

Hebrews Chapter 11 Fourth Continued

Hebrews 11:30 "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days."

“Jericho” (see Joshua chapter 6). The people did nothing militarily to cause the fall of Jericho; they simply followed God’s instructions in faith (2 Cor. 10:4).

We have been looking at the great men of the Bible, and what made them great. It seems that in every situation it is their faith that makes them great. They are not like most men, but they have more faith than their fellows. We see in this verse above an act of faith that seems so foolish to an outsider.

The children of Israel were to march around the city wall one time each day for 6 days. On the seventh day, they were to walk around 7 times. They were promised if they did exactly as God had told them the walls of the city would fall down.

Joshua 6:3-5 "And ye shall compass the city, all [ye] men of war, [and] go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days." "And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets." "And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long [blast] with the ram's horn, [and] when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him."

Remember that here was a lot of people marching around those walls. What a shout this would be. Seven means spiritually complete. It is very important that they did not vary at all in the instructions that God had given them and the walls did fall down.

Joshua 6:20 "So the people shouted when [the priests] blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city."

The Ark of the Covenant with them represented the fact that God was with them, even leading them. If God is for us we should not fear. He is our Refuge. We need no worldly weapons to win the war.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 "(For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)" "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

Our weapon is the twoedged Sword (the Bible), the Word of God.

Hebrews 11:31 "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace."

“Rahab” (see Joshua 2:1-24; 6:22-25; Matt. 1:5; James 2:25).

Rahab had taken her place on the side of God. God will not forget those who fight for Him. We see the reward that Rahab and her family received because she befriended God's spies.

Joshua 6:23 "And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel."

Hebrews 11:32 "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and [of] Barak, and [of] Samson, and [of] Jephthah; [of] David also, and Samuel, and [of] the prophets:"

All of the men listed in this verse held a position of power or authority, but none of them is praised for his personal status or abilities. Instead, they are recognized for what each one had accomplished by faith in God. They are not listed chronologically, but are listed in pairs with the more important member mentioned first (1 Sam. 12:11).

See Judges chapters 6 to 9 (Gideon); 4, 5 (Barak); 13-16 (Sampson); 11, 12 (Jephthah).

“David”: David is the only king mentioned in this verse. All the others are judges or prophets. David could also be considered a prophet (see 4:7; 2 Sam. 23:1-3; Mark 12:36; 1 Sam. 13:14; 16:1, 12; Acts 13:22).

“Samuel and of the prophets”: Samuel was the last of the judges and the first of the prophets (1 Sam. 7:15; Acts 3:24; 13:20). He anointed David as king (1 Sam. 16:13), and was known as a man of intercessory prayer (1 Sam. 12:19, 23; Jer. 15:1).

We find in this Scripture some men of great faith. Gideon was called of God to raise an army to fight God's enemies. We find in Gideon, a reluctant soldier. Gideon did not feel that he was of family background capable of working for God. God chose him anyway. Gideon is well known for the fleece he laid before God.

Gideon was not sure that God was talking to him and he laid this fleece to be sure. It was God, and Gideon stopped doubting and agreed to fight the battle for God. There were over 32 thousand Israelites who came to fight on the side of the Lord. God had Gideon to send all of the fearful and unbelieving home.

At the end, there were only 300 men to come against this huge army of God's enemies. God proved to Gideon and to all the world that just a few on the side of God are a multitude and can win any battle. God has directed them to participate in.

Judges 7:7 "And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the [other] people go every man unto his place."

This tells it all. I can do anything that God has called me to do, regardless of the odds against it.

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

In the days of Barak, Deborah was a judge in the land. We will see in the next verses that Deborah and Barak fought for God and won the battle.

Judges 4:8-9 "And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, [then] I will not go." "And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honor; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh."

Judges 5:12 "Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam."

We find in the next name Samson. Samson, like many ministers, was not perfect, but his last act was to kill the enemies of God. His weakness was women. We all remember the story of how he was tricked and lost his hair.

The Philistines punched his eyes out and worked him like a farm animal. He became strong again as his hair grew out and he prayed to God to kill these enemies of God. We will see in the next verses what happened.

