

Hebrews 11:30-40; "Victorious Faith" May 18, 2025

I. Welcome & Review

A. Good morning. "Ohayougozaimasu". Welcome to Calvary Chapel Iwakuni. It's great to be here with you all as we gather together to worship our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

1. *Welcome any new faces and those streaming online. Deterrence*

B. This morning, I believe we have yet another family that we will be praying for as they finish up their time here in Iwakuni. This is the last Sunday for the Gatt family. Cole, Emma, and the boys; Waylon and Reilly will be headed back to the states as Cole continues his military career.

1. This time of year never gets any easier. It's always hard to say "good-bye" or "see you later" to people who we've grown together with.

2. The Gatt family has made connections with many of us here at Calvary and we want to just thank the Lord for the season we've had with them and pray over them as they start their next chapter of life back in the States.

3. Cole and Emma, if I can have you stand where you are at that would be great. Then, if I could have some of the church leadership and those who feel so led just to come lay hands on this family as we pray for them, that would be a blessing. (*Pray*)

C. As people make their way back to their seats, let's go ahead and dismiss our elementary aged children to their Sunday School classrooms as well.

1. (*2nd Service; Remember to dismiss the Bible English class.*)

D. For the rest of us, we're going to jump back into our study of the book of Hebrews as we make our way through this book, chapter by chapter and verses by verse.

1. Last week we looked at the faith of Moses and how he chose to live a life of faith. Choosing to identify with the Lord and His people rather than as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. And in so doing choosing to suffer affliction rather than the passing pleasures of sin.

2. In his choosing, Moses realized that the reproaches of Christ far outweighed anything Egypt or this world could offer him. He forsook Egypt all the while keeping his eyes upon the Lord.

3. Now, Moses is probably one of the most famous of all the Old Testament saints and heroes of the faith. Most people know about Moses and all that he did, the sacrifices he made, the life that he lived, his heart for God and his heart for the people of God.

4. But this morning, as we continue to make our way through the Hall of Faith that is Hebrews chapter 11, we're going to come across some people and characters who weren't as well known as the likes of Moses, and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

5. These people lived lives of faith just like these others, but their stories aren't as well known. But that doesn't mean we can't learn a great deal from each of them.

6. God used these men and women to accomplish some pretty amazing things; through their faith they showed how to live victoriously for the Lord. These people were men and women who experienced all sorts of victories in life through their faith.

7. These people weren't perfect by any means, but none of us are, other than God Himself. As we look at their lives of faith and the victories they obtained, my hope is that we will be able to learn from their life lessons that we can apply to our own lives.

E. Our text this morning is going to be Hebrews chapter 11 verses 30-40 and the title of our study is going to be "**Victorious Faith**".

1. If you have your Bible with you, go ahead and make your way to Hebrews chapter 11. If you don't have a Bible with you this morning, feel free to reach down and borrow one of the Bibles under some of the chairs around you.

2. Once you are there in Hebrews chapter 11, and if you are able, I'd like to invite you to rise to your feet in honor of God and His Holy Word.

3. I'm going to read through our text from my Bible; I'll be reading from the NKJV of the Bible. If you are reading from a different translation this morning, that's ok, just do your best to follow along in your Bible as I read from mine. The author wraps up his review of the Hall of Faith and Hebrews chapter 11 with the following beginning in verse 30... (*R & P*)

II. Intro & Outline

A. Remember that the author of the book of Hebrews is doing his part to encourage his audience to continue to live lives of faith, to avoid the temptation to go back to Judaism, and to cling to Christ.

1. He was exhorting them to hold fast the confession of their hope without wavering, for He who promised was faithful. (**Heb. 10:23**)

2. These people the author is writing to have been experiencing various levels of temptation and persecution and suffering. The author had mentioned specifically how they had already endured a great struggle with sufferings, many of them had their possessions plundered from them, some were made into a spectacle by reproaches and tribulations.

