

Audio Transcript of Sermon
February 25, 2023
The Faithful

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. We know that when Jesus returns, those who oppose Him will be defeated in their effort to wage war against Him. We also know that those who are with Him during this time are the called, chosen, and faithful. Let's read Revelation seventeen verse fourteen.

Revelation 17:14

14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

We are the called, chosen, and faithful. We cannot go back in time and undo the calling we were given, nor can we go back in time so that we were not chosen. We can't even go back in time undoing the faith we had years ago. But, each day of our life moving forward, we must remain the faithful, because it is through faith that we please God and receive the promise of eternal life. Faith is the substance of things hoped for that we have not yet received. It stands in contrast to science which only can validate those things which can be seen, and therefore faith transcends science and is necessary for our salvation. Hebrews eleven verse one.

Hebrews 11:1-3

- 1. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**
- 2. For by it the elders obtained a good report.**
- 3. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.**

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews then describes in detail how several people during Old Testament times exercised faith. What they did during their lifetimes serves as an example for us as we live our life as the faithful moving forward. We'll go back to the beginning with the family of Adam and Eve. Even though Abel was the younger of their boys, it was Abel who through faith offered the more

excellent sacrifice than Cain, with God having no respect for the offering brought by Cain, and that made Cain angry. Genesis four verse one.

Genesis 4:1-16

- 1. And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.**
- 2. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.**
- 3. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.**
- 4. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:**
- 5. But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.**
- 6. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?**
- 7. If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.**

Having been told by God that if Cain would bring an acceptable offering to God, not holding back from God what is the first and best, that God would also accept Cain's offering. Understanding that, Cain decided to get rid of his rival and killed his brother which brought a curse to Cain. Verse eight.

- 8. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.**
- 9. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?**
- 10. And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.**
- 11. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;**
- 12. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.**
- 13. And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear.**

14. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

15. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

16. And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

Moving forward as the faithful in our lives today, we cannot hold back from God. God, who has been generous with us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is worthy of the best, not the minimum. Moving forward in time in the Bible, Enoch was a man who walked with God. He didn't walk in front of God, behind God, or against God. Enoch walked with God through faith, keeping pace with God, and moving in the same direction and with the same intensity as God, and was taken away so that he did not see death. Genesis five verse eighteen.

Genesis 5:18-24

18. And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch:

19. And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

20. And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died.

21. And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah:

22. And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

23. And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

24. And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

As we move forward as the faithful today and into the future, we must also be walking with God, never seeking to outpace God, and never doing less than what is expected of us. Noah also walked with God, and when Noah walked with God the earth was a really bad place to live. God warned Noah that the destruction of mankind was coming and then told Noah to make an ark, a large boat to survive the flood, along with animals. Noah didn't rely on the fact that he had always walked with God and then ignored this new directive from God. Noah did what God told him to do through faith knowing that what God said would happen

would indeed happen. Noah did all that God told him to do, and in so doing saved his family becoming the heir of righteousness through whom the lineage of Jesus would pass. Genesis six verse nine.

Genesis 6:9-22

9. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

10. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

12. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

13. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

14. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

15. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

16. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

17. And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die.

18. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

19. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

20. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

21. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

22. Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

Looking around in the world we see today, as the faithful, we probably also see tremendous evil and violence. As the faithful of God and like Noah, we also must do all that God expects of us. It was by faith that Abraham was told to leave the land in which he was leaving to travel to a country that God had yet to show him. Abraham packed up his household, even taking his nephew with him, along with all of the household servants, and then left not knowing where God would take him. It took faith for Abraham to journey to this land because in the process he was giving up the land that he knew for the land that he had not yet been shown by God, accepting through faith that this was part of how God would establish a great nation through him. Genesis twelve verse one.

Genesis 12:1-7

- 1. Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:**
- 2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:**
- 3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**
- 4. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.**
- 5. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.**
- 6. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.**
- 7. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.**

The faithful of God are told to seek God's righteousness and the Kingdom of God before anything else, and are not distracted by what they see in the world around us. Abraham's wife, Sarah had faith when God visited with them in the plains of Mamre, telling Sarah that she would finally become a mother, getting beyond initial doubts when she was reminded that with God, nothing is impossible when faith is part of the equation. Genesis eighteen verse one.

