

Hebrews 11.32-40

Faith in Good Days and Bad

July 30, 1967 17 yr old Young Woman dove into Chesapeake Bay, MD Misjudged Depth Water
– Fractured Vertebrae became a Quadriplegic

Joni Eareckson > 2 yrs Rehabilitation: Anger, Depression, Suicidal Thoughts, and Doubts >
Gave her Broken Body to Jesus

Learned to Paint w/ Brush btwn Teeth > Artwork sells Globally

Written 40+ books, Recorded music albums, Starred autobiog Movie

Global Advocate for People with Disabilities / Ministry help Thousands

Wheelchair 56 yrs! / Joni Eareckson Tada > Regularly receives letters

“if you had more faith, God would heal you!”

Read Hebrews 11.32-40 RELATE to this Preacher > “time would fail me”

Sometimes WISH I could have 2 hours for Sermon > You Do Too!??

SENSITIVE to Attention Span of his LISTENERS – 13.22 ‘briefly’!!

1. Good Days

Vs. 32-35 Faith Conquering in Success over Obstacles

6 Great Names

Gideon – Victory over Midianites w/ just 300 men

Armed w/ Torches in Earthen Jars > God thru Enemy in PANIC

Barak – United TRIBES in Victory over Sisera & Canaanite Chariots

Samson – One-Man-War over Philistines / Destroyed as Destroyed

Jephthah – Led Tribes in Battle against Ammonites

Samuel – Judge / Prophet / Anointed 2 Kings: Saul and David

BIRTH > Faith of Mother HANNAH > Cried Out to GOD for Son

Hannah > DEVOTED Son > ‘whose words never fell to the ground’

David – Israel’s Greatest King ‘man after God’s own heart’

Young DAVID said to Mighty Goliath: “You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied”
1 Samuel 17.45

v. 33 MIGHTY Deeds of FAITH

‘conquered kingdoms’ > Joshua, David, Solomon – MANY won Battles

‘enforced justice’ > lit. ‘established righteousness’ God IS King

David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people.
2 Samuel 8.15

‘obtained promises’ Saints of God SAW many PROMISES Come TRUE

Joshua > Walls Fall Down / Rahab & family > Saved from Death

Judges > Defeated Enemies of ISRAEL by God’s Power

Trio of Achievements v. 33,34

Stopped mouth of Lions > David & Samson slew Lions

Quenched the power of Fire > Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar...our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”
Daniel 3.17,18

Escaped the edge of Sword > David, Elijah, Elisha...many MORE

v. 34 ‘made strong out of weakness’ / Blind Samson’s Final Prayer

DIED like Jesus > Destroying TEMPLE of Enemies of Living God

Jehoshaphat ‘put foreign armies to flight’ / Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah... “O Lord, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you. O our God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”...And the Spirit of the Lord came upon...a Levite...in the midst of the assembly... “Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the Lord to you, ‘Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God’s’” 2 Chronicles 20.12-15

v. 35 Women received back their dead by resurrection

Faith of ELIJAH – Widow of Zarephath Son Restored to Life

Faith of ELISHA – Wealthy woman’s son was Restored to Life

By FAITH God’s People achieved what ONLY God could DO

Miracles, Subtle, Secret WAYS| God’s Power for those who TRUST Him

How are we to overcome obstacles? Tragedies? > FAITH in God

ONLY Hope of Deliverance is in Almighty God

2. Bad Days

NOT End of Story > Stop here give FALSE, Dangerous Impression

v. 35-38 “others” TRUSTED thru TEARS, TROUBLES, TRIALS

Not Always DELIVERED – Trouble & Tribulation

Sometimes Presence of God seen in POWER to STAND & TESTIFY

Polycarp BISHOP of Smyrna – Arrested in 155 AD – DENY Christ!!

“86 years have I have served him, and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?”

BURNED at Stake – PROBLEM: Fire NOT Consume! – STABBED!!

