

Lenten Devotional Reflection
30 March 2020 (Lent Day 29)

Scripture: Hebrews 11:17-31 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹⁷By faith Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, ¹⁸of whom he had been told, “It is through Isaac that descendants shall be named for you.” ¹⁹He considered the fact that God is able even to raise someone from the dead—and figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. ²⁰By faith Isaac invoked blessings for the future on Jacob and Esau. ²¹By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, “bowing in worship over the top of his staff.” ²²By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave instructions about his burial.

²³By faith Moses was hidden by his parents for three months after his birth, because they saw that the child was beautiful; and they were not afraid of the king’s edict. ²⁴By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh’s daughter, ²⁵choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶He considered abuse suffered for the Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the reward. ²⁷By faith he left Egypt, unafraid of the king’s anger; for he persevered as though he saw him who is invisible. ²⁸By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

²⁹By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. ³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

Message

In today’s scripture, the writer of Hebrews discusses the subject of faith through several examples in the Old Testament, including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and Rahab. All of them had been justified by faith in Christ. They waited patiently for God and had no doubts in God’s faithfulness. They depended on the Lord and trusted Him with all their hearts.

The phrase “by faith” has been used 11 times in today’s verses. By faith, Abraham received his son back on the verge of death after he decided to offer him up (verses 17-19). By faith, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph did not lose trust in God even though their visions were yet to be fulfilled in the final stages of life (verses 20-22). By faith, Moses chose to share ill-treatment with the people of God and led them to leave Egypt and pass

through the Red Sea (verses 24-29). Regardless of their identities and positions, they were good witnesses and examples by trusting in God.

Life is no easy and we inevitably will face hard times. The mysterious disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 (MH370) happened on 8 March 2014 is one of the tragedies that makes us sad and confused. However, as Christians, we believe God is faithful. Let us learn to strengthen our faith in God during the current epidemic and depend on Him to face challenges ahead.

Reflection

1. What are the things that the witnesses of faith have in common?
2. What is your most memorable reflection on faith?
3. In facing hardships, how can we live a faithful life?

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