

INDIAN CHURCH OF CHRIST
KOCHI

CELEBRATES

HEROES OF FAITH

QUIET TIME SERIES
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THE PREFACE

"By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible,"
(Hebrews 11:3)

"What is seen is not made out of what was visible." These words give us a clearer picture of the stories of our heroes of faith that we will be talking about in this Quiet Time Series for the next 30 days.

When it comes to faith there is only one Hero. The faith that all these heroes possess can only come from that one Hero - who is Our God Almighty. Each of the heroes we will look at, encountered this Hero personally. They experienced the Indescribable, the Alpha and Omega, the I AM, All-Powerful, Sovereign, Almighty, Self-Existing, Eternal One, Great Counsellor, Holy One of Israel, the Father in Heaven.

One of these heroes - Moses describes his experience like this: "Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord, and He passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin'" (Exodus 34:5-7). Moses came back with a transformed faith and a renewed understanding of God. He was a different man since then.

Each of the Heroes of faith rejoiced in God, which increased their faith and trust in Him. Job humbled himself before God and said, "I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted" (Job 42:2). Centuries later, the LORD assured the prophet Isaiah: "I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please'" (Isaiah 46:10).

After witnessing an amazing miracle, King Nebuchadne-zzar wrote to everyone in his empire: "He (the LORD) does as he pleased with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done?'" (Daniel 4:35).

The Apostle Paul reaffirmed that God "works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will" (Ephesians 1:11). Every story of these heroes tell us what God has in mind - His great and amazing purpose. Ours too.

So let us hear and understand their stories over the next 30 days and grow in our trust in the ultimate Hero. Let this series transform us one day at a time and instill in us a faith that moves our hearts to trust Him and His Purpose in each of our lives.

God bless you.

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 1 The God of Abel

Genesis 4:1-16

This is the story of mankind's first brothers.

- Cain was the older brother. Abel took care of animals, and Cain worked the soil (vv.1-2).
- Cain brought something to God, while Abel gave his best (vv.3-4).
- God was pleased with Abel's offering, but not with Cain's (vv.4-5). He wants our best.
- Cain was angry with God's opinion(v.5). God asked Cain why he was angry (v.6).
- God said if we do right, we'll be accepted. But if not, sin is ready to master us (v.7).
- Cain deceived Abel by bringing him to his own territory (v.8).
- God asked a question of Cain to which he already knew the answer (v.9).
- Cain asked if he was responsible for his brother (v.9).
- God heard the cries of Abel's blood (v.10).
- God warned that Cain would fail in his work growing crops because he had polluted the ground with the blood of his brother (vv.11-12).
- God warned Cain he would be restless and wandering – no peace and no home (v.12).
- Cain was overwhelmed (v.13). Cain felt self pity, saying he would be killed (v.14).
- God marked Cain and offered him mercy, allowing him to live (vv.15-16).

Matthew 23:35

Abel was described by Jesus as righteous, the first martyr.

Hebrews 11:4

Abel offered God a better sacrifice because he offered it by faith. God spoke well of his offerings. Abel still speaks though dead, because of his righteousness.

Hebrews 12:24

Jesus' blood speaks a better word than the blood of Abel, whose blood cried out to God from the ground (Gen 4:10).

1 John 3:11-12

Cain murdered Abel because his own actions were evil and his brother's actions were righteous.

We can learn about the God of Abel from these passages:

- 1) God Sees Actions.** God saw their sacrifices (Gen 4:3-5) and Cain's murder (Gen 4:10).
- 2) God Seeks Faith.** God could tell the difference between their offerings (Gen 4:4-5). One was token, and one was generous. One was routine, one was given with faith.
- 3) God Gives Second Chances.** He challenged Cain and gave him a chance to change (Gen 4:6-7). He did not kill Cain (Gen 4:15-16). Jesus' blood provides for a complete clean slate, a second chance (Heb 12:24).

4) God Remembers. Both Cain and Abel were remembered for all time: Cain was unrighteous (1 John 3:11-12), while Abel was righteous (Matt 23:35). Our possessions and achievements fade away. But our character will be remembered by those we touch.

Example: We're grateful for God's second chances, over and over in our lives. Even after really tough times – like when we made mistakes and learned hard lessons in London – God gave us the chance to move back to India by faith and to serve the poor. And though it was challenging, God blessed our choice and helped the work of *HOPE foundation* to grow and touch millions.

Challenges:

- 1) Is your giving of time and money like Cain, or Abel?
- 2) Are you facing a decision about your life right now? One path requires faith and risk. The other is safe and maybe more selfish. Will you trust the God of Abel as you decide?
- 3) Pray about the ups and downs of your life and reflect how God has given you second chances.

- Mark Templer

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 2 The God of Enoch

It is really encouraging to know Kochi church is celebrating 30 years of God working through many amazing faithful brothers and sisters to advance the Kingdom of God. Today's Devotional is titled 'God of Enoch'! We are going to look at Enoch and his relationship with his God.

Enoch was first mentioned in Genesis chapter 5

Genesis 5:18-24

When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Jared lived a total of 962 years, and then he died. When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years. Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

Here is one of the most amazing characters in the bible. One of the few who had the honor of being taken up without experiencing death. Yet his life and his walk with God is mentioned in just few sentences, what can we derive from this?

Enoch was the son of Jared. When Enoch was 65 years old Enoch became the father of Methuselah. After he became the father of Methuselah, the Bible says that Enoch walked faithfully with God 300 years. There was a change in the heart and devotion to God in Enoch after Methuselah his son was born. And it says for the next 300 years, till his death, Enoch walked faithfully with God. That is rest of his life brothers and sisters. Methuselah's birth was a turning point in his life and he never turned back from God since.

There is no specific mention in scriptures for the reason for a change in Enoch's relationship with God! But the name of Methuselah probably gives us a clue. The name Methuselah means, *when he is dead, it shall come*. At the birth of Methuselah, Enoch had a special awareness from God that judgment was coming, and this was one of the things that probably got him closer in his walk with God. God was communicating to Enoch and he was paying attention.

Enoch understood that there was a judgement of God after Methuselah dies. So Enoch was probably expecting that judgement would come any day and that probably motivated him to stay close to God rest of his life. We see him fully trusting God and walking with him faithfully.

Walking with someone implies amity, friendship, intimacy and love. To walk with someone takes denial. We have to go where he/she goes and do what he/she wants you to do and do what pleases the other person. Walking with someone is not easy - it takes denial, denial of your preferences, your whole being! That means if you want to go left and the other person wants you to go right, you go right. Enoch walked with God meant that Enoch did whatever pleased God.

That is what we read in Hebrews **11:5**

By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death: “He could not be found, because God had taken him away.” For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.

– Enoch never experienced death.

Bible says that he was taken from this life without facing death!! God was so kind to him that he did not let him face death – He was taken! God made it very clear to everyone how he felt about Enoch by doing something that was never done before. God knows, he knows our heart, he knows how sincere we are in our faith and how deeply we desire to connect with him. He knows the thoughts attitudes and motives of our hearts in our walk with him.

What would you say about your relationship with God? How is your connection with God? Will God be pleased with your desire, effort and faithfulness in wanting to pursue a deep relationship with him?

Challenge: Reflect on who was the God that Enoch knew that he walked with him for 300 years!

- Dinesh George

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 3 The God of Moses

Standing on the Promises of God

Exodus chapter 5 reveals to us the state of mind of God's people in Egypt, they were treated badly, forced to a life of hard labour for 400 years, oppressed by their captors and now once again they are crying out in their misery hoping somebody would hear their desperate pleas.