Letter written to Believers TEMPTED to Drift Away from Jesus

Persecution HAD Come and was COMING Again > DANGER

TRIALS Test our Faith / FIRE burns DROSS, Refines GOLD

Vs. 35-38 Faith Conquering thru Suffering and Perseverance

Sometimes God is GLORIFIED in our DELIVERANCE

Other times Glorified in our DIFFICULTIES, even our DEATH

JESUS died in Early 30’s / MLK 39 / Keith Green 28 > Impact Lives

35b Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. 36 Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated—

Jesus: “In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”
John 16.33

Jeered, Flogged, Chained, Imprisoned, Destitute, Destroyed

World called them ‘unfit to live’ / Too Good for World!

v. 38 ...of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 1 John 5.4

Faith more Significant than our Circumstances

Elijah was SPARED from King Ahab’s Sword / Other Prophets DIED

God HAD More than Elijah KNEW > 7000 NOT Bowed Knee to Baal

Jeremiah ESCAPED King Jehoiakim’s hatred / Prophet Uriah KILLED

Peter set FREE from Prison / James killed by HEROD

By FAITH we Conquer CIRCUMSTANCES by Blood of Jesus

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” Romans 8.18

JESUS is Lord of ALL – Every KNEE will Bow / Every Tongue Confess

JOHN KNOX Reformer of Scotland: Many Death Threats from Queen

“One does not fear the Queen of Scotland when he has been on his knees before the King of Kings”
John Knox

3. Glory Days

Writer COVER Big Chunk of Hebrew Scripture > Vast Territory

NOT get into OT weeds... RUSHING Forward to Jesus

JESUS is Better than these Great Heroes of the FAITH

DIVISIONS of Verses and Chapters in Bible > Wycliffe's Version 1382

Writer BUILDING to Climax > GREATEST Man of Faith

LOOK to Jesus > AUTHOR and EXAMPLE of PERFECT Faith

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith Hebrews 12.1,2

Jesus: SAVIOR Every Believer in Hebrews 11 > 1st to FINAL Follower

vs. 39,40 And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Faith Looks to the FUTURE > Seeks Greatest REWARDS

Old Covenant Heroes LOOKED to Promises > Never EMBRACED

These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. Hebrews 11.13

If Old Covenant Saints NOT Walked by Faith > NO Israel, No Messiah

Faith SUSTAINS Us while we WAIT for Promises be FULFILLED

ONE People of God – One Covenant, different Administrations

you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone. Ephesians 2.19,20

DANGER > DISHONESTY in Biblical Interpretation

Salvation ALWAYS Gift of Grace > Undeserved > Unconditional

DAVID > Murdered LOYAL Soldier after Adultery w/ WIFE

SAMSON > Driven by OUT OF CONTROL LUST & PASSION

JEPHTHAT – Killed Own DAUGHTER as an OFFERING to God

BARAK – Needed DEBORAH to Fight his Battles for him

GIDEON – Put God to TEST after He had Clearly Spoken Command

v. 40 Key Word BETTER

Christ > Better Covenant, Priesthood, Sacrifice, Home Forever

A tiny spark of light led them to heaven, but now that the Sun of righteousness shines on us,
what excuse shall we offer if we still cling to earth? John Calvin

Only way NAME will Appear in Book of Life is thru BLOOD of Christ

When I survey the wondrous cross / Isaac Watts

On which the Prince of glory died / My richest gain I count but loss,

And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast / Save in the death of Christ my God!

All the vain things that charm me most / I sacrifice them to His blood.

Promises of God BEYOND what can be Received in our Mortal Lives

As it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him” 1 Corinthians 2.9

Eternal Weight of Glory lies Ahead / Crown lies beyond the CROSS

Faith makes REAL things that are UNSEEN and UNOBTAINED

When All Else is Gone, What MATTERS is our Faith

Years later What will People say about You? What is LASTING?

Great Hair? Figure? Wardrobe? House? Car? Job?

Without FAITH we will PERISH w/ All these USELESS things of World

“The world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”
1 John 2.17

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose”

Jim Elliot

Let Joni Eareckson Tada have LAST Word > NOT a LACK of Faith CRUEL Teaching, denies Will of God > More Faith than I ever Will

“In the Christian faith, God really puts suffering front and center. He doesn't get squeamish about it... We can certainly ask to be healed. Anyone who takes the Bible seriously agrees that God hates suffering. Jesus spent most of his time relieving it. But when being healed becomes the only goal — "I'm not letting go until I get what I want" — it's a problem... if you don't start living, your whole life is spent jumping from one healing crusade to the next... If we can come up with a simple explanation, "You did something wrong," then it's something we think we can control... we assume that this person must have a bad track record with God. We just don't want to embrace the God who can be found in the midst of pain... If I had been granted a physical healing back when I was 17, I wouldn't be in a ministry serving other people with disabilities around the world. I believe I have been healed — just not in the way that others expect.”

Joni Eareckson Tada

Hebrews 11.³²And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. ³⁶Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated—³⁸of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. ³⁹And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.