Genesis 18:1-15

- 1. And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;**
- 2. And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,**
- 3. And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:**
- 4. Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:**
- 5. And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.**
- 6. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.**
- 7. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.**
- 8. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.**
- 9. And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.**
- 10. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.**
- 11. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.**
- 12. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?**
- 13. And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?**
- 14. Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.**
- 15. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.**

We who are called, chosen, and faithful never limit what God can do in our lives. We know that with God nothing is impossible and that all things work together for

good. When Abraham finally had his son, God tested Abraham's faith and used his only son, Isaac, as the test. God told Abraham to sacrifice his son as a burnt offering, and when it became clear to God that Abraham had faith not questioning how a great nation could come about with the death of his only son, God intervened and provided a ram for the burnt offering. Genesis twenty-two verse one.

Genesis 22:1-18

- 1. And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.**
- 2. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.**
- 3. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.**
- 4. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.**
- 5. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.**
- 6. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.**
- 7. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?**
- 8. And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.**
- 9. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.**
- 10. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.**
- 11. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.**
- 12. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.**

13. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

14. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

15. And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

16. And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

17. That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

As the faithful of God, and like Abraham, we do what God expects of us and live through the situations of life knowing that when all seems impossible, God will provide a way of escape. As God provided a ram for the burnt offering, God will also intervene in our lives so that the promise of eternal life will be there for us, the faithful. Abraham's son Isaac through faith blessed his sons having lived through that experience of the burnt offering to be spared so that through him and his children, the promises given to Abraham would continue. Knowing these promises, Isaac was ready to bless Esau not understanding that Esau had already sold his birthright to Jacob, a transaction honored by God as the events of the blessing show. Isaac summoned Esau telling him to bring him some venison. Genesis twenty-seven verse one.

Genesis 27:1-4

1. And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I.

2. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death:

3. Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison;

4. And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

Because Isaac's eyes were bad, He couldn't see the deception in which his wife was a willing participant, and the blessing went not to Esau but to Jacob. Verse nineteen.

Genesis 27:19-23

19. And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

20. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the Lord thy God brought it to me.

21. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

22. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

23. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him.

And that blessing set Jacob up to be in the lineage of a powerful nation, one that would dominate other nations and that would be blessed. Verse twenty-eight.

Genesis 27:28-29

28. Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

29. Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

Esau begged for a blessing but because the greater blessing had already been given through trickery to Jacob, Esau received the lesser blessing, a blessing where he and his descendants would be serving the descendants of Jacob. Verse thirty-five.

Genesis 27:35-40

35. And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing.

36. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

37. And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

38. And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

39. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;

40. And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

We the faithful know, that even when deception is used against us, as was the case of Jacob's deception of his father Isaac, God can use that deception for His purposes and to bring the Kingdom of God closer to reality, even when we do not understand how this will happen. When it came time for Jacob to provide a blessing, that blessing went directly to the two sons of Joseph, Manasseh, and Ephraim. Joseph was expecting Jacob to provide the greater blessing to Manasseh as he was the first born, and Jacob consciously chose to provide the greater blessing to Ephraim, explaining to Joseph that the descendants of both boys would become great nations, but that the children of Ephraim would become a multitude of nations. Jacob did this by faith in his old age knowing of the promise that had been given to his grandfather Abraham and passed down to his father Isaac. Genesis forty-eight verse thirteen.

Genesis 48:13-21

13. And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him.

14. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

15. And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

16. The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

17. And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

18. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

19. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

20. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

21. And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

As the faithful of God, we know that we are not alone in our calling, and as in the account of Ephraim and Manasseh, where the younger received the greater blessing by deliberate choice of Jacob, that with God many are called, chosen, and numbered among the faithful and that there should be no surprise that with God the first can be last, and the last can be first. When Joseph was dying, by faith he reminded the children of Israel of the promise that had been made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and with the assurance that comes through faith reminded them that when they would leave Egypt to return to the promised land, they were to take his bones with them. Genesis fifty verse twenty-four.

Genesis 50:24-26

24. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

25. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

26. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

The faithful of God know that when we die, like Joseph, death will not keep us from the promised land. For Joseph, his bones would be returned to the promised

land and for us, we have the promise of eternal life at the return of Jesus Christ. After the death of Joseph years passed until a Pharaoh came to power who did not know all of the great and wonderful things Joseph had done for Egypt. This Pharaoh didn't like the idea of these foreigners living in his country and decided to bring an end to it by ordering that all of the male children be killed at birth. By Faith, the midwives ignored what they were told to do fearing God more than man. Exodus one verse fifteen.

