

Have you ever considered how fascinating it will be when we get to heaven—not only being there—but to visit with our forefathers, disciples, and other Biblical characters and better understand their perspective of how they received and followed God's instructions?

I am always amazed, and I might add somewhat perplexed, when I read of the faith of many miraculous and sacrificial events these people exercised in following God's directives. Abram (Abraham)—getting a message to pull up stakes and set out for a foreign country he may have known little if anything about where he was headed. (Gen 12:1-6) Then in the land which God promised him they are directed to go to Egypt because of a famine in Canaan from where they get kicked out by Pharaoh (Gen 12:10-20) and return to Canaan. Now God really tests Abraham's faith and says **"Please take your son, your only one, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the land of Moriah; bring him up there as an offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell you."** (1) (Gen. 22:2) Can you imagine being told by your loving God to give up your only son as an offering? So Abraham binds Isaac and prepares him for a burnt offering and raises the knife to slaughter his only son before the angel says **"Do not stretch out your hand against the lad nor do anything to him for now I know that you are a God-fearing man, since you have not withheld your son, your only one, from Me."** (Gen 22:12) Obviously this was an incredible act of faith.

Then we see David, likely as a teenager around 17—19 years old, meeting a giant Phillistine, Goliath, around nine feet nine inches tall. In Stephen Quayle's book *Giants* (2) (p. 430) he describes Goliath: "On his massive head he wore a bronze helmet. The rest of his large body he protected with bronze greaves or leggings and a coat of mail. Around his thick waist hung a great sword, and across his broad back was slung an oversized javelin. The spear he carried in his hand bore a blade weighing twenty pounds.. For forty days now the Hebrews had endured Goliath's arrogance and abuse." As David approaches this mountain of a man, Goliath yells (2) (p. 432) to David: "Come here and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air!" So young David, confident God is on his side replies: **"You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷ All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands."**(3) (I Sam. 17:45-47) Another bold statement of faith as David takes a single stone from his pouch and slays the giant with one sling that hits Goliath in the middle of his forehead. So why didn't the Phillistines take David by storm in a rage? Simply because they had NO faith in the God of the Israelites. And now we find David walking away with Goliath's head as a trophy of his faith in God, his Commander.

Oh, to have this kind of faith. I confess too often I have not shown the kind of faith exemplified by these men. And yet God has been faithful in showing His love to me. I can reflect on one of several instances in my life when my life could have been snatched from me in an instant. On a cold winter night driving down a snow packed icy mountain road eight years ago with Nita, her sister and husband, at about 8,500 ft. elevation, I was driving slow as I began a L. H. curve in the icy road. As the road turned, my car only turned and slid sideways off the road, we went airborne sailing off the R. H. side of the mountain. In the two or three seconds we were airborne, I remember thinking 'Lord save us'. Suddenly we stopped moving still parallel with the road but at about a 35-40 degree angle and we heard a gnawing, scratching, creaking sound above the pounding of our hearts. As we finally were able to force the L.H. doors open (now uphill) and crawl out, we found this power pole guy wire had scraped the right front and stopped us from tipping over and rolling down the mountain because it cut through the right hand upper doors and into the roof of our SUV and held the car essentially upright. But the wire was swaying and the pole was creaking. I had driven this road many times without seeing the power pole – which was now leaning our direction—the only power pole near the road on the entire mountain. The utility company had to re-anchor the pole from the opposite direction the next morning. Whatever my faith level was before the accident, it was certainly greatly reinforced after the four of us walked away without a scratch.

We can only marvel when we read of the faith of the apostles as they were mocked, beaten, flogged, imprisoned, and even killed while still rejoicing in being a martyr for Christ. The faith they imparted is truly indescribable. Peter, whom Jesus chose to lead the believers in establishing the church, proved to be exactly what Jesus called him, the 'rock' (Mt. 16:18). Consider Peter's faith when he visited Joppa when a disciple named Tabitha (Dorcas) died. **⁴⁰ Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive.** (Acts 9:40-41)

Again, we see Paul preaching at Troas all night until daylight with a similar act of faith: ⁷ *On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.* ⁸ *There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting.* ⁹ *Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead.* ¹⁰ *Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!"* ¹¹ *Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left.* ¹² *The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted.* (Acts 20:7-12)

And how did Jesus liken a person's faith? "He says in Mt. 17:20:

Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." ^[21] ^[9]

The 'Impossible' - One of my former cohorts was often heard saying 'The difficult we do immediately, the impossible will take a few minutes'. The 'Impossible' - Do you have faith to do the impossible.??

Prayer"

Lord Jesus we thank you for the revelations provided in Your Word surrounding the power of faith. May this power become a part of our lives that Your Name be glorified.

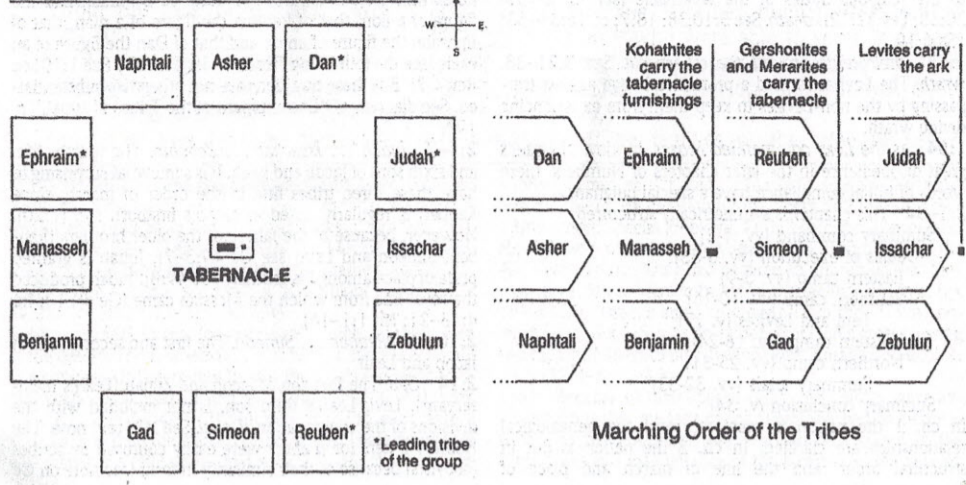
We are thankful too, Lord, for the fellowship and participation of this study group, and for Rudy's leadership through Your Word. We ask your guidance and blessings and that unity and love be reflected in our daily lives. Amen.

- (1) Genesis. quote from The Stone Edition—The Chumash—Pub. By Mesorah Publications, Ltd.
- (2) Giants, by Stephen Quayle—Pub. By End Time Thunder Publishers, Bozeman, MT 59718
- (3) New International Version text. I Samuel and NT quotes.

Saved as: Libraries, documents, Men's Bible Study, Devotions 10-16-12

Encampment of the Tribes of Israel

NU 2:1-31 NU 10:11-33



Israel's wilderness encampment around the central tabernacle Numbers 2