Judges 16:28-30 "And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." "And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left." "And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with [all his] might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that [were] therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than [they] which he slew in his life."

Judges 11:1 "Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, and he [was] the son of an harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah."

Judges 11:32 "So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands." Jephthah made a rash vow and his daughter was killed for it.

Judges 12:7 "And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in [one of] the cities of Gilead."

King David was the beloved of God. Next to Christ, it seems he was the most loved of God. David reigned in Israel for 40 years after the fall of Saul. One of the mighty things that David did was fighting Goliath. David was just a lad when he slew the giant Goliath in the name of the Lord. David was a valiant man of war. He fought against God's enemies.

God loved David and even said that the only thing He had against David was killing Uriah for his wife Bathsheba.

1 Kings 15:5 "Because David did [that which was] right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any [thing] that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite."

Samuel was a gift of God to his mother Hannah. She promised if God would give her a man child, she would give him to God all the days of his life. As soon as Samuel was weaned he was brought to Eli for training in the Lord's ways. Samuel was one of the greatest judges.

God spoke to him personally and Samuel foretold of the fall of the house of Eli. Samuel was bold in speaking out against the idolatry of the people turning them back to Jehovah.

The prophets of old spoken of here are possibly Isaiah, Jeremiah. Elijah, Elisha, Daniel and others of this stature. The strength of these men in the face of death is one of the things that set them aside. They never faltered in their belief, even if it cost them their life. Many of them were called in their youth, and many were martyred for their belief in God.

Now we see the things that set these men aside from the others. Their valiant stand against evil is what set them aside from ordinary people. They believed God, and it was counted unto them for righteousness, like Abraham.

Verses 33-38: The many accomplishments and sufferings described in these verses apply generally to those faithful saints. Some experienced great success, whereas others suffered great affliction. The point is that they all courageously and uncompromisingly followed God, regardless of the earthly outcome. They placed their trust in Him and in His promises (6:12; 2 Tim. 3:12).

Hebrews 11:33 "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,"

“Subdued kingdoms”: Joshua, the judges, David and others.

Wrought righteousness”: Righteous kings like David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah.

“Obtained promises”: Abraham, Moses, David and Solomon.

“Stopped the mouths of lions”: Samson (Judges 14:5-6), David (1 Sam. 17:34-35); Daniel (Dan. 6:22).

Hebrews 11:34 "Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

“Quenched the violence of fire”: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Dan. 3:19-30).

“Escaped the edge of the sword”: David (1 Sam. 18:4, 11; 19:9-10), Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-3, 10), and Elisha (2 Kings 6:15-19).

“Weakness”: Ehud (Judges 3:12-30), Jael (Judges 4:17-24), Gideon (Judges 6:15-16; 7:1-25), Samson (Judges 16:21-30), and Hezekiah (Isa. 38:1-6; 1 Cor. 1:27; 2 Cor. 12:10).

These were just ordinary people like you and me who had an extraordinary amount of faith in God. They believed, if God asked them to do something, they could do it. Where are our believers like this today?

Hebrews 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

“Women received their dead”: The widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:22), and the women of Shunem (2 Kings 4:34).

“Tortured”: The word indicates that they were beaten to death while strapped to some sort of rack.

“Better resurrection” (see note on 9:27). The deliverance from certain death or near death would be like returning from the dead, but would not be the promised resurrection. This was especially true of those who had died and were raised.

The first time they were raised from the dead was merely resuscitation, not the true and glorious final resurrection (Dan. 12:2; Matt. 5:10; James 1:12).

Even these women who received their dead raised to life, were operating in an overwhelming amount of faith.

Romans 8:17 "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and jointheirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together."

Many men and women who would not deny Christ, died for their belief. The wonderful promise to all who suffer for Christ is that we will reign with Him.

1 Corinthians 4:12 "And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:"

Matthew 5:11 "Blessed are ye, when [men] shall revile you, and persecute [you], and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."

Matthew 5:44 "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"

Luke 6:28 "Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."

If we are to be like our leader, Jesus Christ, then we will be all the above. We are not better than our master.