They have given up on Moses their leader and in return Moses who is at one of his lowest points in his leadership pours out his heart to Jehovah in vs 22-23 and in the middle of his great conflict of faith and discouragement God offers him the greatest of all comforts. God gives him Promises and though God's people have many valleys n mountains to climb, the God of Moses finds time to encourage them in a very personal way.

Let's be reminded that these promises are also carried out in our own time, in our generation as new Testament believers.

Exodus 6:6-9

I will bring you out from under the labors of the Egyptians (NASB)

The reality was that they were slaves in Egypt, not for a month, not for a year but for hundred years but for 400 years, that's a very long time, generations of slaves, they laboured every day of the week in the heat and in bad conditions, they didn't know what rest really meant! They had no weekends off, no Sunday's to rest and to worship! everyday was a week day, a working day and in the midst of this situation God promises them rest, He says I will bring you out of hard labor, they needed rest, they were tired, weak and burnt out! God promised them rest, these are very comforting words!!

God's people not only needed to be physically freed but also they were in desperate need of redemption.

Redemption is more than just setting someone free, it means paying what's owed/debts to set one free, God was willing to pay the price for his people in Egypt, God will forgive them and reconcile with them in spite of their sins, what a great promise! they will soon be under a new order, they will truly be under a new King. Can you see the similarity in the New Testament?

How are you feeling this morning, tired? troubled? burnt out? Can you relate to God's people in some small way? God promises us rest because he who formed us knows our inner needs, rest is a crucial part of our physical, mental and spiritual well being, (Promise of Jesus – Read Matthew 11.28)

- Albert Shane

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 4 The God of Nehemiah

In the book of Nehemiah, we read how Nehemiah leads the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls (Nehemiah 1-7) and how Ezra and Nehemiah stage a revival in Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 8-10). As we read through this book we begin to see it is not just offering simple answers and moral examples. It is also giving us a view into how the character of God's people can be deeply flawed, and life is mixed with success and failure. Through it all we see that God never abandons us.

Nehemiah Understood God's Faithfulness

Nehemiah 1:4

When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

Nehemiah's brother and companions came from Jerusalem to see him, and Nehemiah questioned them about Jerusalem's condition. They explained that the people were in great trouble and disgrace. After hearing this, It appears he prayed for four months. Confessing the sins of Israel, asking God to remember his Covenant with His people, and asking God to grant him favor with the King.

Jesus also emphasized the need for prayer and fasting in Mark 9. Nehemiah was so distressed by the news of Jerusalem's condition that he was compelled to pray and fast. There should be things in our lives that we care about so much that it will compel us to pray and fast.

In our lives we wanted to be a family that was devoted to God. There were many things in this world that could pull our family away from God. We spent many days praying and fasting that God would protect our family and turn our children's hearts to follow Him. We are so thankful to God that our three children are now disciples of Christ.

Nehemiah 4:9

"And we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat."

In this scripture it really shows how people prayed and acted. They prayed for protection and they made preparations against the attack. In our life we may face a lot of opposition. Satan will try to get you sidetracked, maybe your job, or friends, illness, financial difficulties. We need to accept that there will always be opposition, understand it then respond.

Have you ever prayed for wisdom and then a scripture pops into your mind? I have prayed about what to share with others or teach, and then Bible verses come to my mind. I believe that is the Holy Spirit giving us the plan as we pray.

People May Be Flawed but God is Perfect

Nehemiah 13:6-8

But while all this was going on, I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had returned to the king. Some time later I asked his permission and came

back to Jerusalem. Here I learned about the evil thing Eliashib had done in providing Tobiah a room in the courts of the house of God. I was greatly displeased and threw all Tobiah's household goods out of the room.

Nehemiah had to leave Jerusalem for sometime and when he came back he observed that the people were doing many unrighteous acts. There were many things that angered and disappointed Nehemiah. God is full of mercy and grace but He is also a God that continually calls us to righte-ousness. No matter how flawed people around us are, we should continue to strive to be righteous.

- George Mathew

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 5 The God of Gideon

...is the God Who Delivers

Today you will meet the God of Gideon. Read **Judges 6: 1-23** with a focus to get to know the God of Deliverance. As you read the passage jot down any phrase that stands out to you about God. The God of Gideon meets you in your trials. He reminds you that you are no longer a slave to sin (v.8). He rescued you from powerful forces (v.9). He is with you (v. 12). He thinks we are a mighty warrior (v. 12). He is patient and listens to our doubts, fears and insecurities (v. 13-23). He gives us peace. We can be completely honest with him. Listen in on Gideon's conversation with God. "If you are with us, why do all these bad things happen to us?" (v. 13). "I feel like the Lord has abandoned us (v. 13)." "I'm the weakest or I'm not good enough." (v. 15). God patiently listens and says, "Go in the strength you have."

Last year I (Pam) felt like the Israelites in a small way. I was working on my doctorate and the pressure of comprehensive exams was looming. We were going through some ministry changes, which felt traumatizing. Just when I thought things couldn't get worse, I got news that my mom passed away. My brothers and I had planned to go to India in May and my mom was looking forward to all of us coming. COVID-19 shut down everything. I could relate to Gideon. I cried out to God like Gideon, "If you are with us, why is all this happening to us?"

In all this turmoil I **looked** for God. His response was, "Go in the strength you have. I had to **open my heart** and tell God my fears, why did you take my mom away? He said, my peace I give you" I had to visualize the Holy Spirit writing my exams. I then **entrusted my cares** to him. God truly delivered me. As I look back at that time, God delivered me from intense pain, I was able to pass my exam, celebrate my mom's life with family all over the world and we continue to pray together every day. Our family got closer than ever before. God is truly a God of deliverance.

The God of deliverance wants to hear our cry, feel our emotions. Listen to us, give us answers, walk with us and hold our hand. He cares deeply. What emotions are you experiencing today? When you are discouraged, having grief, disappointment, who do you run to?

Connect today with the God of deliverance and experience his **LOVE**

Entrust your Cares to him – Cast it on him for he cares for you (Philippians 4:4-7). The God of Gideon is a God who loves. Just like Gideon, learn to have an honest conversation, sharing your innermost thoughts and feelings. After your share, listen to hear what God has to say and then go in the strength you have.

-Oommen and Pam

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 6 The God of Joshua

Deuteronomy 34:8-10

For forty years Moses led Israel. Moses was a great man of God, but who was going to take his place. Which leads us to the question for today's devotional? **Who Can God Use?**

- There was no man of the caliber of Moses upon the horizon.
- The most likely candidate to take over when Moses left off could be:
 - Caleb - He was an older man, full of experience, righteousness, and leadership
 - Phinehas - He was the grandson of Aaron the priest of Exodus; he would be the natural successor.

But the very interesting thing is, God bypassed these men, and **chose Joshua**, an ordinary man.

- I suspect that Joshua least of all, thought that he would be called.
- Joshua, an example of what God can do with a simple man, completely yielded to Him.
- Now surely, Joshua was, an average man.
 - Why did God overlook better qualified applicants?
 - Note God's rule, as Paul stated it in **1 Cor. 1:26-29**, READ
- Moses was initially too strong for God to use.
 - He was raised and trained in preparation to possibly be Pharaoh someday.
 - God had to remove Moses from that and stick him in the wilderness herding sheep, until Moses came to the place where he would say, "*Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of God out of Egypt.*" (**Exodus 3:11**)
- You see that is the problem that God has with most of us.
 - God usually chooses for a particular task, a person who has some weakness.
 - Have you ever noticed it in Scripture?
 - Gideon was the least in his father's house, but God used him.
 - David was just a little shepherd boy whom his own father overlooked.
 - Elijah and Jeremiah were strong prophets, yet they were very weak men underneath. (One wanted to commit suicide and the other wanted to resign.)
- The great problem in our churches today is we have too many people who have talent and ability. (don't get me wrong – talent is not bad. But remember to not take credit for the talent but give glory to God)
 - Many feel that God can and will need them. (challenge: don't ever make that mistake)
 - If you ever wondered why God has not used you in a wider way, take heart – all it needs is to stay humble
- Joshua was an army man; a man used to take orders.
 - From the beginning Joshua understood that even if he was the commander-in-chief now, he still wasn't to give orders, but take them.
 - As the children of Israel were starting their march into the promised land and Joshua had given strict orders 'to keep their swords at their sides and not doing anything aggressive', he notices a man standing outside the camp with his sword drawn and raised up and Joshua goes out to see who this was.