3. The author said that they had need of endurance, they needed to persevere, to continue to bear these difficulties trusting that God would be with them, that all this was part of the will of God, and that God would be faithful to His promise. (**Heb. 10:36**)

4. At the end of chapter 10 he wrote how "the just shall live by faith". (**Heb. 10:38a**)

B. And from that statement he basically launched himself into a history lesson of the faithful men and women who have gone before them, as a way to encourage them and to inspire them.

1. The hope is that he would list off these people who were used by God in miraculous ways and that through their testimonies and accounts, the people would be motivated in their own walks with the Lord.

2. That perhaps they could learn from these people who have gone before them, who endured difficulties and overcame circumstances through their faith in God.
 3. We've looked at some of the main figures from the history of the Israelites; people like Abel and Noah, Abraham and Sarah and the patriarchs who came through them; Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.
 4. Moses was huge. He was a giant of the faith. All the Jews knew about Moses and his account. God did some incredible things through him, bringing the plagues upon Pharaoh and the rest of Egypt and ultimately being used by God to help deliver the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt.
 5. As the author continued to follow the chronological order of things, he does something interesting here in our text.
 6. The next thing after the Exodus from Egypt in the timeline of the Israelites is the 40 years of wandering in the desert.
 7. But the author doesn't make any mention of any of the events during this time. It's believed by most that this was done purposefully. For this timeframe in the lives of the children of Israel was more a time of unbelief, rather than a time of faith and belief in the Lord.
 8. For forty years they wasted away in the desert without many victories in the faith, instead their time was filled with a lot of whining and complaining, a lot of rebelling and division, a lot of discipline and judgment from the hand of God.
 9. And so the author wisely skips that timeframe in the history of the children of Israel and instead begins to focus in upon the generation after those who died out in the desert, those who by faith began to enter into the Promised Land God was giving to them.
- C. In our study this morning, we're going to break up our text into four main sections; with each section highlighting different elements of the victory God worked in and through them.
1. The first section for us this morning has to do with the "**Victory in Canaan**" found in verses 30 & 31. Take a look at these verses once again as we consider the victory of faith experienced by the children of Israel as they made their way into Canaan.
- III. Hebrews 11:30-31; Victory in Canaan
- A. As God led this new generation out of the wilderness, they found themselves traveling up the eastern side of the Jordan River.
1. Along the way the Israelites encountered a few different foes and won victories over some of the kings of some city states.
 - a. In fact, we just read about the details of those victories this last Wednesday night in our study of the book of Numbers. God gave them victories over Sihon king of Amon and Og king of Bashan on the eastern side of the Jordan River.
 2. But God was calling them to enter into and seize the Promised Land on the western side of the Jordan River, in the land of Canaan. But there was just one problem. On the other side of the Jordan River was the fortified city of Jericho filled with mighty men of valor.
 3. Unlike the kings of these city states who attacked the Israelites out in the wilderness, the city of Jericho was a fortress of defense. It was a city completely surrounded by a huge wall protecting them from any outsiders who dared try to attack them.
 - B. Now, by this time, Joshua is now the leader of the children of Israel, and he had been a great military leader. He had served faithfully next to Moses and was the one whom Moses called upon to lead the armies of Israel into battle. He was like the commanding officer, the general if you will.
 1. And he was pretty good at leading the children of Israel in battle. As I mentioned already, he won victories against Sihon and Og, but also he led the children victoriously against the king of Arad and also against the Amalekites as they exited Egypt.
 2. And so, he knew a thing or two about military strategy and how to best maneuver his men and put them in a place of strength that they may gain the victory.
 3. And here they are, having crossed over the Jordan River and they are sitting straight across from the walled city of Jericho. And he has to figure out a way to fight against this great fortified city with a huge wall all around it.
 - C. Well, the Lord comes to Joshua and basically says, "*Hey Joshua, I've got a great military strategy for you to put in place to ensure the victory over Jericho.*" To which Joshua was all ears, "*Ok, God, what is it?*"
 1. And God proceeds to tell Joshua that the key to victory would be gathering all the men of war and having them march against the city of Jericho.
 - a. "*Ok, we're going to try and just overwhelm them with sheer numbers, march in, charge against them, and then what do we do as we approach the city?*"
 2. God says, "*No, you won't go to the city, you'll just march all the way around the city.*"
 - a. "*Ok, so, we're going to try and draw them out, to get them to come out to us and then funnel into the city whenever they open up?*"
 3. "*No, just march around the city and then return to camp.*" Then God says, "*Oh, and by the way, you need to bring seven priests with you and have them blow seven trumpets of rams' horns, and have the Levites carry the ark around the city as well.*"
 - a. "*You want me to take priests and Levites who aren't trained for battle into the fight? And you want them to blow rams' horns and carry the ark as they march around the city with the rest of the fighting men.*"
 4. "*Yes. Exactly*"

