. We'll go and look after the cattle and we'll play over there.

It was difficult for this mother to say yes, but he continued with his pleading. Eventually she gave in and she said, all right, take him. And so early in the morning, they then went off.

Lunchtime, they didn't come back. And late in the afternoon, even as the sun started setting, they didn't come back. And when she realized the sun was going down, her child hadn't yet returned, she then started going out to look for this child.

She searched for him all over, not finding him. Eventually her heart broke. She cried.

She wept. She said, oh, God has given me a child and I've not looked after this child. I've lost this child.

I've thrown it away. She said, I've received this child in such a difficult way through prayer and I didn't look after this child. I've lost this child.

I didn't take care of this child. I was negligent and I've, so to say, thrown this child away. Eventually the neighbors got to hear of this and they made a search party to assist her to look for this child.

Eventually they found this other boy who had come to fetch him at her home. And they asked him now, where is this baby boy, this other boy that you had fetched from that home? He said, well, I don't know. He said, when last did you see him? Well, I last saw him this morning.

Where did he go? I don't know. And her heart, the mother's heart was broken. She said, oh, I entrusted my child into his hands.

And now he says he doesn't know where he is. And then eventually they went down to the river and there they saw the little jacket that the boy had been wearing floating there and there in the water. And when they got there, they found that he had long passed away.

She had received this child in such a difficult manner. And however, she was negligent and she threw the child away, so to say. And you too, you have received the Lord Jesus into your life, but today through your negligence, you've lost him.

You came to the Lord Jesus in tears. You said, Lord, I give you my life. You went around in tears, in mourning, making right your life, confessing your sin.

But today through your negligence, you've lost him. That good, that treasure that you had, you no longer have. That strength that you had, that joy, that peace, that sweetness that you had, you no longer have.

And then Moses' mother hid him away for three months. And the enemy didn't get hold of him. And when she was no longer able to hide him, she weaved a basket of reeds and then placed him amongst the reeds and there Pharaoh's daughter discovered him.

I'm just cutting a long story short. And so she became the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Now listen to what the Bible says concerning Moses.

We read about it in the book of Acts, there where Stephen was about to be stoned. Stephen said there that Moses was taught according to all the wisdom of Egypt. And there he was powerful in word and in deed there in Egypt.

He was taught to be a leader. And he was taught and trained together with the other princes there in Egypt. Oh, what a privilege didn't Moses have there.

But now we come to this time in Moses' life about which we read here in the book of Hebrews. There he was in Pharaoh's palace having been trained and taught according to all the wisdom of Egypt. Now listen to what verse 24 says.

By faith Moses when he had grown up refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. It's amazing, even though Moses had grown up in Pharaoh's palace, even though he lived there in Pharaoh's palace, the Bible says when he had grown up. Now let's look at this in a spiritual sense.

When he had grown up, there is the physical growth, but there's also spiritual growth. Now let's look at it from the aspect of spiritual growth. When Moses had grown up, he started discerning between things.

Yes, he had grown up together with the other Egyptians. He played with the other Egyptian children as well. And he lived a life like the other Egyptians, speaking like the other Egyptians, speaking their language.

When they had their parties there in the palace, they had their feasts, they had their religious celebrations, worshipping the gods of Egypt, Moses would be there as well. And when they bowed down to the Egyptian gods, worshipping them, they had many gods, Moses was there as well, bowing down before them. When they were reveling in their sinful pleasures, the pleasures of Egypt, Moses was in that as well, enjoying himself.

But the Bible says when he had grown up, he started looking at these things discerningly. He looked at the lives that the children of Israel lived, and he looked at the lives that the Egyptians lived, and he said it's not the same. He looked at the lives that the Egyptian men lived, and the lives that the Hebrew men lived, and he said it's different.

He looked at the lives of the Hebrew mothers and the Egyptian mothers, and he saw a distinction, he said it's not the same. He looked at the young people of the Hebrews, the Hebrew young people, the Egyptian young people, and he said they are different. He saw they are totally different.

Yes, they were living in the same country, but they were living separate, different lives. The Bible also tells us that we are living amongst a crooked and a perverse generation, but that we should shine like the stars in this crooked and perverse generation. Yes, we are in the world, but we are believers, we are not of the world.

Even though we live amongst the people of this world, but the Bible says we are not of this world. That is why the Bible says the world does not know us. Why does the world not know us? For the things which the world does, we as the children of God, we do not do.