- **Joshua 5:15** says, *“Then the Commander of the Lord’s army [the Pre-incarnate Christ] said to Joshua, “Take your sandals off your feet for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.”*
- Joshua, from when he was just a young man leaving Egypt till now, understood one important thing; **someone else gives the orders and he is merely to follow them.**
- At this moment, right now, our Lord is in heaven at God’s right hand and he is still the commanding officer.
 - the headquarters for the church are still up there, not down here.
 - Let the Word run our lives.
 - God gives the orders, and we are to obey.
 - Here is where most of us fail in finding God’s will for our lives. God has a **Will** for us, a good and pleasing will.

- Jacob Kuruvilla

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 7

The God of Barak

I am going to talk about the extraordinary God of Barak. The Canaanite king Jabin ruled the Israelites for 20 years. The commander of the army, Sisera had 900 chariots of iron and ruled over them cruelly. But the Israelites had no weapons to fight back. It was truly an extraordinary situation.

A prophetess named Deborah was a Judge for the people of Israel. God spoke through Deborah instructing Barak to recruit 10,000 men from the tribes of Israel and attack Jabin's army. But Barak in vs 8 said to her, "If you go with me, I will go; but if you don't go with me, I won't go". So Deborah and Barak willingly went with each other. They took thousand men who willingly came with them without any weapons and won a great victory over Canaanites. In Judges 5 Deborah and Barak sang a song praising God who was behind the victory over the Canaanites.

Extraordinary God

God did an extraordinary miracle by destroying the army with flood from the Kishon river. **Judges 5:20, 21** *"From the heavens **the stars fought**, from their courses they fought against Sisera. The **river Kishon swept them away**, the age-old river, the river Kishon. March on, my soul; be strong!"*

Judges 4:15 *"At Barak's advance, **the Lord routed Sisera** and all his chariots and army by the sword, and Sisera the commander of the army got down from his chariot and fled on foot." We worship the same God who intervened and fought for Deborah and Barak.*

Extraordinary people

Judges 5:8 says: *God chose **new leaders** when war came to the city gates, but not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel.* The new leaders Deborah, Barak and Jael had no weapon but a willing heart.

Deborah – Her name means Honeybee. Female bees are hard workers. Deborah a hard worker who was called to be a prophet and a Judge against all odds in a man's world.

Barak – Meaning Lightning. He listened to Deborah and recruited ten thousand men from just two small tribes of Israel. As the scripture says Barak and Deborah willingly submitted to one another and went to war without weapons and won a great victory because they listened to an extraordinary God

Jael – Meaning Mountain Goat: always on the edge. She was willing to risk her life to save Israel by killing Sisera the commander of the enemy army with a tent peg.

Every one of you who are listening to this message are extraordinary people because we have an extraordinary God, and we do have a willing heart.

Personally, I could not imagine myself talking to a huge gathering because I am always fearful of talking to people. Today I can do it because I have an extraordinary God with me.

Let us have a willing heart like Barak, Deborah, Jael and the ten thousand Israelites who came forward to fight the enemies without any weapon.

- Rajmohan Paul

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 8 The God of Isaac

There are many names for God in the Bible that emphasize His different characters. He is El Shaddai (“God Almighty”), El Elyon (“The Most High God”), Yahweh Yireh (“The Lord will provide”), Yahweh Elohim Israel, (“Lord God of Israel) and other names like that.

God is also known as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 3:15, Acts 7:32). Through these three persons, God tells us that He is the God of Abraham (the extraordinary persons), the God of Isaac (the common persons), and the God of Jacob (the evil persons). He is God to those who are outstanding in their faith. He is God to those who are merely ordinary people. He is also God to the vilest among all men such as the robbers, the thieves, and the prostitutes.

The covenant made with Israel was passed on from Abraham to Isaac, from Isaac to Jacob and then to the whole nation of Israel. So, the name reminds us of God’s covenant faithfulness. All three were promised land, many descendants, and a blessing from the Lord. Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldees to Canaan, and the Lord established a covenant with Him (Genesis 12:1-3). The Lord reaffirmed the same covenant He made with Abraham’s son, Isaac (Genesis 21:12; 26:3-4). Later, the covenant was affirmed with Isaac’s son, Jacob (Genesis 28:14-15).

Of the three patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), we know least about Isaac. But it is interesting to note how Jacob addresses God in Genesis 31:42 as the *Fear of Isaac*, and in Genesis 31:53 he addresses God as the *Fear of his father Isaac*. So, we see that for Jacob, God is “The Fear of Isaac” or the “fearsome God of Isaac” (NLT).

The Bible makes it clear that God is to be feared as well as loved. He is still “the fearsome God of Isaac.” Some scholars say that Jacob referred to God as the “*God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac*” (and not “the God of Isaac”) because Isaac was still alive at this time and thus still serving God with fear and reverence, while Abraham was dead and already with the Lord. Other commentators (particularly Jewish scholars) also believe that calling God the *Fear of Isaac* points back to the event of Abraham nearly sacrificing Isaac on Mount Moriah. Surely this event would have taught Isaac a lot about the God his father served. He would have learned that God expects total obedience, and he would have seen first-hand the mercy and provision of God in providing a ram to sacrifice in his place. Isaac would have known about the incredible power and grace of God as he heard his mother Sarah talk about the miraculous way that he was born- to very old parents who were past the point of having children naturally. He also experienced this kind of grace in his own life- God allowed his barren wife to have children after he prayed on her behalf. Isaac also saw the sovereignty of God in the circumstances surrounding the giving of his blessing to Jacob when God’s plan was to give it to Jacob instead of Esau.

Through all of the events of his life,

Isaac learned that fearing the Lord meant revering His greatness, obeying His commands, and submitting to His authority, and from Jacob’s words, we see that fear of the Lord became a defining characteristic of Isaac’s life.

I have fallen in the trap of pride, self-righteousness, forgiveness and the like over the years and our hearts tremble before God. I also have been through many hardships like lack of finances, death of dear ones, joblessness, being falsely accused etc., but through it all we have seen that God is sovereign and no matter what the situations, He is always faithful, and He is the one to be feared out of reverence and awe.

Let us with prayerful and humble hearts seek God and be known as people who fear and tremble before the great and awesome God we worship.

- Pradeepkutty

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 9 The God of Joseph

Genesis 37 to 50 talk about Joseph and his walk with God. We see good times and bad times in his life but he walked with God all the time. He faced many battles in his life.

The Family battles

Genesis 37:19, 20, *"Here comes that dreamer!" they said to each other. "Come now, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we'll see what comes of his dreams."* Genesis talks about several painful stories of sibling rivalry like Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau. Here Joseph's brothers conspire against him because he was getting more attention as a favourite son. They hated him all the more when they heard about his dreams. None of them realised it was God who was at work.

