

"The Walk of Faith"

Part 27

11:1-40

Introduction: Tonight in our study of the book of Hebrews we are going to pick up a little more speed and cover a few more verses. For the past 4 weeks we have been looking at one verse and that is Hebrews 11:32. It is in this verse that the writer has named 6 individuals and one group of people. These are all examples of what living faith looks like. Now we have looked at the lives of several of these individuals.

We looked at Gideon, Barak and Jephthah. Each of these men lived during the days when the Judges ruled and each of these men were used in a mighty way by God. There is another man in this verse who was also a Judge and his name was Samson. Now when we think of Samson there are many things which come to our minds but normally one of them is not FAITH. He was a man who struggled with weakness and the weakness was women. This weakness eventually led him to a sad ending. But throughout his life he was victorious over the Philistines. Let me show you the end of his life.

Judges 16:26-30

²⁶ And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

²⁷ Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

²⁸ And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

²⁹ And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

³⁰ And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

In this event Samson killed more Philistines in his death than he did while he was alive. In all of this it was FAITH which brought the victories. Let me show you something which Samson knew.

Judges 13:5

⁵ *For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.*

This was the message given to Samson's mother and she would have been sure to relate this to her son as he grew. So Samson knew this and therefore in every battle he faced with the Philistines he believed what God had told his mother. It was by faith that Samson entered into the battles.

I. Samuel

Notice Hebrews 11:32

There are yet 2 more men listed here and they are David and Samuel. We will consider David as we go through the verses that will follow. But for a few minutes we need to stop and consider Samuel.

Samuel never fought in one battle. His fight was far more difficult than entering into a battle with a sword. Samuel also lived during the days when the Judges ruled and Samuel's battle was against the immorality and idolatry of his day. Let us notice what Samuel had to tell Eli.

1 Samuel 3:11-18

¹¹ *And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.*

¹² *In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.*

¹³ *For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.*

¹⁴ *And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.*

¹⁵ *And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision.*

¹⁶ *Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I.*

¹⁷ *And he said, What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee.*

¹⁸ *And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.*

Then in 1 Samuel 15 he had to deliver a message to King Saul after Saul sinned against God.

1 Samuel 15:19-23

¹⁹ *Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?*

²⁰ *And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.*

²¹ *But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.*

²² *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

²³ *For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

There were other times which Samuel had to stand against sin and each time it was by FAITH that he stood for the TRUTH. Faith gave him the courage to take his stand.

II. The Pinnacle of Faith

Part 1

A. True Faith Conquers

Now the writer is going to list some of the victories of faith which can be traced to the lives of many of the Old Testament saints.

Notice Hebrews 11:33

1. They subdued kingdoms.

When I read this I am reminded of Joseph and how he was raised up to be the Prime Minister of Egypt and how his faith carried him through 13 years of great trials. I am reminded of Moses who by faith stood and faced Pharaoh as he refused to bow to the commands of God. I think of Daniel who was deported in the captivity and how by faith he refused to eat the king's food and how God elevated him to a prominent leadership position under Nebuchadnezzar. Then when the Persians conquered Babylon Daniel again found favor with Darius. Daniel was a great man of faith. Through it all his faith never wavered.

2. They wrought righteousness.

This means they labored to work righteousness in their lives. The idea here is that they stood against great pressures which were brought in an attempt to get them to compromise.

This reminds me again of Joseph and the situation with Potiphar's wife.

Genesis 39:7-9

⁷ *And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.*

⁸ *But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;*

⁹ *There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

Daniel was another man who stood against the pressures of his day.

Daniel 1:5, 8

⁵ *And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.*

⁸ But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Daniel 6:7, 10

⁷ All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

¹⁰ Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

3. They obtained promises.

God had made many promises to his people in the Old Testament and it was by faith that the promises were obtained.

There are several which come to mind.

- a. Israel crossing the Jordan.
- b. Israel and the conquest of Jericho.
- c. The book of Judges is full of examples.

4. They stopped the mouths of lions.

This is definitely a reference to Daniel in the lion's den. Remember how the king came early in the morning to check on Daniel after he had spent the night in the lion's den?

Daniel 6:20-23

²⁰ And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

²¹ Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

²² My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

²³ Then was the king exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

It was faith which closed the mouths of the lions.

Notice Hebrews 11:34

5. They quenched the violence of fire.

This is pointing to Daniel's 3 friends. As they stood before Nebuchadnezzar they stood in pure faith.

Daniel 3:16-18

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

¹⁷ If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

¹⁸ But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

We know that these men were not harmed and we also know that Jesus Christ walked in the furnace with them. It was by faith that the fire was quenched.

6. They escaped the edge of the sword.

David was a man who was threatened by the sword of Saul over and over again. The entire time he was running he was trusting God to protect him for God had promised he would be the king of Israel.

1 Samuel 16:10-13

¹⁰ Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these.

¹¹ And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

¹² *And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.*

¹³ **Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward.**

This day David was anointed to be the king of Israel. He would not forget this day and he would not forget the anointing was from God. As he spent the next years fleeing the sword of Saul David rested his faith in the promise of God thus he "escaped the edge of the sword".

Conclusion:

I want to leave you with a verse which we have looked at many times but it is so appropriate.

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

When we live by faith God honors our faith and it is then that His power is released.