

## ~Hebrews~

## Lesson 32 – The Courage of Faith (part 2)

Last week we began the last section of chapter 11 called “the Courage of Faith”

- We saw valiant men and women who were victorious in this life having a hope unto eternal life with the Messiah
  - Joshua, Rehab, Gideon, Samson, David, and Samuel to name a few
- These were people who obtained the victory in this life
  - The main focus of these victories was to rescue Israel out from the hand of the enemy and bring forth the Messiah into the world.
- Remember, God’s focus in His redemption plan is to reconcile men with Him in Christ.
  - Everything God does, He does in Christ.

## 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

<sup>18</sup> Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself **through Jesus Christ**, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> that is, that God was **in Christ** reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Today we will be wrapping up chapter 11 and focusing on verses 33 – 40.

- In this final close to the chapter of faith, we see Paul summarize the life of faith.
  - Through this entire chapter, Paul has made it very clear that we are not to be hoping in the things of this life,
    - but in the invisible, eternal promise of God unto Resurrection and Eternal Life with Him

## Hebrews 11:1 (ZRT)

Faith is the foundation of that which is being hoped for, the convicting proof of an accomplished work not physically seen.

- Faith is focused on the future hope of our Eternal Salvation with Jesus.
  - This has been the case with every example in chapter 11
  - Paul is admonishing the Hebrew Christians to focus on the future hope of Jesus.
    - To endure and persevere through the hardships they were facing by choosing Jesus.
  - We must refuse the world and choose Jesus, just as Moses did, “*He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin.*”, Heb 11:25.

This is such a relevant concept to us now as Christians in America

- We are on the brink as Christians to make a choice. God or the world?
- We need to be rooted in God’s Word and His Promise earnestly seeking a better resurrection.
  - The Resurrection unto Eternal Life in Him

Paul in these final verses, gives us two examples of victory by faith.

- In all instances as Christians, we are overcomers

## 1 John 5:4-5

<sup>4</sup> For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is he who overcomes the world? But he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

- Paul is telling us in chapter 11 there is victory in life and victory in death.
  - Whether life or death, we have the victory in Christ.

- Our victory in Christ is the reconciling with our Father FOREVER.

Paul starts with examples of courageous faith that lead to **victory in this life**.

Hebrews 11:32-35<sup>a</sup>

<sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:

<sup>33</sup> <sup>a</sup>who through faith subdued kingdoms, <sup>b</sup>worked righteousness, <sup>c</sup>obtained promises, <sup>d</sup>stopped the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> <sup>e</sup>quenched the violence of fire, <sup>f</sup>escaped the edge of the sword, <sup>g</sup>out of weakness were made strong, <sup>h</sup>became valiant in battle, <sup>i</sup>turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

<sup>35</sup> <sup>i</sup>Women received their dead raised to life again...

Most of these examples are from the list of six men we discussed last week

<u>Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David and Samuel</u>	<u>Others in Scripture</u>
<p><i>a) subdued kingdoms</i></p> <p><i>b) worked, accomplished righteousness</i></p> <p><i>c) obtained promises</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This wasn't "The Promise" because in v. 39 Paul says these have not received promise</li> <li>• So these promises are physical manifestations of their faith resulting in victories in this life           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Abraham received the promise of Isaac</li> <li>○ Noah received the promised deliverance from the flood</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>f) escaped the edge of the sword</i></p> <p><i>g) out of weakness were made strong</i></p> <p><i>h) became valiant in battle</i></p> <p><i>i) turned to flight the armies of the aliens</i></p>	<p><i>d) stopped the mouths of lions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daniel and the lions den, Daniel 6</li> </ul> <p><i>e) quenched the violence of fire</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Daniel 3</li> </ul> <p><i>j) women received their dead raised to life again</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The son of the widow of Zarephath was raised from the dead at the hand of Elijah, 1 Kings 17:17-24.</li> </ul>

Many people will stop reading at this point and claim their victories in this life and not read the rest of the chapter

- But this is such a superficial approach to faith and not at all what Paul is speaking of.
- I believe he is wrapping up this chapter on faith with the climax of the martyrs for God and His name.
- These are the true heroes of faith and those who will be honored greatly in eternal life.

These are the examples of courageous faith that lead to the **victory in death**

Hebrews 11:35<sup>b</sup> - 38

<sup>35</sup> ... Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

<sup>36</sup> Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

<sup>37</sup> They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—

<sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy.

They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

Lets take some time now to draw out each verse starting with v.35

Hebrews 11:35<sup>b</sup>

<sup>35</sup> ... <sup>a</sup>Others were <sup>b</sup>tortured, <sup>c</sup>not accepting deliverance, <sup>d</sup>that they might obtain a better resurrection.