We live in a world where there are many family battles - between husband and wife, parents and children and also between siblings. Some time it can be physical other times just inside the hearts and minds. How do you find yourself in your family? How others in your family experience you? Are you a brother or a sister who bring peace in the family or are you a trouble maker?

Joseph had a very bad experience from his brothers and as a result he reaches Egypt. But what is so encouraging is - The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. (Gen 39:2)

Battle in the world

In Genesis 39, we see that Joseph was accused of rape and was put in jail. May be he could have thought this was the end of his life. Genesis 39:21 says -But while Joseph was there in the prison, the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warden. What convicts me is that this God was with Joseph all the time- during prosperity or in prison. When we are with God and God with us we can face any battle in this world.

Genesis 45:4-5 NIV

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. When Joseph became highest in position he did not take revenge with Potiphar and his wife, or his brothers. Joseph was aware of God's presence in his life always and that helped him to forgive his brothers and he could become a life saver and peacemaker in his family.

Today let us all make decisions to bring peace in our family and in our church by having a close walk with this God of Joseph. As a disciple of Jesus we can decide not to live a life of revenge, enmity or forgivingness because these are the things that destroy our lives. When I look back into my life I had to face many battles -A difficult childhood with an alcoholic father, a seminary life filled with temptations and then wandering around Bangalore to find a job. God was with me through all these and I got an opportunity

to study the Bible and become a disciple and also be part of Cochin Mission team. I could see God leading me and helping me through all these.

Joseph experienced God and trusted him throughout his life. Genesis 41:15, 16 says - *Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." "I cannot do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires."* This God of Joseph is my God and yours, he is with us and he has a plan for you and me. Let us trust him and live a life that pleases Him.

- Saji Alex

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 10 The God of Samson

Samson, is indeed an interesting character. He evokes varied emotions in us when we go through his story. If you are not an informed reader, you might very well come across some conclusions which may not be scriptural or God intended also. Remember, the hero of every story in the Bible is God himself. We find the story of Samson in Judges 13-16. He served as a Judge or a “tribal leader”, during the formative years of Israel. Hebrews 11:32 mentions Samson’s name in the ‘hall of fame’ of the heroes of Israel

Samson was a Nazirite. (Numbers 6:1-8 says, it’s a very unique or special vow of faithfulness towards God, there were conditions attached to it). Only three are named in the Bible as a Nazirite - Samson, Samuel and John the Baptist. Interestingly, all three of their mothers were barren.

The call of Samson is to fight against Philistines, and deliver Israel out from their oppressive hands. (Judges 13:5b). His story unfurls; he saw a woman from Philistines and he wanted to marry her, his parents were saying ‘no’, but Bible says that this was from the Lord. In the course of getting married to the girl, Samson broke the terms of his Nazirite vow in many ways. He touched a carcass, ate fermented food, here honey, and he feasted with the Philistines, when he was not even allowed to touch a grape. The incidents which followed the wedding feast include bloodshed and burning of lives. The girl and her father were burned to death by the Philistines.

Later, the Philistines worked through the tribe of Judah and captured Samson. After this, we see Samson going to a prostitute, and later, he fell for another woman called Delilah. What a mess! In the middle of all these things, God was still working through him.

Samson gives out a picture of what was happening during those days, as described in the initial chapters of the book of Judges. He did not know how to serve God or to be faithful to God; everything he had done against Philistines came out of his own anger and vengeance. Samson broke every terms of faithfulness attached to his Nazirite vow. But the God of Samson was faithful to His promises, because Samson kept the Nazirite braids. When Samson lost his braids, by the influence of Delilah, he lost everything.

I believe, the final act of Samson brought him in to the hall of fame of Israel’s heroes. In Judges 16:25-30, he turned to God for one last time, in prayer, and as one-man army, he conquered the enemies of Israel, and gave his life for the cause God called him to do. For the God of Samson, His purpose of Samson was bigger than Samson himself. Samson has to pay for his sins, dearly.

The question that lingers in my mind as I write down this is; being 30 years in to my relationship with God, how do I look at my sins? Do I try and imitate the world around me and say to myself, “Oh, God will somehow fulfill his call for me, despite my sins!” Sometimes I am tempted to say, “My sins brought about something good, so it is ok that I’ve sinned.” Both are WRONG, because, such thoughts does not take the faithfulness of God of Samson in consideration. God does not need my sins for his righteous purposes to come to fruition. I want to live as one who knows the ‘heart of God’, which hates sin and ‘reflect the faithfulness’ he has towards me - let us, brothers and sisters. God bless Kochi.

- Benny Soza

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 11 The God of Hannah

We could see Hannah's story in the book of 1 Samuel. Elkanah had two Wives-Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children but Hannah was incapable of being a mother even when Elkanah loved her the most. Bible says in 1 Samuel 1:6,7; *"And because the Lord had closed her womb her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the Lord, her rival provoked her and she wept and would not eat."*

Childless woman was considered a failure. Hannah was frequently insulted by Peninnah due to her infertile womb. Still she tolerated all her insults on her barrenness without striking back. As a barren woman, Hannah had many reasons to feel bitter and discouraged. But rather than dwelling upon her problems Hannah did something else.

What did she do? Let's look into 1 Samuel 1:10; *"In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord."* When I face painful words or hurtful behaviour, my immediate tendency is to retaliate to people or feel depressed about it and disconnect from others. But we never hear a word about Hannah behaving like that to anyone. She never looked around but she looked up to God.

As she kept on praying to Lord, Eli, the priest observed her mouth and thought that she was drunk. Even when she was misunderstood by the priest, she didn't rebel against him but explains to him in humility. She said in 1 Samuel 1:15,16; *"Not so my Lord, I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord. Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief."*

Later we see in verse 19 and 20, that *"the Lord remembered her and she conceived a baby."* When she went to God with honesty and humility, He blessed her. Later as we know, she devoted the baby-Samuel- to the temple of God as she promised Him. Eli, the priest's sons were very wicked. Hannah could've made a thousand excuses not to leave her son there with them but she didn't. Instead she left her three-year-old baby there as she promised to God. She didn't worry about the circumstances, she trusted God to take care of him. What an amazing trust she had in God! Her pains, her hardships made her go closer to God than running far away from him. Through all these trials she learned to surrender to God and to put her trust entirely on God. She experienced God's faithfulness in her life.

Our God wants to show his faithfulness through different trials in our life. If we witness God's faithfulness, we will rejoice in our heart in spite of any painful situation around us. Sometimes it is God who allow those situations in our life so that we could experience his faithfulness.

In 1 Samuel 2:1, we see Hannah praising God with a merry heart. A bitter soul in chapter 1 is totally changed to a rejoicing heart in chapter 2.

Each of us may face such times of barrenness in our life when nothing comes out even after putting a lot of effort in our children, work and relationships. Instead of focusing on the problem and getting discouraged, we need to look up to God as Hannah did. God is faithful and he wants us to experience his goodness through these situations.

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 12 The God of Deborah

Today we are going to learn from Judges 4 & 5. Judges 2:10-19 says that after Joshua's death another generation of Israelites grew up who did not know the Lord or all the miracles he had done for Israel by rescuing them from the slavery in Egypt and bringing them to the promised land of Canaan. They did evil in the eyes of the Lord, serving the Baals and Ashtoreth. Hence, God gave them into the hands of their enemies. But whenever they cried out, God raised Judges to save them.