- a. *“Ok, so that first day will be like a declaration of war, or perhaps an warning to them that we mean business. Then the next day we’ll come out in battle array and attack?”*
 - 5. *“No. The next day we’ll do the same thing. We’ll march around the city with the priests blowing their horns and the Levites carrying the ark, and all the fighting men simply marching around the city. In fact, we’ll do this for six days straight, Joshua. And then on the seventh day we will make our move.”*
 - a. *“Ok, Lord, what will we do then?”*
 - 6. *“Well, on the seventh day, you’ll march around the city like you did before and the priests will blow their horns like before, but this time you won’t return to base.”*
 - a. *“Then we’ll attack?”*
 - 7. *“No, then you’ll march around the city again and again. Seven times in total. And then you’ll have all your men yell at the top of their lungs.”*
 - a. *“Yell out loud. That’s the strategy we’re going with?”*
 - 8. *“Yes. Yell at the top of your lungs and the victory will be yours. The walls of Jericho will come tumbling down when you guys shout with all your might. And the city will be ripe for the taking.”*
- D. Of course this is my adlib of Joshua chapter 6. In Joshua 6 God simply comes to Joshua and gives him all these details without any input from Joshua.
- 1. But I want you guys to think for a second here. I know many of you are active duty in the military, and most of you are around enough military people to recognize if something seems like sound military strategy.
 - 2. I have to wonder what was going through Joshua’s head when God tells him this strategy for overtaking the city of Jericho.
 - 3. This does not seem like a good strategy. If your commanding officer came up and said we’re going to take this location and our strategy is to simply march around the location for six days straight, and then on the seventh day we’ll march around it seven times while blowing horns and then yelling, I think most of you would think he had lost it.
- E. But the amazing thing is, Joshua does exactly what the Lord tells him to do. By faith he led the children of Israel into this bizarre military strategy against the city of Jericho.
- 1. The fighting men and the priests and Levites marched around the city once each day for six days, blowing their horns and carrying the ark of the covenant.
 - 2. No other sounds were made besides the blowing of the rams’ horns for Joshua strictly warned all of the people, “You shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I say to you, “Shout!” (Josh. 6:10)

- 3. Then on the seventh day they marched around it seven times, blowing their horns and then finally at Joshua’s command, when the priests blew their horns after the seventh lap around the city, the people all shouted with all their might, that the wall came tumbling down, falling flat on the ground. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. (Josh. 6:20)
- F. Here’s the thing, God had come to Joshua and promised him victory. He said, “See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor.” (Josh. 6:2)
- 1. By faith, Joshua, and the children of Israel, believed God for His promise even when the process made absolutely no sense to them.
 - 2. Church family, in our lives of faith, the plans and processes God lays out for us won’t always make sense to us. But that isn’t an excuse not to continue by faith.
 - 3. The Lord declares “‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,’ says the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.’” (Isa. 55:8-9)
 - 4. When the process God has you going through doesn’t make sense to you at all, strike it up as simply the Lord’s ways and thoughts being beyond your own and continue to trust Him and His promises.
 - 5. God will see you through, He will never leave you nor forsake you. He will complete the good work He began in you.
 - 6. While the process and plan may not make a whole lot of sense to us, trust, by faith, that God is at work and that His will is being done.
- G. Now, Joshua and the children of Israel are not the only ones recognized for the faith during that victory in Canaan. Our text also tells us about a woman named Rahab and her victory.
- 1. Now, if you aren’t familiar with the account of Rahab, you’re probably not alone. And if you are familiar with her account you may be a little surprised to see her listed here in the Hall of Faith amongst the likes of Abraham, Sarah, and Moses.
 - 2. If you or I were inducting people into God’s hall of faith, Rahab may not have been at the top of any of our lists. But that is part of what makes her account so special and worthy of mention here in the hall of faith.
- H. For those unfamiliar with Rahab’s account, Rahab was a woman who lived within the walled city of Jericho.
- 1. Before God gave Joshua his great military strategy for taking down the city of Jericho, Joshua had sent spies into the land to gather intel regarding the city of Jericho.
 - 2. He sent two men out to secretly investigate and gather intel and these two men made their way into the city of Jericho and found lodging in the house of Rahab.