Hebrews 11:36 "And others had trial of [cruel] mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:"

"They": Joseph (Gen. 39:20), Micaiah (1 Kings 22:27), Elisha (2 Kings 2:23), Hanani (2 Chron. 16:10), Jeremiah (Jer. 20:1-6; 37:15), and others (2 Chron. 36:16).

Paul himself, was the very best example of suffering all these persecutions except for Jesus. These are nothing compared to the wonderful things God has planned for us in heaven.

Hebrew 11:37 "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;"

"Stoned": The prophet Zechariah (son of Jehoiada), was killed in this fashion (2 Chron. 24:20-22; Matt. 23:35).

"Sawn asunder": According to tradition, this was the method Manasseh employed to execute Isaiah.

"Were slain with the sword": Uriah the prophet died in this fashion (Jer. 26:23; 1 Kings 19:10). However, the expression here may refer to the mass execution of God's people; several such incidents occurred during the time of the Maccabees in the 400 years between the Old and New Testaments.

"Wandered about": Many of God's people suffered from poverty and persecution (Psalm 107:4-9).

We know, that history tells us, that Isaiah was sawed in two for belief in God. We also know that John the Baptist was beheaded for his belief. If you look at the true followers of God in the Bible, nearly all of them were under terrible persecution for their belief in the Father God or Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 11:38 "(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and [in] mountains, and [in] dens and caves of the earth."

(See 1 Kings 18:4, 13; 19:9).

Moses was a wanderer in the desert. David hid in a cave to keep from killing Saul. This is just an example of the troubles of many followers of God.

Verses 39-40: Genuine faith perseveres to the end; emotional decisions do not. True faith continues to believe the truth. Once again, the author shows the superiority of the new covenant. God saved the “better thing”, or the fulfillment of “the promise”, for this age. In fact, without those of the new covenant, even the mightiest champion of faith from the Old Testament could “not be made perfect”.

“Some better thing”: They had faith in the ultimate fulfillment of the eternal promises in the covenant (verse 13).

Hebrews 11:39 "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:"

These all believed in Messiah. They were looking for a city whose maker was God. As we said, they all believed and it was counted unto them as righteousness.

Hebrews 11:40 "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

“They without us”: The faith of Old Testament saints looked forward to the promised salvation, whereas the faith of those after Christ looks back to the fulfillment of the promise. Both groups are characterized by genuine faith and are saved by Christ’s atoning work on the cross (Ephesians 2:8-9).

To be perfect, we must be in Christ. Jesus Christ came after their time on earth. We have the opportunity to be perfect in the sight of God through the shed blood of His son Jesus Christ. We are not perfect in ourselves; we are perfect, washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. We have taken on His righteousness so that we might be acceptable in the sight of the Father.

Philippians 3:9 "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"

Hebrews Chapter 11 Fourth Continued Questions

1. By _____ the walls of Jericho fell down.
2. How many days did they walk around the walls of Jericho?

3. What was unusual about the last day?
4. What were they to do after the priest blew the trumpet?
5. What did the Ark of the Covenant represent?
6. The weapons of our warfare are not _____.
7. What is the Christian's weapon?
8. What was the harlot's name that was saved?
9. Why was she saved?
10. Who was saved with her?
11. What unusual thing did Gideon do?
12. How many soldiers did God let him keep out of the more than 32,000 that came to fight?
13. Who was a judge in the land in the days of Barak?
14. What did Barak tell her about the war?
15. How can we relate Samson to many ministers today?
16. What was Samson's weakness?
17. What had the Philistines done to Samson?
18. What was Samson's last act of valor?
19. Who was Jephthah?
20. What was caused by a rash vow he took?
21. King David was the _____ of God.
22. What was the only thing that God had against David?
23. Who was Samuel's mother?
24. What did she promise God about Samuel?
25. Who trained Samuel in the ways of God?
26. Name some of the prophets of old.
27. Name some of the things these men of old did.

28. What did these women who received their dead back to life have?
29. What promise do we find in Matthew 5:11?
30. If we are to be like Jesus, what are some of the things we will endure?
31. Who was one of the best examples of suffering besides Christ?
32. How did all of these obtain a good report?
33. How is the only way anyone can be perfect?