1. God Uses Whoever is Willing: Judges 4:4-14

Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a wife and maybe a mother. Jewish society did not give much value to women, their role was usually limited to being a wife and mother staying indoors. They were not educated in language or the scriptures. Deborah after receiving God's call to be a prophetess could have easily given in to her fears and various insecurities to shy away and not accept that call or that role. Instead she rose up to the opportunity and served publicly holding court, settling disputes and revealing God's instructions. She didn't allow any excuses or fears to stop her from doing God's will for her life. She was willing to assist Barak and be there for him without belittling him or refusing him, though he was expected to lead without her. She led as a mother in Israel, inspiring 10,000 people from all the tribes to willingly offer their lives to fight against Sisera's army (**Judges 5**).

What are some insecurities and excuses that stop you from being effective for Christ? What are your fears? What are some opportunities to serve His kingdom that you had rejected?

2. God Delivers His Children: Judges 4:15-24

Imagine 3,00,000-foot soldiers 10,000 horses, 900 iron chariots, all defeated, scattered and retreating and the commander Sisera fleeing on foot! -that's the sight which met the eyes of the ten thousand men who came with Barak. God caused confusion and fear, allowing the Israeli men to easily slaughter all of them, and a non-Jewish woman, Jael to kill commander Sisera using a tent peg!

What are some miracles God has done in your lives, that delivered you from fears, insecurities, diseases, accidents, death, sin or any other traps?

3. God Deserves Our Praises: Judges 5 (Song of Deborah)

Deborah and Barak sang the song praising God for the victory He gave and for all the people whom he could use. 1 Peter 2:9 and many other scriptures remind us that we are created to declare God's praises. Think about the insecurities or excuses that stop you from serving God's Kingdom. Prayerfully decide what step you can practically make towards overcoming this barrier.

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 13 The God of Esther

The book of Esther is set far away from the Promised Land, on the opposite end of the world in the city of Susa, the capital of the powerful Persian Empire (539–331 BC), extending from India to Nile region in Egypt.

The story has a strong message. If you do what is right and intentions are right, God helps you out and makes the situation in favour of you no matter how powerful the persons who is planning to destroy the one who walks in the path of God.

Esther becomes Queen as Mordecai pushes her in a smart way and King likes her to be his Queen out of all the girls contesting for the position. Mordecai figures out that there is a revolt against king and reports it to king through Queen Esther. Instead of honouring Mordecai, Haman is plotting to kill Mordecai and all Jews in the province on a single day and manages to get the permission from King to carry out the concealed plan.

Time was running out and Mordecai is pushing Queen Esther to the point of death to appear before the king without his permission and to bring out the matter to the king. It's surprising to see the king was pleased to see the Queen and offers even half of the kingdom to her. Her mind was set on how to save the genocide of Jews. She prepares a party and invites King and Haman. King's heart, prior to the second party, was troubled and couldn't sleep and decides to go through the chronicles in which Mordecai's good act of saving the king's life was mentioned and nothing was done for him by the king or officials. King decides to honour Mordecai in his heart. And the kind of honour was detailed out by the king through Haman. Haman thought he was going to be honoured but king Honoured Mordecai. Prior to this Haman has already prepared a pole to hang Mordecai.

When King and Haman came to the Queen's party and Queen disclosed the evil plan of Haman. While the king went for a walk, Haman decided to plead with Queen to save him from king's anger. King saw Haman falling on the couch in which Queen was seated and took it as if Haman was molesting Queen. King's anger flared up against him and he was impaled on the same pole he had prepared for Mordecai. Queen manages to convince king so that Jews are allowed to protect themselves from the enemies.

We won't see the mention of God or sin in this book but we feel the presence of God and his Guidance through one man Mordecai which saved Jews from the evil intention of enemies of Jews. All events happening in favour of Mordecai in the midst of adversities is an eye opener how God decides to help the one having good plans for others.

In my life disaster has crossed me multiple times. After my first daughter Lidya departed, we were trying for another child and was undergoing treatment and things were not turning in our favour even after so much time and money was invested. So we decided to stop all treatment and submit to Jesus. And it's a miracle Liyanda my daughter came into our life comforting our soul.

It's always good to put ourselves into Jesus hand for he has a plan for us, not to harm us but to prosper us. As Jesus says "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."
- Sheji

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 14

The God of the Slave Girl

2 Kings 5; 1-4

“Now Naaman, captain of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man with his master, and highly respected, because by him the Lord had given victory to Aram. The man was also a valiant warrior, but he was a leper. Now the Arameans had gone out in bands and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel; and she waited on Naaman’s wife. She said to her mistress, “I wish that my master was with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy.” Naaman went in and told his master, saying “Thus and thus spoke the girl who is from the land of Israel.”

This little girl has been sold into slavery and is working in the house of a high ranking Aramean official as his wife’s maid. We don’t know from the text how long she has been there, or how she has been treated; whether she has violent or benevolent owners. But what is striking about her is that despite all this she still has the courage to speak up and to honour Elisha, the prophet of Israel’s God – who, let’s be honest – has not saved her from captivity! **Despite every-thing, she still had faith in Yahweh and his prophet.**

God had not prevented her capture or suffering, but she still believed that he was the answer to Naaman’s problems. She still believed in his power, in his faithfulness to heal, in a prophet to work on his behalf, in miracles done in his name. There is no ‘could’ but rather a ‘would’ in her mind. She believes God and his prophet WILL heal her master - even if they didn’t save her.

When we look into the life of this slave girl, she was young, she was a slave, she was a foreigner far from her family - despite all the struggles, she had the heart to help her master. This little girl is a real inspiration. She shows concern for those who she has no reason to love, who do not love her, who use her.

Just like the slave girl we can also demonstrate our God through our life so that the people around us will see and worship him.

We can be like her who was spreading ‘good’ despite her suffering; we can share the Gospel even in our toughest times.

- Asha James

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 15 The God of David

There are many heroes of faith in the Bible. But if you have noticed, there is only one man in the Bible who had the privilege of being called “a man after God’s own heart” in God’s own words (Acts 13:22; 1 Samuel 13:14).

Have you ever wondered... why? Is it all about him. Or about the God whom he served? How it can be this man who proved himself capable of lust, which led to adultery, which led to murder (2 Samuel 11), getting that commend-ation from God? How did this man go down in the annals of history and in the very Word of God as a man after God’s own heart?

When I think of David’s life and read his writings, I’m struck by one trait that David exemplifies more than anyone else in Scripture, and very likely more than any human being I’ve ever known: Complete and unpa-ralleled honesty with God.

Reading David’s Psalms, is like taking a spiritual roller coaster ride. Let’s check this out: *Give ear to my words, O Lord; consider my groaning. Give attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for to you do I pray* (Psalm 5:1-2). He is pleading to God to hear his prayer probably in a time of distress.

O Lord, rebuke me not in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath. Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am languishing; heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled. My soul also is greatly troubled. But you, O Lord—how long? Turn, O Lord, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love. For in death there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who will give you praise? I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping. My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows weak because of all my foes. (Psalm 6:1-7). During a time of pain and distress he is seeking God’s grace.

I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies... (Psalm 18:1-6). This is a psalm of acknowl-edgement of God’s love and protection for him.

These are the words that came out of David when he was faced with real life situations. Today the question before us is - are we willing to throw away our mask and be vulnerable before God and people? Remember that David was not only vulnerable with God but also with all of us.

Let’s get real with our pain, hurts, fears, weaknesses, gratitude, ignorance and so on.

- Christy Varghese

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 16 The God of Habakkuk

Habakkuk was a prophet from Judah who lived around 600BC. We understand from the book that he lived there some time before the invasion of Judah by the Babylonian empire. Being righteous and godly, Habakkuk was upset by the sinfulness of the Israelites. He wondered why God didn't punish the evil doers and correct them. So, he decided to complain to God about the sinfulness of the people who lived in Judah. He felt helpless and asked God why he had to live with all the injustice happening around him. He wondered why God was tolerating all the wrong doings among his chosen people (Hab 1:3). Somehow, he felt that God was no more in control of his people.