- a) **Others...** - This word is alloi, ἄλλοι, meaning others of the same kind.
  - o This is most likely a continuation of the named list from above.
- b) **tortured...** - This word, tumpanizo, τυμπανίζω, means to drum upon or beat.
  - o To be beaten with rods, 2 Cor 11:25
- c) **not accepting deliverance...** – This is the record of their courageous faith
  - o These men and women had a choice to recant and reject God, but chose rather to “*not accept deliverance.*”
  - o When they were being beaten, and scourged, and mutilated. Their arms and legs being ripped off, and their flesh being filleted, exposing their muscles and innards.
    - They still did not accept deliverance
- d) **...that they might obtain a better resurrection.**
  - o They did not recant because they were looking to a better hope who is Jesus.
    - They were looking to the Resurrection unto Eternal Life
    - They knew that if they died in this life, they would receive a better resurrection, that is Eternal Life in Christ.
    - This is faith that overcomes

Hebrews 11:36

<sup>36</sup> <sup>e</sup>Still others had <sup>f</sup>trial of <sup>g</sup>mockings and scourgings, yes, and of <sup>h</sup>chains and imprisonment.

<sup>37</sup> <sup>i</sup>They were stoned, <sup>j</sup>they were sawn in two, were <sup>f</sup>tempted, were <sup>k</sup>slain with the sword. They <sup>l</sup>wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—

- e) **Still others...** this word is heteros, ἕτερος, meaning “another of a different kind”
  - o Paul is now speaking of a new group of courageous heroes of faith that are different from the list he has already mentioned.
- f) **trial...** in v.36, and **tempted** in v.37
  - o These are forms of the peirasmos, πειρασμός, the trial, which puts to work and increases our dokimion, δοκίμιον, our proven genuineness.
    - Those tempted were probably tested with the passing pleasures of sin and choice of freedom from suffering
    - But they did not recant, they did not give in
- g) **mockings and scourgings...**
  - o Nehemiah was mocked as he built the wall around Jerusalem, Neh 4:1-4
  - o Jesus was scourged, Jn 19:1, Is 53:5
  - o Paul was scourged, 2 Cor 11:24
- h) **Chains and imprisonment...**
  - o Babylon besieged Jerusalem and Jeremiah was chained and “*shut up in the court of prison*”, Jeremiah 32:1-2
- i) **They were stoned...**
  - o Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, the priest (not the prophet) was stoned to death, 2 Chron 24:20-21

- Stephen from the book of Acts was stoned to death, Acts 7:54-60
- Paul himself was stoned, seemingly to death, in Lystra, Acts 14:19, 2 Cor 11:25
- j) they were sawn in two...
  - It is Jewish tradition that the Prophet Isaiah was sawn in two
- k) slain with the sword...
  - “*Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord*”, and “*had executed all the prophets with the sword*,” 1 Kings 18:4, 19:1, 10
  - 85 priests of the Lord were slain at the hand of Doeg by king Saul, 1 Sam 22:18
- l) wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—
  - These are they who have given up everything to follow God.
    - Prophets of old wore animal skins to imitate Elijah and portray their denial of the pleasures of this life, Zech 13:4, 2 Kings 1:8, Is 20:2,
  - They were driven out of society and denied the pleasures of human clothes
    - We see John the Baptist wearing camel skins, Matt 3:4
      - These could have recanted their faith and accepted the luxury of clothing, but instead they chose to suffer and wander about in animal skins.
  - V. 38 tells us “*they wandered in deserts and mountains, dens and caves of the earth*”
    - These were true pilgrims, sojourning on the earth, “*seeking a homeland whose builder and maker is God*”, Heb 11:10, 14,16
    - Elijah lived by the brook and God took care of him, 1 Kings 17:3-4
    - Obadiah hid 150 prophets in caves, 1 Kings 18:13
    - Elijah hid in a cave as well, 1 Kings 19:9
    - David hid in the cave of Adullam, 2 Sam 23:13

For thousands of years, the enemy has always hated God’s anointed and those who would choose to align themselves with Christ.

- In chapter 11, Paul is giving the Hebrew Christians hope in telling them that to suffer for the Name is not something new.
  - For even the saints of Old suffered for God
  - It is in these examples by which we can strengthen ourselves in faith
- The word martyr has taken on a different meaning now because of the persecutions of being a Christian.
  - Martyr, martureo, μαρτυρέω, originally meant “to witness”, but now it is associated with those who died for what they believe.
    - The meaning naturally changed because those who were witnesses of Christ usually died in confessing themselves as Christians

Foxes Book of Martyrs and Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History are historical accounts of the True Church and those who were killed for proclaiming the name of Jesus.