3. Now, the Bible tells us very plainly that Rahab was a harlot, and because that was her trade, it was not strange for male travelers to find themselves seeking lodging in her home.
4. Well, word came to the king of Jericho that there were spies in the city who had been sent out by the Israelites and word on the street was that they had made their way to Rahab's house.
5. So, the king sent to Rahab telling her to bring out the men who had come to her house for they were spies sent to search out all the country. (**Josh. 2:3**)
6. But instead of turning the men in, Rahab hid the men on her roof in a pile of flax, proceeded to lie to the king saying that the men had come to her, but had already left through the city gate and that she didn't know who they were or where they were going.
7. This was all a falsehood, for she knew who these men were, and she knew what their intentions were. For we read in Joshua an incredible declaration of faith by Rahab to the spies she had hiding on her roof.
 - a. She said to them, "I know that the Lord has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath." And she proceeded to ask that her kindness be returned to her and that her and her family be spared when God delivered the city into the hands of the Israelites. (**Josh. 2:9-11**)
8. Wow. Rahab knew that the Lord God of the Israelites was the one true God of both heaven above and the earth below. For her, the evidence was too much to suggest anything otherwise. She believed upon the Lord and by faith protected the spies that had come to her house.
- I. And so, on that seventh day when the Israelites marched around the city of Jericho seven times and then shouted and the walls came tumbling down, there was at least one section of the wall that did not fall.
 1. For the Scriptures tell us that Rahab lived upon the wall. She had let the spies out of the window of her house which was situated upon the wall by a scarlet cord.
 2. And the spies told Rahab that unless she kept that scarlet cord hanging from her window, identifying her house from others, that they would be free from their oath of protection.
 3. On the day the walls fell, Rahab had gathered her entire family into her household and was spared the destruction that came upon all the rest of the city for their lack of faith in God. Rahab was saved, her along with all her household, the judgment of God.
4. Rahab and her story is an odd story, again, one you may not consider worthy to be mentioned amongst the likes of these other heroes of faith, but I am here to tell you that here story is more important than you may initially think and consider.
5. For Rahab's story is a picture of the beauty of the grace of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. The scarlet cord that hung from her window is a picture and type of the scarlet thread God weaves throughout the Bible telling of His great redemption plan.
 - a. Rahab's story lets us know that nobody, no matter how filthy your background, no matter where you come from, no matter your place in society, that nobody is beyond the reach of the gospel of grace.
 - b. All can be made into trophies of God's amazing grace if you will come to God by faith.
 - c. Rahab was a harlot, she lived a life of great promiscuity, she was a gentile, who was raised in a pagan land. And yet God reached her.
 - d. She heard about the Lord, she heard about all His wonderful ways in which He had worked in and through the children of Israel and she was convinced that He was the one true God of both heaven and earth.
 - e. Rahab's story lets us know that the gospel is able to save even to the uttermost. And not only that, but her story doesn't end there.
 - f. Her life not only pictures for us the grace of God in saving someone, but it also pictures for us the grace of God in using someone for God's glory.
 - g. We may believe that God is able to save to the uttermost, but do we believe that God can not only save someone like Rahab, but also turn around and use someone like her as part of God's great redemption story that is weaved throughout the Bible? Do we believe God can save someone this far gone and then use that person to bring about God's one and only Son?
 - h. That is exactly what happens in Rahab's life. For Rahab would get married to a man named Salmon and she would give birth to a baby boy named Boaz. And Boaz would marry Ruth and together they would give birth to Obed and Obed would give birth to Jesse and Jesse would give birth to David, through whom the Messiah, Jesus Christ eventually came. Rahab was David's great great grandma.
 - i. And Rahab is listed in the genealogy of Jesus Christ listed out in Matthew chapter 1. She is the great, great, great, great, "30 greats in all" grandma of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (**Mt. 1:5-6a**)
6. Rahab's mention here in the hall of faith reminds us that **the gospel has the power** to not only save, but also to transform a life and use that life for God's glory and His kingdom.