As we know, the God of the Bible is compassionate and slow to anger. Here, in this book, we see our God listening patiently to all the complaints made by Habakkuk. And later God replies back with all the plans he has in dealing with the evil that was prevalent in Israel, and also informs him about the upcoming judgement. God tells Habakkuk how he is going to raise up the Babylonian empire which will then conquer many nations around it and also invade Judah. Even though Habakkuk was not very happy with God's plan in which a nation more unrighteous than Israel was going to attack it, he decides to humble himself and wait for all these things to happen. We see how he puts his trust in God and magnifies God with praises.

God's judgement can be very harsh at times, but he also consoles the righteous (Hab 2:4). After hearing God's decision, Habakkuk trembled in fear (Hab 3:16). He prayed to God to be merciful in his wrath against evil. The God of Habakkuk as we see is mightier than anyone and is from everlasting to everlasting. His glory covers the heavens and his praise fills the earth (Hab 3:3). God ultimately wants everyone everywhere to come to know him and give him the glory (Hab 2:14).

We are constantly bombarded with bad news in the media, whether it is war, financial fraud, corruption, murder etc. which sometimes makes me wonder, why God doesn't directly interfere and stop all evil. Just like Habakkuk, I ask God why he delays his judgement on the wicked. Not realizing that his ways and thoughts are different than mine (Isaiah 55:8). I have realized that I need to be patient and wait on the Lord. The understanding that God is all knowing and just, makes me be at peace. The knowledge that he is the Rock and his works are perfect helps me put my trust in him.

Let's be able to pray like Habakkuk and praise God and find strength in him (Hab 3:17-19). Because no matter what happens in our lives, God can help us sail through it. He only has plans to prosper us and not to harm us, plans to give us hope and a future (Jer 29:11).

- Matthew Thomas

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 17 The God of Josiah

Josiah, king of Judah, was eight years old when he began to reign. In the eighth year of his reign, he himself began to seek the God of his forefather David, and God gave him success in all that he did. Josiah had to make a stand against his family and all the people of Judah who were bowing down to idols and practicing divination. He made the brave decision to follow the Lord wholeheartedly and set about destroying the idols, Asherah poles, and those who burned incense to these idols in high places.

Josiah reigned 31 years in Jerusalem, *“and he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left”* (2 Chronicles 34:2).

In the eighteenth year of his reign, he raised money to repair the temple, and during the repairs the high priest Hilkiah found the Book of the Law. When Hilkiah read it to Josiah, the king tore his clothes, a sign of mourning and repentance (verse 11).

King Josiah called for a time of national repentance. The Law was read to the people of the land, and a covenant made between the people and the Lord: *“The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people joined in the covenant”* (2 Kings 23:3).

“Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses, nor did any like him arise after him” (2 Kings 23:25). God’s wrath would later come upon Judah due to the evil King Manasseh had done (2 Kings 23:26), but the judgment was delayed because of Josiah’s godly life and leadership (2 Kings 22:20).

To seek God is to know more about God and His will. Although Josiah’s grandfather was a very wicked king, he humbled himself before Lord and sought him whole heartedly.

Let us seek God and His will today and forever. We can make a decision to submit ourselves to God so that God can use us to have an impact in the lives of many people around us.

- Binoy Thomas

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 18 The God of Elisha

Today we are going to talk about the God of Elisha. Elisha was a great man of God and he had amazing faith. He was also the old testament prophet who did more miracles than anyone else.

What made him the man who he was? It was his amazing relationship with God. He had a big picture of God. What is the meaning of big picture here? When we are close to any object we will see that as big. Same way, he was close to God so, he was able to see God, BIG. I remember, when I was a small boy, I could see planes flying up in the sky. It used to look so small and I used to wonder, how can people can sit in this. But when I grew up, I could see plane closer then I felt like, man!!! This is really big!

Same way with God, when we are close to God, we will see him Big.

Let us look into the bible to see how great his faith was and how big his God was.

*1 Kings 19:19-21¹⁹ So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him.²⁰ Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother goodbye," he said, "and then I will come with you."
"Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?"²¹ So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the ploughing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his servant.*

Here we see Elijah calling Elisha to serve God along with him. It is like Jesus called his disciples to follow him. When Jesus called his disciples some of them who were fishermen left their nets and followed him.

Here, Elisha also did similar thing. He left everything and followed Elijah. He also did something more. He slaughtered the oxen, burned the plowing equipment, then he followed Elijah which means, when he did that there is no chance for him to go back again. He found a big God and he never wanted to go back from serving him.

When I decided to follow Jesus, there were many people who were close to me opposed me from following Jesus and at some point, I even thought "should I really follow Jesus? – by hurting these people? But, many brothers and sisters came to me and encouraged me and they helped me to see that big God. They helped me to stand strong. I was able to see a bigger picture of God. Those encouragements opened my eyes.

Let us introspect ourselves and see how Big our God is...

Spent time with a person who is struggling in their faith and help him/her to see a bigger picture of God.

- Subhash

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 19 The God of Rahab

Joshua Chapter 2.

Goosebumps awaits those who understand Joshua Chapter 2 and its continued story found in *Joshua 6; Matthew 1:5-6; James 2:25-26 and Hebrews 11:31*. The central character is a woman named Rahab, a popular Inn cum Brothel owner, and a prostitute herself. Even to mention these details I was forced to think many times, whether it is fitting to be mentioned in the QT lesson. About the 'Israelite Spies' if you are wondering why they settled in a prostitute's home instead of spying, do note that brothel / Inn is an ideal location for spies to gather intelligence. Though tons of lessons could be learnt from the life of Rahab, this morning I would like to say two things what I see about the GOD of RAHAB.

1. For the GOD of RAHAB one's messy past does not matter

As mentioned earlier, though we feel quite uncomfortable to utter the words like prostitute, brothel owner etc, for the holiest of holy God, Rahab, (and every human being including you and me) are His creation. Everyone is fearfully and wonderfully made and are precious in His sight. All He looks at is not what choices one made yesterday, but what choice one makes today and tomorrow. I tried to read and reread to confirm that it is the same Rahab (of Joshua 2) who became the great grandmother of King David in whose lineage our saviour Lord Jesus was born.

In the Hall of Faith described in Hebrews 11, from among the crowd in which Rahab entered the promised land, where is Joshua, whose prayer God answered and stopped the sun from going down one full day? or where is Caleb, who kept his zeal, boldness, and devotion even at the age of 85? The choice she made on 'that day' and 'the days that followed', revived the 'lost' fact that Rahab was fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God; and that she is precious in His sight!

Dear sisters and friends what 'messy' past is haunting you, making you feel guilty, dirty, small or insignificant in your own eyes, and convincing you that you are NOT fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God; and you are NOT precious in His sight? The first choice you need to make today is *'for the GOD of RAHAB, who is my God too, my messy past DOES NOT MATTER. All He waits for is, what choice I am going to make today and the days to come. Hence I am going to display this understanding by being joyful, staying calm, feeling secured, accepting myself as I am and accepting others as they are.*

2. Far and wide, the GOD of RAHAB's power and majesty, has already reached

Jericho is over 700 Kms from Egypt. Yet in the days without radio, TV, phones, internet, social media etc, though Israelites were unaware, the news of how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea to protect HIS people, and how the Lord fought for HIS people have reached Jericho; and they had also learnt that LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below. Let us understand we are not the ones who are going to introduce God to non-believers for the first time. The love of Christ and His work of salvation has already reached many non-believers far and wide for many generations beyond what we can imagine and their spirit deep within rekindled even more due to the ongoing pandemic. The power, majesty, grace, glory of GOD of RAHAB is so very awesome that even a blind can see Him, deaf can hear Him

and dead (in sin) can feel His (offer of) salvation. All we need to do is to be faithful stewards and keep preaching through LIFE and ACTION more than mere words.