As children of God, we ought to grow up spiritually. There are amongst us those who have been children of God for many years. Maybe there are amongst us those who have only got converted for one month.

But we ought to discern. This one is a child of God and this one is a child of this world. Anybody ought to look at you and see clearly that you are God's child.

And you ought to grow up spiritually in order to be able to discern. As Moses grew up and when he had grown up, he was able to discern. It is heartbreaking when you find a Christian who has been in the church for many years, but you still have to tell him, as a Christian you should not speak like that.

And you need to tell him, a Christian should not dress like that. A Christian should not go to those places. You say those things to those people because you want to help them, but in actual fact, it should not be necessary.

As a child of God, you should have discernment within yourself that I should not behave like this. Moses, when he had grown up, it was then when he was able to discern. May God have mercy on us as his children that we will grow up to such an extent that we will have discernment in our lives.

Not that it will be necessary for Reverend Stegan to stand in the front and to say, oh, you should not be doing this and that and that and the next thing. Whereas you are an old Christian in the church for many years, we should discern for ourselves. And by that, he is trying to assist you and help you, and maybe even that you do not accept.

And you say he is just making rules. The Bible says when Moses had grown up, he refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. And then it continues, instead he chose.

Moses was an amazing man. He said I am deciding now. He looked at the children of God busy mixing the mud.

Being enslaved, being beaten. And then he looked at the joy, the pleasures that he had there in Pharaoh's palace. He said even though these are pleasures, but these are only temporary pleasures for a short time.

He said I am deciding now. You get those who are Christians, but because of the pleasures of this world, that person decides to go back into the world. Those very pleasures, those sinful pleasures that Moses decided to forsake, to leave behind, to turn his back upon, those are the pleasures that others are still going towards.

The Bible says he chose. If you choose, that means there is a choice. You've got some options.

You've got to choose one amongst different options. There was Egypt with all its pleasures. There were the children of God, the Hebrews.

And Moses, when he had grown up, he chose. Moses said even if I have to lose everything, but if I can live with the children of God, that means more to me than anything else. He said that is greater, that is better than all the pleasures and all the treasures of Egypt.

He said today I choose. I don't know if there is anybody in our midst who is still living in the world, who hasn't yet come to the point where they've chosen between the world and Christ. Are there still those in our midst that are still in Egypt, bound in the pleasures of sin? Those temporary pleasures, but it would be good for you to make your choice today.

As Moses made his choice, and as Joshua also one day, we read about in the Bible, made his choice. And he placed this choice before the children of Israel. He says you choose today whom you will serve, but as

for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

He says yes, choose whom you will serve, whether it be the gods of your forefathers that you served on the other side of the river. But I choose now to serve the Lord. And also remember Elijah on Mount Carmel.

I'm just touching briefly on these points. Where he brought the whole nation together. And when the whole of Israel were there and all the prophets of Baal were there as well.

So let's go up on to Mount Carmel. That each one now will make his choice. You know the matter.

And he said to the children of Israel, for how long will you waver and hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, choose him to serve him. But if you say Baal is God, well then serve him. But make your choice today between these two.

When Moses had grown up, he made his choice. It would be good that we would make our choice as well. You know there on Mount Carmel, the children of God, the children of Israel then chose the God of Elijah.

They chose Jehovah. They made a good choice. But remember on another occasion when Jesus stood there before Pilate.

The children of Israel made a bad choice. Pilate made Jesus to stand there before them. And he made Barabbas to stand there before them.

And he said, you choose now between these two. Whom should I deliver unto you? And set free. And they chose Barabbas.

They made a bad choice. But here we speak of a man who made a good choice. He made the right choice.

He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. So how did people then live in Egypt? If it refers here to the pleasures of sin for a short time, what kind of a life did the Egyptians then live? Well we cannot explain everything but let me just describe to you a little bit and picture to you the life in Egypt at that time. Egypt was a country that the children of God at that time hated.

If you go and read, don't open there now, but if you read in Psalm 114, they say the Egyptians spoke a different language. Egypt was a land of slavery. In other words, Egypt is symbolical of the world of sin.

Now just in passing, let me mention one thing. Remember when Joseph arrived there in Egypt? He was sold as a slave there by the children of Ishmael and Potiphar bought him there on the slave market. And Potiphar, a high up official of Pharaoh entrusted all his possessions into Joseph's hand and care because he saw that Joseph was blessed.

