

“Faith of Our Fathers”

March 22, 2020

Before the notification of the spread of the Coronavirus and our present state, I believed that we would experience revival in our Chapel and community. In my perspective it was people coming together to worship not separately worshipping in their dwellings. Nevertheless, God is sovereign and this is the way to revival for the nations. May we each hear the voice of the Lord over all other voices that are speaking and be led by His Word and Holy Spirit. May His love abound among us and Let us hope in our Sovereign Lord together.

Scripture Text: Hebrews 11:1-6 NLT *Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. 2 Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation.*

3 By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.

4 It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel's offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed his approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith.

5 It was by faith that Enoch was taken up to heaven without dying—“he disappeared, because God took him.” For before he was taken up, he was known as a person who pleased God. 6 And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.

VERSE 1 *Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.*

Think about it, a healthy child exercises a certain measure of faith as an infant. He/she learns that if he desires to be held or comforted by their parents they will just call them with a cry. Their caring and loving parents usually rush to their aid to provide for their immediate needs. Eventually, the parents will be able to discern the true need by the type of cry without panicking.

In **Romans 12:3**, addresses us with “the measure of Faith” God has given us. Your first thought may be, “Do we all get the same *measure* of Faith?” **First**, we are all gifted with the faith to believe when we ask the Lord to save us. **Ephesians 2:8-9** “[for by grace you have been](#)

saved through faith, and not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9. not of works, lest anyone should boast.” **Second**, we’re instructed to grow that faith through the hearing of God’s word (**Romans 10:17**) and through *living by faith not by sight* (**2 Cor. 5:7**). Doing these things will increase our faith as we trust God’s Word and put it to the test. There are times that we may be endowed by God to exercise a greater degree of faith depending on the task, but just a mustard seed of faith will do the job.

Let us, understand that as a Christian we will face obstacles in our walk of faith. Walking in God's will doesn't guarantee that our way will be easy but we are most confident that He is with us. Jesus tells us, in **Matthew 11:28-30 NLT 28.** *“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”*

Nevertheless, no matter how difficult the day which He has made, we can trust God and go forward in faith. **Isaiah 41:10** *“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*

VERSE 2 *Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation.*

In ages past God spoke to the prophets in dreams and visions to lead His people. Non believing nations who worshipped false Gods were witnesses that the God of the Jews was all powerful. The words of the prophets were scribed, spoken and shared among the people as they moved in belief as God confirmed His will. Those who believed were blessed according to the word of the Lord that was given by the prophets. Their reputation preceded them throughout the land as they obeyed the words of God’s prophets.

Disobedience made them venerable and victims to their enemies but when they obeyed, they were unstoppable against their foes. Their faith in following God was accounted to them for righteousness.

Galatians 3:6-8 NKJV *6 just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” 7 Therefore know that only*

those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." Paul was appealing to the gentiles that they were included in the promise God made to Abraham.

When we believe the Word and exercise our faith in the Lord and we gain a good reputation among the people that the Lord is with us. People who don't know the way, we show them by our love for each other and to those not walking in faith and relationship with through Jesus. **John 13:34-35 NKJV 34** *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

VERSE 3 *By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.*

The Holy Bible's opening declaration says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." How awesome and fathomless are those words. In the book of Job, He says, that it is God, *"He does great things past finding out, yes, wonders without number."* (**Job 9:10 NKJV**). He who believes in God as the framer of the universe believes in what he has not seen. He was not present at the time of the creation. He has not seen, and yet he believes. This is, however, what men are doing every day as they hear the Word of God and are quickened by the Holy Spirit... come to repentance and believe God!

Many high school students in my day were taught the Theory of Evolution, simply stated that man evolved rather than created by a Superior Being. I often wonder about those who do not believe God of the bible. Where is their hope... in this life only? When you die, then what? **1 Corinthians 15:19 NKJV** *"And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world."* (**MORE**) In Christ we have eternal life. **John 11:25-26 NKJV** *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*

VERSE 4 *It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel's offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed his approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith.*

In **Genesis 4**, We have the account of Cain the first born and Abel the sons of Adam and Eve. Abel was a shepherd tending sheep, while his older brother tended the fruit of the ground. During the time of harvest they presented an offering of thanks to God for the bounty of His blessing. **Verses 3-7 NLT** *When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the LORD. 4 Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The LORD accepted Abel and his gift, 5 but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected. 6 “Why are you so angry?” the LORD asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? 7 You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”*

God saw the motive of their hearts, no matter how we present our gifts before God, it is the motive that matters the most. Abel offered a lamb; and Christ is the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world (**John 1:29**). He may have had other livestock but he chose a lamb and presented to God the best parts of the lamb. It is clear that Cain recognized that all things come as a result of God's blessings. So he presented his gift, perhaps out of obligation rather than love for God. He had an issue with his brother Abel which tainted his offering to God. **1 John 4:20 NKJV** *If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?* We should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.” Abel's innocent blood was shed for his righteous deed and calls it out for vindication.

VERSE 5 *It was by faith that Enoch was taken up to heaven without dying—he disappeared, because God took him.” For before he was taken up, he was known as a person who pleased God.*

God was pleased with the relationship that **Enoch** had developed through faith in Him. Though he could not see Him, yet believing that He was present. There are four distinctions of **Enoch's** character in view:

1. He walked in the name and fear of God in obedience and in view of the **Messiah**, the promised seed.
2. He walked uprightly and sincerely as if being in the very presence of God.
3. He had familiar near and intimate communion with God each day of his life.
4. **Enoch** was not a perfect man but a man that was counted as righteous by God because of his faith in Him and he lived 365 years.

One day God decided to take him to be with Him not by death, as we would say, “**Enoch** went to be with the Lord.” He simply disappeared off the planet and he was not in the land of the living, but the Lord took him to himself out of the world. He removed him from earth... next stop heaven, soul and body, as **Elijah** was taken {**2 Kings 2:1-11**}. **Enoch** and **Elijah** was taken up into heaven which represents the paradise of God. They were removed from the pain of this fallen world into the bliss and joy of paradise. **Moses**, the great prophet and giver of the Law, died and was buried. **Enoch** and **Elijah** was translated without seeing death.

We have this hope and assurance that we will be translated like the faithful Enoch and Elijah. **1Thessalonians 4:16-17 NKJV** 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

To walk with God, we need to keep in step without running ahead or lagging behind. Along the way, we talk with the Lord, listen to Him, and enjoy His presence. We trust His guidance when we cannot see what lies ahead. Our final destination that awaits us is far greater than the journey we take together. So, with joy we shall endure to the end with victory.

APPLICATIONS:

Faith is a necessity for those who desire to know that God has purpose in everything pertaining to us.

God takes great delight when His children believe His immutable Word.