Each day, letting go of the bad choices of every yesterday, as we keep making choices like being content, godly (not just religious), self-controlled etc, in nutshell making choice to be like the women of worth mentioned in Proverbs 31, the GOD of RAHAB will certainly take you to the 'Promised Land' and also bring forth within you and through you wonderful men of God from your own family and also from the streets. Stay blessed!

- Reena Vincent

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 20 The God of Noah

Noah lived in a day in which man is graphically described as “wicked” and when “every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (*Genesis 6:5*). A day when the earth was corrupt and filled with violence (*Genesis 6:11–12*). It was ultimately a day when God finally said enough is enough and promised to destroy mankind, along with the earth (*Genesis 6:13*). However, there is a contrast between Noah and the wicked people of his generation. Perhaps the most significant thing we are told about Noah is that he found grace in the eyes of the Lord (*Genesis 6:8*). This is why Noah is characterized as a righteous man, blameless in his generation, someone who walked with God, just as Enoch did (*Genesis 6:9; 5:22; cf. Ezekiel 14:14, 20*).

In a day of unrestrained evil, Noah, who had a right relationship with God, stands out (*Genesis 7:1*). It is difficult to imagine such unwavering faithfulness in the midst of total godlessness, but that is the lesson that Noah’s story teaches us. Over and over again, the Bible states: “Noah did everything just as God com-manded.” His life of 950 years of exemplified obedience.

In the New Testament, Noah is described as a preacher of righteousness (*2 Peter 2:5*). The years in which the ark was being prepared highlighted God’s great patience with wicked humanity (*1 Peter 3:20*). Jesus, also, saw the days of Noah as characterizing the days that immediately precede His second coming (*Matthew 24:37–39*).

Noah obeyed God not only because he knew God in a personal way, but also because his faith was acting on His word no matter how foolish it may have seemed to the world around him.

Our lives and the circumstances in which we live are very similar to those of Noah’s time. But how are we living today? Are we living in obedience to God alone? God speaks to us through His Word just as He spoke to Noah. Be the ones who believe and obey those words completely.

- Kurian George

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 21 The God of Samuel

1st Samuel 3: 1-21

Here we see how Samuel became the prophet of God, how he has taken up the responsibility which God has entrusted with him and how he has grown as a prophet of God.

The boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord in the presence of Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there were not many visions. These words describe the dark days of Judges.

Even though Samuel was ministering to the Lord, he was not yet known the Lord, because he did not listen to the word of God yet. It may be because of the dark days which existed at that time.

When God called him, he could not recognize his voice. So he ran to Eli and said 'here I am, for you called me'. And Eli said I did not call you. God called Samuel 3 times and Samuel ran to Eli all the 3 times thinking that it was Eli who called him. On the 3rd time Eli perceived that the Lord has called Samuel.

When Samuel realized God's call, he started maturing and is established as a Prophet. Samuel is seen as the last Judge and the first prophet. Since the days of Moses (some 400 years before the time of Samuel), there were not many prophets in Israel. At this important time in Israel's history, God raised up Samuel as prophet.

Samuel loved God and obeyed him wholeheartedly. He became an honest and fair judge, dispensing God's law impartially. As a prophet he exhorted Israel to turn from idolatry and serve God alone.

God used him to anoint two important kings in the history of Israel, that is Saul and David.

The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up and he let none of his words fall to the ground.

Do we have people like Eli in our lives who can help us to understand the voice of God which will pave way for our spiritual growth?

What do we learn from the life of Samuel? Are we realizing God's call and are we ready to be used by Him for His purpose?

- Sojan Alex

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 22

The God of Caleb

In **Numbers 13** Moses chose 12 men who were leaders in their tribes. Caleb was the head of the tribe of Judah. Caleb and Joshua, along with 10 other men, were sent to Canaan to see if the land was good or bad and whether it was even worth fighting for. After 40 days of spying out the land, the spies told of an amazing abundance of fruit, milk and honey. **But the spies were fearful of what they found concerning the men and the cities.** Their report was that the cities were large and had strong walls around them. The children of Anak, who were known to be giants, lived in Canaan.

While there was much concern for the strength of the cities and the size of the people, **Caleb stood up for the promises of God. Caleb urged Moses and the people of Israel to trust God and possess the land.** The sorry report of the majority of the spies scared the people so much that they wept all night. Joshua and Caleb pleaded with the people to trust God for His promises. The people were so angry with these two faithful spies that they wanted to stone them. Sadly, the people turned away from the land of God's promise and wandered around in the wilderness for 40 years until all the adults, except Joshua and Caleb, died.

In **Joshua 14: 6-12**, we see Caleb's motivational speech. He said that he was 40 years old when he went to spy the land of Canaan for the first time. He spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness with Israel patiently waiting for the fulfillment of God's word regarding his possession of the land. After the 40 years of wandering and 5 years of war, Caleb was still ready to battle on for the Lord. When he gave his great speech he was 85 years old and claimed to be as strong then as he was the first day he saw those beautiful grapes in Canaan. He was as vigorous to go out to battle as he was then. His confidence was not in his own ability but in the power and faithfulness of God.

Caleb had full faith in his God who fulfills all His promises. **He trusted the promises of God even when others did not.** He was the oldest man in the whole country of Israel when he spoke those words. God blessed Caleb for his faithfulness and his patience. What an encouragement for us to be faithful to the promises of God. We don't have to make God's promises happen—He is perfectly capable of that. But, like Caleb, we should be prepared to follow God and patiently anticipate the fulfillment of those promises.

How do we respond to the negative report of people about God and his kingdom? What are some of God's promises which you find difficult to trust in? I have the tendency to listen to and believe the lies told by the great liar the Satan. I am realizing that all the negativity and critical thoughts in my mind are nothing but lies by Devil the deceiver. I am learning to focus more on God's Word and his promises in the Bible rather than listening to Satan's voice. Caleb glorified God by portraying his God large. How large is our God being displayed by our words and deeds? As we are commemorating the 30th anniversary of Cochin Church, let us think about ways through which we can make our God large.

- Bobby Jose

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 23 The God of Jacob

Humility in prayer

Today's quiet time thought is about another hero of faith whom God chose to fulfil the promises God made to Abraham for his descendants.

He is Jacob, one of the twins of Isaac. The meaning of that name is familiar to all of us. Jacob's early life was in line with that name.

Genesis 32:9-10⁹ Then Jacob prayed, "O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, LORD, you who said to me, 'Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,' ¹⁰ I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two camps.

Jacob who set out to Laban in Paddan Aram with just a stick, returned to his homeland as a very rich man. Neither his acquired wealth nor his achieved human strength led Jacob to a prideful stature. In his prayer to God, Jacob said, "I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant". Jacob is the sum of many disqualifications – a deceiver who, without showing mercy to his brother, obtained the birth right and the blessing which his brother deserved from his father, unfaithful person who lied to his father that he was Esau, deceived him by giving him lamb meat instead of his desired wild meat, and robbed him of the blessings. A man who deserves God's wrath and punishment, yet God has shown mercy to Jacob. God faithfully kept his promises, fulfilled in Jacob.

Personally, our life was full of crises, big and small, and I did not have the strength, self-confidence or faith to face it or overcome it. But only through the grace of Almighty God I can overcome it.