- J. Rahab, while she didn't have the best of starts, through her faith in God, she became one of the greatest women of faith the Bible speaks of. Such a beautiful and amazing story, her victorious life of faith is, to us all.
- K. Well, let's move on to our next section of scripture in verses 32-35a as we consider those who had "**Victory over Circumstances**".

IV. Hebrews 11:32-35a; Victory over Circumstances

- A. Here in these verses the author runs out of time and space to share all the details of the heroes of faith who have gone before his audience.
 - 1. I would really love to dive deep into each of these lives and the lessons they teach us, but we'd be in Hebrews chapter 11 for probably another month if we did that. So, I too will do my best to move along.
- B. I do want to briefly look at each of these lives and pull out a quick lesson we can learn from each of them and the victorious life of faith they lived.
- C. We'll start off with Gideon. Gideon's account is found in the book of Judges chapters 6-8. Gideon lived during a time when the children of Israel had been handed over to the Midianites by the Lord. The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and so this was their punishment, God handed them over to their enemies.
 - 1. Well, the children of Israel cried out to the Lord and the Lord decided to raise up a judge who could lead them in victory over the Midianites.
 - 2. God sent the Angel of the Lord to Midian, who happened to be hiding in a winepress threshing his wheat in fear of the Midianites. When the Angel of the Lord appeared he declared to Gideon, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!" (**Judg. 6:12**)
 - 3. The Angel told Gideon how God was going to use him to save Israel from the hand of the Midianites and how He was sending him out.
 - 4. But Gideon basically said you've got the wrong man. He said, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." (**Judg. 6:15**)
 - 5. But again the Angel assured Gideon that God was indeed going to use him. Eventually Gideon came around, but he still feared the Midianites and their enormous army of 135,000 soldiers. He rallied around him people from the surrounding region to go to battle with him, but could only muster up 32,000 people to fight.
 - a. And that is when things got interesting and God started his lesson of faith with Gideon.
 - b. Gideon was facing terrible odds; 135,000 up against 32,000. The enemy had more than a 4:1 ratio of fighting men against Gideon and his troops. And the Lord came to Gideon and said, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'" (**Judg. 7:2**)

- c. So God tells Gideon to offer an out for anybody who was fearful and scared to go out to battle. And 22,000 people left Gideon, leaving him only 10,000 troops to go up against 135,000.
 - d. God said to Gideon, "the people are still too many" and he whittled Gideon's forces down to a mere 300. And then God testified, "by the three hundred I will save you and deliver the Midianites into your hand." (**Judg. 7:7a**)
- 6. And that is exactly what God did. God led Gideon's 300 to victory over the Midianites and the seemingly insurmountable odds against them.
 - 7. Gideon thought he was weak, Gideon thought that God had the wrong man for the job. But God showed Gideon that as long as God is on your side, then there's nothing to fear.
 - 8. God promised and declared to Gideon that He was with Him, and that was all that matter. It didn't matter if Gideon was weak, it didn't matter if Gideon had 32,000, or 10,000, or 300. God was with him. And if God is for you, who can be against you? If **God is with you**, you have nothing to fear.
 - 9. What a great encouragement for these Hebrews that were facing persecution and temptation. Gideon's story would remind the people that just as God was with Gideon, so too, God was with them. And it didn't matter how many people came against them, as long as they were with the Lord, they need not fear a thing.
 - a. May we too be encouraged by Gideon and the lesson God taught him. God is with us, and He is for us. We need not fear.
 - b. We may be little, we may be weak, but remember what the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 12, he said, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (**2 Co. 12:10**)
 - c. God told Paul that His strength is made perfect in Paul's weakness and the same is true of us. In our weakness, God perfects His strength in us. (**2 Co. 12:9**)
- D. The author lists a few other judges as well. Barak is listed here. You may recall his account of leading the Israelites into battle against the 900 iron chariots of Sisera.
 - 1. The prophetess Deborah came to Barak and told him to gather 10,000 men with him and to go into battle against Sisera and his forces.
 - 2. But Barak was timid. He did not want to go into battle unless Deborah promised to go with him. Deborah said she would go, but because Barak was not willing to go on his own, that the Lord was going to give the glory from the victory to a woman. And that is what took place.
 - 3. A woman by the name of Jael tricked Sisera into taking refuge in her tent and while he napped, she took a tent peg and drove it through his head into the ground. She wasn't messing around. If you aren't familiar with this account, give it a read, it's in Judges chapter 4 and 5.