Now I'm referring to this that Egypt was a land of sin. And there in Potiphar's home he had his wife. And the Bible tells us that Potiphar's wife wooed Joseph.

She looked at him and she tried to get hold of him. The Zulu puts it very well. She cast glances, she cast her eyes on Joseph.

She was always looking at him. And not just now and again, every day she was busy at this trying to get hold of Joseph. Whatever Joseph did, she tried to catch his attention.

Many will not see heaven just because of their eyes and what they look at with their eyes. There are many men who will not see the kingdom of God because of their eyes. Because you also cast your eyes on the woman.

Even though you do not flirt with them, but your eyes are constantly on them and you are looking lustfully at them. And there are also women who will never see the kingdom of God because they are casting their eyes on the men. That is what Potiphar's wife was like.

Now maybe your life is exactly the same as Potiphar's wife's life was. You also constantly looking at the opposite sex. This matter of the eyes is another matter.

Even David one day looked at a woman where she was busy bathing. My own father, that is brother Alphius's father, when his father became older, he lost his sight. He was a sighted person, but one day on his way to a service, he met up with some criminals.

They beat him up and through that he lost his sight. Now listen to the message that he usually preached. He said, God loves me more than all of you in the congregation.

He said, God has prepared me for heaven just like somebody sharpens his arrows, so he has sharpened me as well. He said, many of you will not see the kingdom of heaven because of these eyes of yours that lead you astray. He said, now I have passed by that stumbling block because God loves me.

We as children could not understand that. How could our father speak like that? But if you read, our Potiphar's wife constantly casts looks and glances at Joseph. One understands why he said that.

Now you know eventually what happened there between them. That is what Egypt is like. Egypt was also a place of abundance.

There was abundant food. It was a place of knowledge and science and all sorts of pleasures. Egypt was open to anyone who wanted to come and enjoy its pleasures.

And they also had a number of gods. That is why we read, even if you do not read open there, but in Exodus 5 verse 2, when Moses spoke to Pharaoh confronting him, saying, God says to you, let my people go. Pharaoh answered, he said, who is this Jehovah? And I as Pharaoh should obey his word to let the children of Israel go.

And he continued saying, I do not know this Lord Jehovah. And I will not let Israel go. But Pharaoh knew his own gods there in Egypt.

And that is why we also read in Exodus 32, there where Moses had gone up onto the mountain, where God spoke to him, and Aaron remained behind with the rest of the children of Israel. Eventually they came to Aaron and said, now you also fashion us a god like the gods of the Egyptians. And he said, alright, bring all your earrings and all your gold jewellery.

And then he fashioned for them a golden calf, and then he called them to worship and said, come and bow down now, this is your god. Where did they learn to do that? They learnt that in Egypt. Moses left all of that which I have described to you, and he made his choice.

It was not an easy choice. And then the Bible continues to say, because he was looking ahead to his reward. He compared his reward to the treasures and the pleasures of Egypt, and he said, this reward in comparison is much greater, therefore I choose it.

He regarded his grace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt. Because he was looking ahead to his reward. That reward was constantly before his eyes, he didn't want to lose out on it.

Brethren, if we also have the spiritual maturity that Moses had, then we will be helped as well. That if we discern and ask the question, if I now commit this sin, what reward will I gain? If I do this, what will my reward be for it? He was looking ahead to his reward. He said, all these pleasures, they are just for a short while, for a short time, but great is my reward if I remain faithful to the Lord.

Now Moses, when he had grown up, made his choice, he looked toward his reward, and now let us see what Moses accomplished after he had made this choice. And in closing, let us also consider how God was able to use Moses after he made his choice. When he had grown up, he refused to be known as Pharaoh's daughter.

He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God, rather than the pleasures of Egypt. What was God able to accomplish through him after that choice? Now I remember one day when he was there in the land of Midian, and I'll just refer to it briefly because we know it. When he was looking after the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro, he saw a burning bush.

Well, that in itself wasn't something very strange to see a bush that is burning. That's quite a common incident. Maybe you've even seen that yourself, a tree or a bush burning.

But when Moses observed that bush, he saw something different. He said, why does this bush burn but it is not consumed? And the Bible says he then turned aside from his way towards this bush to look at this miraculous event. Blessed is the one who will turn aside from his way to come and observe this sight.

And the Bible says when God saw that he had turned aside, he called to him by his name. But before he had turned aside, God was silent. But when he had turned aside to come to this burning bush, God called his name.