- In reading these accounts, we too can be strengthened for what perils might lie ahead in our lives  
Below are some excerpts from the 1576 edition of Foxes Acts and Monuments of the Martyrs

*1576 Foxe – intro – page iii*

*After the Jews, then came the heathen Emperors of Rome, who having the whole power of the world in their hands, did what the world could do, to extinguish the name and Church of Christ. Whose violence continued the space of three hundred years. All which while the true Church of Christ was not great in sight of the world, but rather*

*was abhorred everywhere and yet notwithstanding the same small astounding, wonderous flock so despised in the world, the Lord highly regarded and mightily preserved. For although many then of the Christians did suffer death: yet was their death neither loss to them, nor detriment to the Church: but the more they suffered, the more of their blood increased.*

*... the Lord began to show ... wonderful tokens, and bloody marks of his Passion, as the bloody cross, his nails, spear, and crown of thorns, .... By the which tokens almighty God pre-signified what grievous afflictions and bloody persecutions should then begin to ensue upon his Church for his Gospels sake, according as in this history is described. Wherein is to be seen what Christian blood hath been spilt, what persecutions raised, what tyranny exercised, what torments devised, what treachery used against the poor flock and Church of Christ..*

*I do but recite the principal writers and preachers in those days, but how many thousands there were, which never bowed their knees to Baal, that is known to God alone.*

1576 Foxe – To the Reader page qii

*To be short, the martyrs declare to the world what true Christian fortitude is, and what is the right way to conquer, which standeth not in the power of man, but in hope of the resurrection to come...*

A.W Pink writes, “*To suffer the hardest things as well as to do the greatest, is all one to faith. It is equally ready for both when God shall require; and it is equally effectual in both, as God shall strengthen.*”

It is here that we continue to verse 38 of which I believe to be the most moving of the entire chapter 11.

Hebrews 11:38<sup>a</sup>  
<sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy.

For it is here that God distinguishes His view of excellence and honors the martyrs who gave their life for Him.

Psalm 16:3 As for the saints who are on the earth, “They are the excellent ones, in whom is all My delight.”

- This world is not worthy of the glory that is bestowed when one of God’s children gives their life for Him.
- The world was not worthy of the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world
  - But this is a beautiful display of His grace
    - Because it is through the martureo, μαρτυρέω, that the world might know Jesus
      - The world doesn’t deserve it, we don’t deserve it but by His grace, He offers His love.
      - That’s what Jesus did, and that is how we should be walking in this life
    - And in turn, the Father will exalt these martyrs with Everlasting Life in Him because “*they overcame by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their marturias, μαρτυρίας, and they loved not their life even unto death,*” Rev 12:11

## Hebrews 11:39 - 40

<sup>39</sup> And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,  
<sup>40</sup> God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Paul now wraps up his discourse on faith and includes us with it

- All these heroes of faith, although God, having given them a good testimony, μαρτυρέω, of their faith, they still did not receive the promise.
  - Just as we saw in v.13, “*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*”
- Why hadn't they received the promise? Because the promise had not yet manifested.
  - The Messiah had not yet come to pay the price for sin and redeem them unto Everlasting Life with Him.
  - The Promise of the Spirit was given to Jesus when He was raised from the dead, Acts 2:32-33
    - Then given to all those who believe in Him, Acts 2:38-39
- **God having provided something better for us ...**
  - The “US” is Paul speaking to the Hebrew Christians as well as to all believers.
  - This better thing that He provided is the **better covenant**, Heb 7:22, **a better hope**, Heb 7:19, **established on better promises**, Heb 8:6.
    - It is the reconciliation of us to the Father in Christ, 2 Cor 5:18
    - And this could not happen until Christ died and rose again imparting a better covenant of Eternal Life in Him.
  - God provided Himself the Lamb to take away the sin of the world, Gen 22:8, Rev 5:6
    - God having provided, προβλεψαμένου
    - This is a participle in the middle voice meaning God is providing Himself
    - He is the better thing for us and has provided Himself to us
- **...that they should not be made perfect apart from us.**
  - We are all made perfect, teleiothosi , τελειωθῶσι, made complete in Jesus, Heb 12:2
    - Salvation was perfected and completed on the cross, Heb 2:10, 5:9, 7:28
    - The OT saints had faith in the Messiah looking forward
    - We as NT saints have faith in Jesus looking backwards
  - Now, after the cross, we are all made perfect together because we are all looking toward the accomplished work on the cross.
    - And it is from this point that we all look forward to the Day when we will be glorified in Him FOREVER with Everlasting Life in Him.

## Romans 8:35-39

<sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

(Jesus told us these things would happen, Jn 15:18-21)

<sup>37</sup> Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

<sup>38</sup> For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.