

February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## “Those of Whom This World Is Not Worthy”

Hebrews 11:30-40

Previously in **Hebrews 11:1-29**, we read about people of faith who trusted God to have a plan and purpose for their lives. These people stepped through their fears and stepped out in faith; God blessed them and provided what they needed in this life, while also promising that they would receive eternal life in heaven.

These people weren't all great, but they did have faith in God, and so God sets them apart as examples for us.

**Read Hebrews 11:30-31...** God's people are finally ready to enter and conquer the Promised Land, and the very first city they come up against is Jericho.

Joshua sent two men to spy in Jericho; they were hidden by Rahab a prostitute, who feared the Lord (**Joshua 2:10-11**), “We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.”

Rahab helped the spies escape and return to Joshua, where they gave their report. God instructs Israel (cf. **Joshua 6**) to march around the city once a day for 6 days (seven priests carrying seven trumpets march in front of the Ark of the Covenant). On the 7th day they march around the city 7 times with the priests blowing their trumpets, after the 7th time around the priests blow long blast on the ram's horn and the people shout... the walls then fell down and outward, away from the city.

*Note: Several archeological excavations were done in Jericho in the 19th and 20th centuries in which much has been discovered; most amazing, the walls on the hillsides seem to have fallen out, not in, creating a ramp for the Israelites to easily enter the city.*

God's people then went into the city and killed every person in Jericho, except for Rahab and her family (cf. **Joshua 6:17, 25**), for Rahab feared God and helped the Israelites rather than obey her king.

**Read Hebrews 11:32...** Now we are given a list of six faithful believers: Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, and Samuel, and the category of prophets.

**Gideon** was a man of weak faith, when the angel of the Lord came to him with a promise to help him defeat the Midianites Gideon asked for “signs” (putting out a fleece) to confirm God's presence and power, to affirm that God would indeed give him victory (cf. **Judges 6-7**).

Gideon was very reluctant to go against the armies of Midian, but he finally let go of his fears and trusted God.

February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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Gideon started out with over 30,000 fighting men, but God quickly lowered that number, first to 10,000, then down to just 300 men; for the Lord did not want Israel to be able to boast about their victory over the Midianites and the Amalekites. God used Gideon and 300 men with trumpets, pitchers, and torches to drive Israel’s enemies out of Canaan, even though their number was said to be too numerous to be counted.

**Barak** was the commander of Israel’s army when the Canaanites had oppressed Israel for about 20 years. The Canaanites had 900 iron chariots when Barak was called to fight them. Deborah was judge over Israel at this time and God was with her, so Barak ask her to go with him.

Deborah went with him and God brought a great rainstorm that turned the ground into thick mud, causing the chariots to get bogged down. Barak and his men attacked, pursuing and killing all their enemy, and this lead to 40 years of peace in Israel (cf. **Judges 4**).

**Samson** had godly parents and supernatural strength; but Samson despised these blessings, until God took away his great strength. He was captured and blinded, but Samson turned back to God who allowed him, in his death, to kill 3,000 of Israel’s enemies (cf. **Judges 13-16**).

**Jephthah** mother was a prostitute and his own brothers ran him off from home so he wouldn’t get any inheritance; not a great start. Jephthah fell in with and became leader of a group of renegade warriors; but when Israel was threatened by Ammonites, Jephthah was asked to lead Israel’s army against them.

Jephthah vowed to consecrate the first thing to come out of his house, when he returned from battle, to God (and it ended up being his daughter). God had given him victory in battle, so he offered his daughter to perpetually be in God’s service. Jephthah became Israel’s Judge and he ruled for six years (cf. **Judges 11-12**).

**David** was a shepherd boy, the youngest son of Jesse, and as a teenager he defeated Goliath, the enemy of Israel. As a man ee was mighty in battle, trusting God for protection and power. David became king over Israel, and even though he committed adultery and murder, he was a man with a heart after God; in fact, it will be upon his throne (the throne of David) that the Lord will rule on the earth during the millennium kingdom (cf. **1Samuel 16-1Kings 2**).

**Samuel** was both a prophet and a judge of Israel. He obeyed God, but his sons, who were delegated to follow him as judges, were corrupt and they perverted justice; so the people demanded a king. Samuel listened to God and anointed the first king of Israel, Saul, and in his farewell speech, Samuel warned the people to give up idols and serve the one true God (cf. **1Samuel 1-3**).

