

NOT EVERYBODY HAS FAITH AND IS HELD BY IT

We can have saving faith, but not the practical faith we need to hold unto it in our troubled times; that faith that casts out worries, anxiety and fear, when the storm is above our heads; when the mountain in front of us seemly hard to climb; when left at the mercy of circumstances with no visible way out. The disciples showed this lack of faith, when faced with a storm of great proportion, even when YAHSHUA was in the boat with them, in spite of all the power He had demonstrated through miracles He performed. He mentioned that faith, as small as a grain of mustard, can do wonders, if we had it. There would not be mental or physical illnesses, because there would not be worries, anxieties and fear in the presence of faith. These three spirits affect the mind and body in ways that we are kept prisoners unto death. Slaves to the power of drugs, we become dependent of them to survive, day by day, year by year and finally unto the grave. When we are held by these spirits, faith is non-existent to perform miracles in our bed of sickness. The reality of God's promises is voided and doubt takes over the mind, making us even more prone to the power of sickness. **"By His strikes we are healed,"** are the words frequently used in our prayers for healing. Why they are not doing what they are supposed to do? Because they are not mixed with faith. We have uttered them over and over, but they stay in our head, never coming down to the heart – the soul, where the emotion, the will, and the intellect are working together to bring them into reality. We repeat them as a parrot repeats words without understanding their meanings. Practical faith depends very much on our believing from the heart.

Noah built an ark without seeing rain falling on the earth before. He heeded to God's command and performed it as he was told to do and behold, his salvation! (Gen. 6) Abraham took his son to be sacrificed at the command of the Lord. Behold, he became the father of all nations; YAHSHUA came from his descendants and through Him the world was blessed. (Gen. 22) Daniel and his friends were saved from the lion's mouth and from fire, because their faith overwrote worry, anxiety and fear. They cared not for their lives, but to obey God's commandments. (Daniel 3,6). King Jehosaphat did what the Lord commanded him to do to be saved from his enemies and Jerusalem was saved, without them having to fight them. He believed that the battle belonged to the Lord, and behold, the Lord God performed His promise (II Chron. 20). Moses stood in awe facing the Red Sea; the enemies were approaching him and his people to destroy them; mountains stood on the other side. Moses, however standing firmly in his faith said, Fear not; stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which He will work for you today. For the Egyptians you have seen today, you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace and remain at rest. The Lord told Moses, Lift up your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and the Israelites shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea (Ex. 14). So, it was that held by faith, Moses obeyed the words of the Lord; they were saved, but their enemies were left buried in the depth of the Red Sea. Not yet knowing Who YAHSHUA was, at His command, Peter and his partners were told to put their net out into the deep water and lower their nets for a haul; Peter, after toiled all night, catching nothing, said, On the ground of Your word, I will lower the nets. Held by his faith, Peter and his friends caught a great number of fish;

and as their nets were breaking, they signaled to their partners in the other boats to come and take hold with them. They came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink (Luke 5).

Life of faith is one that is connected with God at all times. Since faith is the substance of what we believe, mountains, as high as they are, are just molehills. They can be removed at the power of our words, guided by faith, expressed in words of command. YAHSHUA told His disciples if they had faith as small as a grain of mustard, they could perform miracles as in commanding the mountain to be thrown into the sea, and it will happen. Held by faith- the pillar of our strength, we can overcome the world. Nothing will be too hard for us in the sense of accomplishing the will of God, battling the evil one and his schemes which results in diseases. Mountains will overwhelm us only in the absence of faith. Holding unto faith is not thinking about the immensity of the problem we face; it is not fearing its outcome; but it is walking in the light of God's promise: "The battle belongs to the Lord." Faith constitutes the entire armor of God available to us in times of trouble. It is holding on faith and nothing else, that we will have victory over any circumstance. For the word faith is another word for victory. He said, "My sheep hear my voice" (John 10). There will be many voices heard in our walk through this earth. The voice of reason can sometimes mislead us, when our walk is not guided by faith. But at the same time, it is trustworthy when we are guided by faith.

Many roads, many turns, many decisions we will face. But the one that we must take is the one held by faith. The Bible says, all that is not of faith is sin. Faithless life cannot please God. The letter to the Hebrews confirms it: "Without faith it is impossible to please God; for whoever would come near to Him must believe that God exists and that He is the rewarder of those who earnestly and diligently seek Him" (11:6). Faith is the bridge in receiving all the blessings promised in the Word of God.

Many heroes and heroines of faith have lived a life filled with troubles; but they found peace in their sustaining faith in God. Many today have risen above their sufferings and have become heroes and heroines in their examples of enduring faith. They were destituted, they were hungry and lacking the most important things to survive, yet, they held on to faith to the end. Their deaths were not a thing to pity over, for their end was glorious when they found themselves in the presence of the One for Whom they suffered and died for, continuously beholding His face in righteousness, satisfied when awaking beholding His form. From Psalm 17: 15, a psalm of David, who suffered many woes in his life time. His enduring faith we read in almost all the psalms he wrote. He was sustained by it and declared his love and hope in God based on the strength of his faith. In Psalm 27:5,14 he said, "For in the day of trouble He will hide me in His shelter; in the secret place of His tent will He hide me; He will set me high upon a rock; wait and hope for and expect the Lord; be brave and of good courage and let your heart be stout and enduring. Yes, wait for and hope and expect the Lord."

It is enduring faith that will lead us to our eternal home, when we are guided by it, for faith is the substance of our spiritual life. Stephen, one of the believers of the first century, had without a doubt, a life that was marked by his sustaining faith. He died a death of a martyr, forgiving those who were stoning him. He prayed, Lord YAHSHUA, receive my spirit; and falling on his knees, he

cried out loudly, Lord, fix not this sin upon them; and when he had said this, he fell asleep (in death) (Acts 7:55-60). Beautiful, indeed. He died clear of bitterness against those who killed him. He saw heavens opened and the Son of man standing at God's right hand! (Acts 7:56). It was as if he was already in the presence of the Lord. Perhaps, he didn't feel the impact of the stones thrown at him. For in the presence of the Lord, there is peace, there is joy, there is hope forevermore. That's what he felt before he left his body to be forever with the Lord. Forgiveness is faith in action. Held by faith, all Christians must follow the way of the cross, forgiving all those who have offended us, otherwise, there will be no heaven for us, no matter who you are. Let's follow our Lord's example: "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they are doing!"

THINK ABOUT IT!