Exodus 1:15-22

15. And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah:

16. And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live.

17. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.

18. And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive?

19. And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.

20. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

21. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

22. And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

By faith, the parents of Moses hid him for three months so that no threat to his life would occur, and when they were no longer able to hide him, through faith, they placed baby Moses in an ark made of reeds and floated him on the river instead of allowing him to come to a certain death. Exodus two verse one.

Exodus 2:1-3

1. And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.

2. And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

3. And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.

The faithful today looking to the promise of eternal life, are not afraid of laws of man that contradict the faith we have. When man tells us to do anything that is opposed to God, we obey God through faith, rather than man through fear. By faith, the children of Israel departed from Egypt and were protected by God from being seen by the Egyptians as they left even though they were close together. Eventually, by faith they passed through the Red Sea with the Egyptian army in hot pursuit and because of faith, God worked it out so the children of Israel walked through on dry ground while the Egyptians found themselves getting stuck in mud and eventually drowning with the wall of water cascading down around them. Exodus fourteen verse thirteen.

Exodus 14:13-31

13. And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever.

14. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

15. And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward:

16. But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

17. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

18. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

19. And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:

20. And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

21. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

22. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

23. And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

24. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians,

25. And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

26. And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

27. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

28. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.

29. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

30. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore.

31. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.

The faithful know that faith can challenge what is commonly understood. To this day nobody can conclusively prove how the waters of the Red Sea were parted, and if we can't prove this to this day, imagine how eye-opening and almost terrifying it must have been to walk on that dry land with walls of water on either side. Like those Israelites walking through the Red Sea, we must walk forward in faith even if what we see with our eyes is terrifying. Had any Israelites refused to move forward through the Red Sea, they would have likely been killed by the

Egyptians. We cannot retreat in faith and can only move forward pressing to the promise of eternal life. By faith, Rahab the harlot hid the spies of Israel that were sent to scout Jericho and made a deal with them that would spare her life and the life of her family, and Rahab's life was spared. Joshua two verse one.

Joshua 2:1-14

- 1. And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there.**
- 2. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country.**
- 3. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country.**
- 4. And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were:**
- 5. And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.**
- 6. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.**
- 7. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.**
- 8. And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof;**
- 9. And she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.**
- 10. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.**
- 11. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.**
- 12. Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token:**

13. And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.

14. And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

The lives that we have bring us into contact with so many other people who are not yet the called, chosen, and faithful. When it is evident to these others that God is with us in our lives as it was to Rahab the harlot, that God was with the people of Israel, that like Rahab the harlot, that among these other people there will be some who understand the value in being aligned with the faithful whom God is with. Like those Israelite spies who didn't reject Rahab's request because she was a harlot, we cannot reject people who express an interest in God because of the current circumstances of their lives, knowing that once they are among the called, chosen, and faithful, they will adjust their lives to reflect what God expects of them.

There are so many incredible accounts of faith in the Bible where people had to act before any evidence was presented to them of the need to act, and even though all of them acted with faith, none received the promise, that hope of eternal life. Hebrews eleven verse thirty-two.

Hebrews 11:32-40

32. And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33. Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38. Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

39. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

These people of the Old Testament did what they did through faith, and have not yet received the promise of eternal life. That hope is yet in the future and all who are the called, chosen, and faithful will be part of that first resurrection. Imagine though what would have happened if any of the people we read about today would have acted without faith. Imagine if Abel did not bring the more excellent sacrifice, if Enoch didn't walk with God, if Noah ignored God until the flood waters came. If Abraham ignored God would we be talking of Isaac, Jacob, and the children of Israel? What if the parents of Moses had allowed him to be killed obeying man rather than God, or if the children of Israel lacked faith to believe that God would get them through the Red Sea on dry land? If Rahab had turned the spies over to the King of Jericho, she and her family would have also been killed.

But all of these acted with faith. They acted based on something they hoped for that they had not yet seen with their own eyes. To be the called, chosen, and faithful, today and throughout the rest of our lives, we also must look beyond what we see with our own eyes today and throughout our life as we hope for eternal life by focusing on God's righteousness, and the Kingdom of God.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.