February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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**Hebrews 11:33-35a...** Although names aren't mentioned here we know many of whom the author is speaking: Daniel was saved by God from the lions (cf. **Daniel 6**). Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were saved from the flames of the furnace (cf. **Daniel 2-3**). David escaped Saul, who repeatedly tried to kill him (cf. **1Samuel 23-24**).

Isaiah (cf. **Isaiah 41-42**) and Jeremiah (cf. **Jeremiah 32-33**) acknowledged their own weaknesses and cried out to God, and He strengthened them.

The widow of Zarephath (cf. **1Kings 17**) and the Shunamite woman (cf. **2Kings 4**) had sons who were raised from the dead by Elijah and Elisha.

God uses people of faith, strengthening us in our weaknesses so that the power of God may work in us.

When people step out in faith, trusting God, they are able serve God, doing whatever He calls them to do, these faithful acts sometimes become legends, stories that generations will talk about.

**Hebrews 11:35b-38...** The second part of verse 35 says these people of faith experienced mocking, scourging, and imprisonment; they were tortured, put to death with the sword; and they went about in sheep and goat skins, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated, wandering in deserts and mountains. living in caves and holes in the ground.

Jeremiah was chained and stoned; tradition tells us Isaiah was brutally sawed in two by the wicked king Manasseh. Elijah and Elisha wore animal skins and wandered the earth as men who had no earthly home.

Looking at the history of God's people, there is a long list of those who suffered for their faith, not that they enjoyed suffering, but they endured it out of love and devotion toward God. These people were looking forward to an eternal inheritance in a heavenly home.

**Hebrews 11:38** says the world was not worthy of these people; and that these faithful servants were worthy of something far greater than what they experienced here.

We may, at times, feel like we are living under a curse rather than a blessing; evil is all around us, and the enemies of God in this corrupt world seem to be having victory; but we must keep our eyes on Jesus.

We are to follow Jesus, by faith, trusting Him to protect and provide, now and forever.

**Hebrews 11:39-40...** For seven weeks now we've studied people of faith, sinful people who struggled, often failed, but as they lived out their faith, seeking to obey God, they pleased Him and He counted them worthy of mention here in the Believer's Hall of Faith, Hebrews 11.

These men and women are godly examples, and although, while they lived on this earth, they didn't receive all God had promised until they died, or were caught up, like Enoch, to be with God, forever.

February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## “Those of Whom This World Is Not Worthy”

Hebrews 11:30-40

That is what we look forward to, the hope that we have is made possible through the sacrificial death and sovereign resurrection of God’s Son.

These OT Believers listed in the Hall of Faith, didn’t have a knowledge of Jesus Christ, they didn’t have the written Word of God, they didn’t have the indwelling of God’s Spirit; and yet they had saving faith (**Hebrews 11:1-3**), “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”

**Hebrews 11:6**, “And without faith it is impossible to please [God], for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”

The Hall of Faith has been and is continually being filled with faithful believers throughout the ages.

If your name was written here in chapter 11, what would be said about you? What example of faith are you leaving for future generations?

Yes, you are flawed, you have failures, we all do; you are a sinner, we all are. Every person listed in this chapter is a sinner who was saved by God’s grace, a flawed person who often failed God. But God never failed any of them, and He will never fail you.

What you need to consider is this, are you trusting God, really trusting God, to watch over, provide for and protect you each and every day? Are you seeking to know and to do that which pleases God? If so, your name is written in the Book of Life, because you are in Christ.

Whatever your situation, whatever your station in life, you have the opportunity, like those recorded in the Hebrews 11, to honor God with your life while setting an example for others to follow.

Everyone who belongs to God by faith, has overcome sin, death, and judgement, in and through Jesus Christ.

**1John 5:1-5**, Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, to keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

**Psalms 1:1-3**, “How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.”

February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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Hebrews 11:30-40

**Psalm 37:3-5**, “Trust in the Lord and do good;

Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.”

**Proverbs 3:5-6**, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

**1Corinthians 15:58**, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.”

**1Thessalonians 5:16-18**, “Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

**Colossians 3:17**, “Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” **23-24**, “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”

**Philippians 4:4-9**, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you,” **12-13**, “I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” **19-20**, “And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

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