

SPIRITUAL GIANTS

BIBLE TEXT : Hebrews 11:23-40.

LESSON 443 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall" (Psalm 18:29).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Hebrews 11:23-40

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he was* a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

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

28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry *land*: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

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

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

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

Bible References:

Notes:

Moses' Place in History

Israel was a nation of slaves when Moses was born. The king had commanded that all male children were to be killed, but the parents of Moses had faith in God and believed God wanted Moses to live; so his mother hid him in a basket in the bulrushes. The king's daughter found him and took him to be her son. He grew up in the king's palace and was taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians.

When he grew up, God talked to his heart about the conditions under which the Israelites lived. He knew they were working very hard at making bricks, and he wanted to help them. He was willing to leave the pleasures of Pharaoh's court because he realised that this life is very short, and what is most important is to prepare for Heaven. By faith he knew about the plan of salvation -- that Jesus would come to die to redeem sinners and make them ready for Heaven. That really took faith, because Moses lived about 1500 years before Jesus was born. The plan of salvation, which God showed to Moses meant much more to him than to enjoy the pleasures of sin "for a season."

The Heavenly Goal

No price is too great to pay in order to make Heaven our home. Even if we have nothing to enjoy in this world -- if we never own our own home, if we never have a new car, if people do not appreciate what we do -- if we live to please God and go to Heaven in the end, it will be worth it all.

Moses could have had wealth and power as Egypt's king, but he would rather help those who did not appreciate him so that he would eventually go to Heaven. It took a great deal of faith to move three million people into the wilderness when he had no means of supplying food for them. But God had told him to tell Pharaoh, "Let my people go," and Moses was not afraid of Pharaoh. Pharaoh could have killed him for causing insurrection among his slaves, but Moses believed God would protect him, and He did.

Because Moses had faith, God opened the Red Sea so the Children of Israel could go through on dry land. When the Egyptian army tried to follow, they were all drowned. They did not believe God.

The Passover Lamb

God had commanded the Israelites to observe a special feast which was afterward called the Passover. Each family was to kill a perfect lamb and sprinkle the blood over the door of their houses, then, eat the lamb with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. The blood typified the Blood of Jesus to be shed in years to come; and all who were in homes where the blood was over the door post that night were saved alive, whereas the eldest of every family in Egypt was slain. That again took faith: to believe that the blood, of all animal sprinkled over the door would save their eldest son alive. But as many as obeyed received the blessing of life; those who disobeyed died.

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

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.

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

36 And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

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;

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

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

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

During the forty years that the Israelites wandered in the wilderness God provided enough food for all of them; and their clothes never wore out -- not even their shoes, with all that walking! But many times things happened where people did not believe God, and they died. That was their punishment.

The Fall of Jericho

Finally, forty years after they started from Egypt, the nation of Israel began to enter into Canaan. Jericho was the first city to be conquered. It was a strange method that God gave them for taking the city. He told them to march around the walls of the city for seven days, and on the seventh day to march around seven times. The priests led the procession, carrying the Ark of the Covenant. When they would blow the trumpet the people were to shout, and the walls would fall down. They believed God, and the walls fell down just as Joshua told them. Those were high walls, built strong to keep out all invaders. They had always protected the inhabitants until this time, but now by faith the walls of Jericho fell. All the inhabitants of the city were destroyed except Rahab and her family, who had hidden the spies of Israel.

Gideon's Faith

Through the years there were many more who believed, and enjoyed the blessings of God. Gideon's father worshipped idols, but Gideon had enough faith in God that he dared to destroy his father's idols. Later, he took an army and went out to fight against the Midianites and Amalekites. God told him that there were some cowards in his army and to send them home. Twenty-two thousand went back! Gideon probably did not think he had any too many in the first place, and now he had two-thirds less! But Gideon believed God would give him the victory. Then God told him to give his army another test, and only three hundred were left to fight in Gideon's army -- and they did not have any arms! But Gideon believed God; and when his army did as they were told, God gave them the victory over all the nations who had gathered against them.

Barak, Samson, and Jephthae were other leaders in Israel in the times of the judges who seemed to work the impossible; but with God nothing is impossible. By faith they overcame the enemy.

The Shepherd King

David became the greatest king that Israel ever had. He was anointed to be king when still very young; and he had to wait ten years before he was given the throne of Israel. During those years King Saul tried to kill him many times, but David believed God would deliver him, and He did.

Even when David was still a shepherd boy, God gave him strength and courage to kill a bear one time and a lion another time when they tried to get his sheep. Then when Israel was at war with the Philistines, and no one was brave enough to face the Philistine giant Goliath, David took his slingshot and went out to meet the big soldier. He said to Goliath: "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee" (I Samuel 17:45, 46). David did not even have a sword, but after one shot from his sling had knocked down the giant, he used Goliath's sword to cut off his head. David wrote many of the Psalms that we have in the Bible, praising God for His mighty deliverances. God worked for David because David believed God.

Others Who Believed God

The three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace were some who

"quenched the violence of fire." Daniel was one for whom God closed the mouths of lions. Elijah and Elisha were prophets who had such faith in God that they brought people back to life after they had died. Others believed God even when they were not delivered; they were willing to suffer and die rather than doubt God and do anything that might displease Him. Some had "trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 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" (Hebrews 11:36, 37). They were willing to suffer all that because they believed that God had a home in Heaven for them when they left this world. They had never seen Heaven, but they had faith in God.

Christian martyrs of ages past are enjoying eternal bliss with our Jesus. Many more will still have to give their lives; but that one brief instant when they leave this world will open to them beauties in Heaven greater than anything they ever imagined. If it should be our lot to have to die for our faith, Jesus will be standing with outstretched arms to receive us the instant we have breathed our last here. And then we will be at rest forever with the Lord.

Paul adds one more verse to this list of heroes of faith. He said the plan of salvation was not complete with them: there is something better for us. We are living in the Holy Ghost Dispensation, and have the Comforter with us. Each one of us who is saved and sanctified is commanded to get the baptism of the Holy Ghost. What a privilege we have! We can be the Bride of Christ if we measure up to our privilege. The plan of salvation was not complete until Jesus sent the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost and baptised all who were gathered in the Upper Room. It is our responsibility, as well as our privilege, to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost in order to be of real service for Jesus and be ready when He comes.

QUESTIONS

1. How did Moses' mother show she had faith?
2. What did Moses choose rather than to live at the king's palace?
3. What happened in Egypt the night the Israelites left?
4. How was Jericho conquered?
5. Tell a little about Gideon's life and the exploits he wrought by faith.
6. Who was the shepherd king? Tell some brave deeds he performed
7. Who were cast into the fiery furnace but were not burned?
8. Who was cast to the lions to eat, but was not hurt?
9. What happened to the martyrs after they were killed?
10. What completed the plan of salvation?