E. Samson is also listed here. Samson was a he-man with a she-weakness.

1. All of these judges listed here were people who were flawed, people who weren't perfect by any means. And their inclusion here in the hall of faith ought to encourage us all. You don't have to be perfect in order to be victorious in your life of faith.
2. We don't want to aim to disappoint, we want to live honorably before the Lord. But it is encouraging to know that God can use people that had some flaws, people who may have blown it a time or two, or three, or even more.
3. While Samson seemingly wasted much of his life getting involved in things he had no right to be involved in as a Nazarite, we read that at the end of his life, after he had been bound and blinded by the enemy, that he called upon the Lord one final time.
4. While he was brought before the enemy as a form of entertainment, to mock and ridicule him, Samson called out to the Lord asking God to remember him. He said, "O Lord God, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!" And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left. Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he pushed with all his might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life." (**Judg. 16:28-30**)
5. Samson overcame by faith. He trusted God to empower him one last time, that with one final blow, he would strike a death blow to the Philistines and thus helped deliver the Israelites from the Philistines.

F. The next judge mentioned in our text is Jephthah. I imagine most of you don't know much about Jephthah, his account is also in the book of Judges, in chapters 11 and the first half of chapter 12.

1. Jephthah had a rough upbringing, life wasn't easy for him. His father had an adulterous relationship with a harlot and he was the offspring that came from that relationship. Jephthah's father had other kids with his wife and the entire family knew that He was an illegitimate son.
2. The Bible says he was a mighty man of valor, but his brothers ridiculed him, hated him, and treated him with scorn and eventually kicked him out of the family saying to him, "You shall have no inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman." (**Judg. 11:2b**)
3. When he fled, Jephthah got mixed up with the wrong kind of crowd and often would go out raiding with these people. So he was a rough and tough kind of guy that wasn't easily intimidated or scared off.
4. And it came to pass after many years that the people of Ammon made war against Israel and the people of Gilead where Jephthah was from were in desperate need for help. So they reached out to their half-brother Jephthah requesting that he come lead them into battle.

5. Jephthah responded, "Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?" (**Judg. 11:7**)
 6. And his family pleaded with him that he come help them because the people of Ammon were too great for them and they needed someone like him to help keep them safe, to help lead them in battle.
 7. Well, Jephthah agreed to help his family and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and helped him bring about a great victory against the people of Ammon and for his family. Delivering their lives and becoming the hero of the family.
 8. Jephthah's account would be one that I think would encourage some of the audience of the book of Hebrews, for many of them had been ostracized by their family. Because of their faith in Jesus, some were kicked out of their families, renounced by them.
 - a. The account of Jephthah would remind them and perhaps encourage them, that maybe one day their families may find themselves in a difficult situation, in distress perhaps, not knowing what to do and who to turn to for help and maybe they would reach out to them, to find hope and answers for the difficulties they were experiencing.
 - b. I know this has happened a number of times in my life. People who didn't want anything to do with me but were hit with some of life's most difficult and challenging of circumstances and all of a sudden, they're reaching out to me for prayer, for guidance, for help.
 - c. Maybe you can attest to something similar in your own life. Perhaps a time where a distant family member or long-lost friend reaches out to you because they know you are a believer and they have questions, and they need answers, they want to know about the hope that we have within us through our faith in Christ.
 9. Jephthah's account shows how you never know when someone from the past may reach out to you for hope and answers and that we should always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks us a reason for the hope that is within us, with meekness and fear. (**1 Pt. 3:15**)
 - a. Maybe you're **praying for loved ones** to come to the Lord and you've witnessed to them many times before, but they just don't want to hear it right now. Don't be surprised one day when they reach out to you and ask you to pray for them. When difficulties and challenges come and people need hope, may they turn to us and may we be able to lead them to the Lord and the hope we have in Him.
 - b. May our lives and our faith in Christ be a beacon of hope to a world that desperately needs the Lord.
- G. Well, the author also mentions David and Samuel here along with the prophets. You're probably more familiar with their lives.

