**OVERCOMING FAITH**

**HEBREWS 11:1-2, 33-39**

 Through faith the elders obtained a good report.

 If we are to obtain a good report in heaven it will be because we have faith in God.

 We read of these people in what is called the Bible’s Hall of Faith because battle after battle, trial after trial, temptation after temptation, discouragement after discouragement; they kept their faith and were consecrated.

 Consecration *to* God and faith *in* God ought to characterize every servant of God.

 The church world has many believers in God, but few consecrated to Him.

 Consecrate—to dedicate to God.

 We are dedicated to everything else but God. (job, family, etc.)

 We need people today who actually prove His faithfulness in fulfilling all His promises.

 Malachi 3:10, “*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house,* ***and prove me now herewith****, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*”

 Proving God is just saying, “*Sink, swim, or drown, God, my faith is in you.*”

 When you were a kid and got into a fight you drew a line in the dirt with your shoe and said, “*I dare you to cross it.*”

 That is what God is saying; except instead of getting busted we’ll get a blessing.

 We can prove God by faith.

**I. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF FAITH?**

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 Hebrews 11:1, “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*” {substance: or, ground, or, confidence}

 The Amplified Version of the Bible says, “*title deed*”.

 Although the object or thing we are believing God for, might not be seen, with faith we hold the title deed.

 Faith acknowledges the things unseen, and acts as if they were visible.

 We have no business letting Satan drag us through the mud, and overcome us.

 When we have faith just the size of a mustard seed, we hold the title deed to victory.

 Hebrews 11:7, “*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*”

 Had the rain came? No!

 But he believed it would because God said it.

 John 20:29, “*Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*”

 They *see* it with their heart, although they do not *hold* it in their hands.

 Hebrew 11 is so important.

 These heroes are so important, because they are the first ones to believe in a certain area.

 Their faith is even greater than ours, because a lot of our faith is based upon God moving in their lives.

 Faith is not something mystic, but it is something concrete.

 It is not some physic phenomenon, but it is something we believe down in our gut.

 Faith also admits by its very nature that God knows some things we do not know, and that God can do some things we cannot do.

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 We know that, but sometimes we “don’t know that”.

**II. THE OBJECT OF FAITH**

 Mark 11:22, “*And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.*”

 Means must be used in our believing, but means must not be the object of our trust.

 There was a draught in II Kings 3:16.

 And there Elisha said to the King and soldiers, “*And he said, Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full of ditches.*”

 They are but ditches we dig, but God must fill them.

 James 2:26, “*For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*”

 Noah built the ark, but God had to keep Noah and the animals safe for about a year.

 When Jesus forgave me of my sins, I had and have to walk like I am saved, and bring forth fruit like I am saved.

 But I must not trust my works, but in what He did.

 God can be trusted to keep every promise He ever made.

 I Corinthians 10:13, “…*but God is faithful,*”

 God isn’t man with limited *power*, *resources*, *insight* and *ability*.

 He has all the power in the universe in His hand.

 Psalm 89:33, “*Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him,* ***nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.***”

 How then can His power be doubted?

 Jeremiah 32:27, “*Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?*”

 The object of our faith is in One who cannot *lie*; One who cannot *change*, and One who cannot *fail*.

 We have a reason to have faith; because of the God we serve.

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 God is the object of our faith, but what is the ground of our faith?

**III. THE GROUND OF OUR FAITH**

 It is the Word of God.

 I Peter 1:23b, “*the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*”

 Isaiah 40:8, “*The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.*”

 Proverbs 30:5, “*Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.*”

 God’s Word is purified.

 There are no impurities in it.

 Therefore the ground of our faith is as *faithful* and *true* as the object of it.

 It was the Word of God that all of these people believed in, stepped *out* on, and held *on* to.

 Romans 10:17, “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”

 You want to build your faith?

 Read all the Scriptures that you can that pertain to your situation.

 Many years ago a man was to be hanged. While on the scaffold he asked for a drink of water. His request was granted, but his hand shook so much that he could not drink it. “*Take time,*” said the king, who sat by to see the end of the law, “*you will not be hanged till you drink it.*” In a moment the culprit dashed the cup from him saying, “*Well, I’ll never drink it, so I can never be hanged.*”

 He took the king at his word and was saved.

 When he got that noose around his neck he thought it was impossible to be free.

 In our life some things may equally look impossible and hopeless.

 But as one man said, “*God said it, I believe it, and that settles it.*”

 Let us take the Word of God for what it is worth!

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 II Peter 1:16-19, “*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.* 17 *For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* 18 *And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.* 19 ¶ *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*”

 He said: 1) We heard a voice 2) We were eyewitnesses 3) The Word of God.

 Peter was saying we just didn’t put our trust in a voice (Like some cults), or our instincts (heart is deceitful), but in the Word of God.

 Acts 27:25, “*Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.*”

**IV. THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF FAITH**

 John 11:40, “*Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?*”

 Believe and thou shalt see.

 Peter believed and saw the great draught of fish.

 Joshua believed and the Bible says, “*There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.*”—Joshua 21:45.

 Solomon said 400 years later in Israel’s history, “*Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.*”

 Jesus told the disciples to go get the colt.

 Mark 11:4a, “*And they went their way, and found the colt*”

 If they had not gone out; they could not have proved the truthfulness of His Word.

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 Is there a single case where faith has been disappointed in all the revelation of God? If not, then we need to go ahead and step out on a limb; that is where the fruit is!

 We need to witness, get prayed for, and obey what God is telling us to do.

 God cannot do mighty things through us because of our unbelief.

 Matthew 17:19-20, “*Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?* 20 *And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*”

 Not big, nor medium.

 We just resign ourselves to God’s Word.

 Matthew 21:22, “*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*”

 We are not our own; we are in the care of the Father!

 This is either true or it isn’t.

 If it is; then why is it not in our experience?

**V. THE RESULT OF FAITH**

 Many wonderful results are recorded in Hebrews 11.

 It is impossible to mention all the possibilities of faith since it is written, “*According to your faith be it unto you.*”—Matthew 9:29.

 There is no limit given.

 Of Hezekiah it says in II Kings 18:5, “*He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.*”

 There are none today like those who trust in the Lord.

**CON:**

 Romans 10:17, “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*”

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 More than likely if I go to a stranger they are not going to give me anything.

 But God should not be a stranger to His children!

 There is no reason why we should stay *faithless*, *powerless*, *answerless*, and *needful*.

 Someone has stated that Dake’s Bible says there are 250 promises just in the New Testament.

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