And God sent him to go to Egypt to deliver his people. God spoke to Moses face to face. The Bible says that God spoke to Moses as a friend, face to face.

But all this only happened after he had made his choice, after he had refused to be known as Pharaoh's daughter's child. And after he chose the disgrace of Israel, then only God was able to use him. And Moses became a hero whom God used.

And he came and he confronted this mighty Pharaoh himself. And God used him to deliver his people. God used Moses to once again lead his people and to bring them together as a people and as a nation as it was God's plan.

Here is the very same Moses when they came to the Red Sea, where they were hemmed in on both sides. In the front, the Red Sea. Behind them, the armies of Pharaoh.

This man who had made his choice to serve God no matter what, to choose him above all else, stretched forth his staff and the Red Sea opened up and the whole nation could go through on dry land. And the whole nation was saved through him. There are many people that have that desire that God should save people through them, that he should work through them and do mighty things and do miraculous things.

God will never be able to use you until you've chosen him above all else. Often, Uncle Elo, Reverend Steegan tells us, when he came to the point where he chose God, where it was difficult to make that choice, but he chose the Lord and he chose to be obedient to God, no matter what, it was then that God was able to start using him. And then, after the children of Israel had gone through on dry ground, the armies of Pharaoh of Egypt followed behind.

And then, once again, the same Moses, that had made that choice, stretched forth his staff and the Red Sea closed up and drowned the armies of Pharaoh. And they sang a song when they saw all these soldiers and all these heroes of Egypt drowned there in the sea. And they also received manna there in the wilderness through Moses, who was in contact with God.

There they could drink water from a rock when they were thirsty because of Moses, who was in contact with God. Now brethren, we could say so much more, but let me maybe say the last thing now. It was this Moses, when God's people were attacked by the enemy, the Amalekites, this man of God, who had chosen God against all odds and in comparison to anything else, he, when he raised his hands in prayer, the nation of Israel were victorious.

Let me tell you what the Amalekites did. They did not attack the Israelites openly from the front. The Amalekites did not attack the Israelites openly from the front.

The enemy would come from behind and they would ambush them from behind where all those who are weak, all those who are tired and falling behind, those were the ones whom they came and killed. Some of those when they left Egypt were walking in the front, briskly walking in the front, but as the way became longer, it was long, they became tired, they fell behind, they were the ones who were killed. I don't know if they look at us, if the enemy looks at us, how many of us are in danger to be killed by the enemy? Those who were on fire for God, but because of the length of the way, because of the number of years, they become tired, they become weary, they start dragging their feet, even reading the Bible is a burden.

Those are in danger to be struck down by the enemy. You brothers and sisters, you know your own life. You know whether in your life there isn't anything like that perhaps, but it would be good for you to again say today, Lord, I choose afresh.

Just as Moses when he had grown up refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, why don't you make that choice once again? Why don't you make that choice so that God also, after you've made that choice, will be able to use you as His vessel? You know there when Moses in the wilderness took off those sandals from his feet, God was able to use him, and God is waiting for you as well. God is waiting for you to make your choice. He is waiting for you to turn aside so that He might speak to you.

He is waiting for you to turn your back upon all the temporary pleasures of this world, and to choose Christ and His disgrace. He is waiting for you, so that after that He might use you. Shall we close our eyes and pray? Lord, at the beginning of this service, we have asked you to speak to us.

If there is one person in our midst who says that they haven't heard you speaking to them, it can only be because they are spiritually deaf. Thank you, Lord, for speaking to us. Lord, when you speak to us, you await a response from us.

You have placed us before a choice once again this morning. On the one hand, the pleasures of this world. On the other hand, the cross, disgrace, together with Christ.

On the one hand, there are the comforts of Egypt. On the other hand, there is the suffering together with the children of God. But we also know, Lord, that those pleasures, those treasures of this world, of Egypt, are only for a short while.

Please show us, Lord, if there are any such things in our lives. Lord, if there are any of those pleasures of Egypt that we have chosen and that we have got in our lives at this time, any of the treasures of Egypt, any of the gods of Egypt that we have bowed down to and worshipped, show us, Lord, if there are any such things in our lives, that we might, together with Moses, turn our backs on those things and choose rather to follow you. And even though we had made that choice in the past, may we once again make that choice today.

That we will look forward to the reward that you have for us. Grant us that grace, O Lord, that we will take that step this morning. Help us not to go out of here and just to carry on as we have always done before.

We ask this not because we deserve it, but for your name's sake.

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