1. David was the mighty king of Israel beloved by the people. But he wasn't born into royalty. He started off as a ruddy looking boy, the youngest of eight sons who was responsible for keeping the family's sheep while his older brothers were off fighting against the enemy.
2. And you guys all know the account of David and Goliath, right. Goliath came out against the children of Israel and defied the armies of Israel, calling them out to battle him one on one.
3. One day, David's father sent him to the battlelines to bring some supplies and to check in on his brothers and David heard Goliath taunting the men of Israel and defying the armies of the living God.
4. And David would not have any of it. He stepped forward declaring that he would go and fight the giant. David was sent to the Saul who was king over Israel at the time and they tried to enquire about his training and whether he had ever fought before and David told of stories of how God delivered him from the paws of both lions and bears who had tried to take the sheep and that God would likewise be with him against this Philistine who was defying the Lord and His armies.
5. Eventually David was there on the battlefield, one on one against the giant Goliath and Goliath mocked him and ridiculed him
6. But this is how David responded in 1 Samuel 17, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands." (1 Sam. 17:45-47)
7. David knew a very important truth when it came to overcoming seemingly insurmountable odds and circumstances. He knew that **the battle belonged to the Lord.**
8. That victory wasn't going to be through his own might, nor his own strength and experience, or lack thereof. Victory to overcome was going to come from the Lord and Him alone.
 - a. Years later the prophet Zechariah would declare a similar message when he proclaimed the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord of hosts. (Zech. 4:6)
 - b. The battle belongs to the Lord. By faith, David took out the giant Goliath, trusting that the battle was God's and not his own. He was just a willing vessel, willing to be used by God to bring about a great victory.
9. Maybe you are here this morning, and you are facing what seems to be an insurmountable obstacle or circumstance. May you be encouraged

knowing that the battle belongs to the Lord and if He so chooses, He can bring about the victory, He can help you to overcome as you to Him by faith.

- H. And that really is the lesson from all these people. By faith, they all found victory over their circumstances; many of which are listed here in our text.
 1. Through faith they subdued kingdoms; people like Joshua, and David, and many of the Judges God raised up did this.
 2. They worked righteousness, or your translation may read they administered justice or enforced justice; again this would apply to many of the leaders God raised up during their years.
 3. They obtained promises, and stopped the mouths of lions. This could be referring to Daniel and his account in Daniel chapter 6 where the people tried to feed Daniel to the lions, but God stopped their mouths.
 4. They quenched the violence of fire; perhaps referring to Daniel's good friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego who were delivered from the fiery furnace King Nebuchadnezzar had thrown them in.
 5. They escaped the edge of the sword, and out of weakness became strong, they became valiant in battle and turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Sounds like Gideon to me.
 6. Women received their dead raised to life again. Through the ministry of the prophets Elijah and Elisha this happened to the widow from Zarephath in 1 Kings and the Shunamite woman of 2 Kings.
 7. All these amazing victories over extremely difficult and challenging circumstances. By faith, God brought them the victory.
- I. But not everyone experienced the same results as these people listed here. Take a look at our next section highlighting those who experienced **"Victory beyond Catastrophe."** Read with me the rest of verse 35-38.
- V. Hebrews 11:35b-38; Victory beyond Catastrophe
 - A. Others didn't experience that same sort of deliverance over their circumstances. Some went through catastrophe. Some were tortured, mocked, scourged, imprisoned and even killed through stoning, and being sawn in two and slain by the sword for their faith.
 1. The prophet Jeremiah experienced a lot of these things. And many believe that the prophet Isaiah was sawn in two by order of the evil king Manasseh after he prophesied of the destruction of the temple. Isaiah is said to have hidden himself within a hollowed-out tree and when Manasseh found him he ordered the tree cut in two with Isaiah in it.
 - B. It's interesting to me that in verse 34 we read of how some escaped the edge of the sword, but here in verse 37 we read of how some were slain by the sword.
 1. And this brings something up that I think is very important to understand. God doesn't always choose to deliver His saints in the same manner. All lived by faith, but not all were delivered from their circumstances, some had to endure great catastrophes in life, some

had even died. Does that mean that their faith wasn't as great as those who were spared, those who were delivered? No, not at all.

2. It just means that God chose to work differently in and through their lives. Again, He is operating in ways that are far beyond our own.
3. These people mentioned here who experienced these great catastrophes of life did so not accepting deliverance, that they may obtain a better resurrection.
 - a. They weren't living for this world and life here on earth. They were living for and believing in faith the promise of God **for a better resurrection**. A resurrection after death that would have them enter into the presence of the Lord in heaven.
 - b. These people were living like Abraham, by faith, they looked to their eternal home, they looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.
4. The world's assessment of these people was that they were not fit to live. They were tortured, beaten, scourged, mocked, tempted, afflicted, tormented, and killed by the people of this world.
 - a. But do you know what God's assessment of them was? God said that the world was not worthy of them. This world was not worthy of the men and women who found victory beyond catastrophe.
 - b. Maybe you are here today, and you've experienced this kind of catastrophe and loss in your life. And yet, you continue to praise God, you continue to live by faith.
 - c. I pray you will continue to do so all your days, with your hope and focus set upon the eternal. Life on this earth is short, and a better resurrection awaits all who will live their lives by faith. Continue forward in your walk with God, know that one day all your pains and heartaches will be eternally healed by the Lord.

C. Let's wrap up our text and our study real quick by looking at our final verses and the last section dealing with our "**Victory through Christ**."

VI. Hebrews 11:39-40; Victory through Christ

A. Verses 39 and 40 are more a summary statement concerning all the men and women listed and mentioned here in chapter 11 as part of the Hebrew Hall of Faith.

1. The author writes how they all obtained a good testimony. That word testimony can be used to speak of someone giving approval of another, or speaking well of another. In this instance, it is speaking of God's divine favor, God's divine approval.
2. God looked at each of these people and put His stamp of approval upon all of their lives. And how did they obtain this good testimony, this stamp of approval upon their lives? Not through their might, not through their strength, not through their own resolve, or their own persistence. It was through faith. **Through their faith**, God gave his divine approval of their lives.

3. All these people received a good testimony through faith, but they did not receive the promise. The promise of God's Messiah, the one who would come and bring usher in a new covenant, a covenant that would result in the grace of God being poured out on many, and people given full access to God by grace through faith.
4. But the author writes in verse 40 how God has provided something better for us; referring to himself and his audience. These people who went before them lived exemplary lives of faith, but they didn't receive the promise. But they had. They had seen the coming of God's Messiah. They had seen the establishment of the new covenant. They experienced the salvation that comes by grace through faith and they will one day be joined together with these saints of old in heaven, where they will be perfected forever in God's presence.
5. These heroes of the faith persevered, they endured, they lived by faith, not having received the promise. But the author, his audience, and even us, as we read this account, we have received the promise. And these heroes of the faith stand as a testament to the goodness of God and the power of faith.
6. One day we too **will be perfected** forever alongside the saints of old and the saints who have gone before us since Christ's coming.
7. We will be united together in one body, in one faith, for all of eternity thanks to the work of Jesus Christ upon the cross of Calvary. His death and resurrection made a way for us all to be joined together with these heroes of the faith, perfected together through our faith in Christ.
8. Amen? Amen. Let's pray.