Let us look back at our lives for a moment. In many cases, we were like Jacob. When we are in despair, when we do not know what to do next, is it not God's grace that has guided us everywhere?

Dear brothers and sisters, the reason we have lived and received good things up to this moment is not because of our faithfulness or our merits, but by the grace of God. (This does not certify that our faithfulness and good deeds are not necessary or even they are bad, God require it from us). So that we may humble ourselves and remember the words of Jacob, "I am unworthy, Your Servant."

- Jyothi, Thiruvananthapuram

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 24 The God of Jonathan

1 Samuel 14:6
1 Samuel 18:1-5

Jonathan was a spiritual leader whose actions, attitudes, and interventions all glorified God. Jonathan was the son of Saul. Jonathan was very strong and courageous. In 14:6, he says to the young man who is carrying his armour, “Come, let’s go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised men. Perhaps the Lord will act in our behalf”, Jonathan and his company routed the Philistines in the war that followed. Despite being so strong and valiant, Jonathan did not rely on his strength but rejoiced in his victory in the Lord, saying that the Lord had worked for us. Jonathan did not glorify himself, but was convinced that it was the power of God and that had helped him. So he gave all the glory of the victory to God. Here in the scripture, it is said that the “Lord will work for us”. Jonathan was convinced that all the success that he has are given by God, no matter how small or big the strength of the army is. Thus Jonathan trusted in the Lord and gained strength in the Lord and was filled with the love of God throughout his life.

We can see that he shared this love with others. Saul was jealous when the people shouted, “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.” But Jonathan was not jealous.

After the time of Saul, Jonathan was to rule as king. But Jonathan was not jealous when the Lord gave it to David. But he said “You will be the king over Israel, and I will be second to you”. He did not dare to defeat David and become king. Likewise, Jonathan loved David with all his heart. Jonathan was Saul’s commander when the Philistines came to fight against the people of Israel and Jonathan was the one supposed to be facing Goliath in that battle. But David killed Goliath and saved the people of Israel. If Jonathan had gone to war that day, Jonathan would probably have died. But David went to war and saved Jonathan from death. Jonathan was loyal and loving toward David, who saved his life, and loved him with all his heart.

Let us think dear brothers and sisters, do we have the ability to understand the success that God is giving us today? Are we ready to give God the glory of success in our lives today? Or do we take pride in our own success, thinking that it is by our own ability? Do we think that the good knowledge we have, the good intellect, the good job, the good wealth, the good speech, the good environment, the good relationships are all our abilities?

May we have the knowledge and confidence that all of this is made possible by God. We must have the same love for Christ our Saviour today that Jonathan had for David. Christ died for us and saved us in the place where we should have died. Today we can be ready to love that Saviour as God, just as Jonathan loved David.

Let us understand today - Every person who relies on God and find strength in Him will have the character of God. May we live as unchanging children of God, as God is unchanging.

-Bennychan, Thiruvananthapuram

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 25

The God of Daniel & Friends

The book of Daniel centres around this profound theme—the Sovereignty of God. (We shall meditate on God, than any person)

Discipline: (Daniel 1:1-2/Jer 32:27-28)

The all-Knowing God of Daniel & friends, starts the Book of Daniel with a commencement of loving discipline enacted on His OWN people (Judah) and their Ruler (King Jehoiakim), by allowing their capture and enslavement by many pagan Kings in succession, starting from the most powerful one, King Nebuchadnezzar, then by his son Belshazzar, by Darius, by Cyrus. The Sovereign God had a disciplining plan for God's people/rulers & later for pagan people/rulers, at His timing, as both are His Creation.

Which area of your life, do you think, He might start disciplining with or have already started? What will you choose to do next?

Favour: (Daniel 1:9)

***God caused** the man-in-charge official, **to show favour and compassion to Daniel.** v17- *To the four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. Dan 3:25 Son of God had joined* the 3 friends to be with them during the crisis and save them from the extreme fire and to serve as a testimony for all others, to see and put their faith in the real GOD. **Dan 6:14** The king, even though, in full authority, made every effort, to save Daniel from the pit of Lions, he could not, since, it was not in God's timing and method, but in v22 my God sent angels to shut the mouth of lions and saved me. **Dan 9:21-23** While Daniel was in prayer... angel Gabriel was sent for giving insight and understanding, and for appreciating him that, he (Daniel) was highly esteemed and will be given more visions for the distant future. (That will benefit all the generations to come, till Christ Jesus returns and beyond). **Dan 12:1-3** *Angel Michael will rise... name found in the Book of Life (Phil 4, Rev 3,13,17,20,21). Chapter 12v2 many will arise...some to everlasting life & others to contempt (1 Thess 4:14-16)**

Proclamation: Dan 2:19-23

(All Nations! All People's! Let's Proclaim Him to the Whole World and in the great assembly of His Saints")

Daniel praised the God of Heaven and said, about His wisdom, power and giving it to others, changing times & seasons, raising up others, reveals dreams. V27-28 *Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, ²⁸ but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries.*

Dan 4:1-3 *King Nebuchadnezzar, "It is my pleasure to tell, the nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth: about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me... His dominion endures from generation to generation. In 4:17, so*

that the living may know that the **Most High is sovereign over all** kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone. **Dan 7:27** *Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. 'His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him'*

Dan 9:4-17 *Lord, the great and awesome God...keeping with all your righteous acts.... hear the prayers & petitions of your servant.*

Conclusion: God says, "I am the Lord, the God of all the peoples of the world". He will keep showing great **signs** of the future, display **wonders** every time. All the Kingdoms in any era, are **disciplined** by Him, till finally His Kingdom will last forever and His rule through all the generations of the World. His **proclamation** style and His Biggest **favour** are: **12v3 ..the wise(people), who lead many to righteousness, will shine like the Stars for ever and ever. 12:10-Many will be purified, made spotless and refined.**

Dan 12:13 **"AS FOR YOU, GO YOUR WAY TILL THE END. YOU WILL REST, AND THEN AT THE END OF THE DAYS YOU WILL RISE TO RECEIVE YOUR ALLOTTED INHERITANCE."**

The pagan Kings were made to know this, Daniel & his friends knew it.

Prayer: Ask our Sovereign God to help you to understand & handle the DISCIPLINE, thank & ask for FAVOURS, the strength & will for PROCLAIMING Him.

Are we truly aware of the sovereignty of our Lord and God, and ready to offer our allegiance to Him, till the very end?

- Binoy Philip

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 26 The God of Elijah

You will recall that it is written that Elijah was a man of like passion as you and I [James 5:17], yet our Lord God manifested Himself in his life in such extraordinary ways that sometimes makes one wonder why such responses from God are not so common today.

What was it about Elijah that distinguished him from the rest and made God so endeared to him? You will discover as you read along 2 Kings 2:11-14. There is a significant position for Elijah in the whole of God's programme.

Elijah operated at a time when the powers of darkness had completely paralyzed Israel so much that they threw down the altars of God and forgot about serving God. He was the first prophet to announce that there will be drought to punish God's enemies. He was the first prophet to lock up heaven and put the key in his pocket and said, "There will be no rain except by my word;" the first prophet to multiply food, raise the dead, pray for immediate rain, write a death letter to a king and the first prophet to call down fire.

When Elijah had gone by a whirlwind to heaven, his servant, Elisha was stuck at the bank of the river Jordan. He could not build a bridge to pass nor swim over. He was in trouble and could not do anything. He would have been destroyed by wild animals but he picked up Elijah's cloak that had fallen from him and struck the water with it and screamed, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" he asked. And as he did that, God answered, it divided to the right and to the left, and he crossed over.

Who then is the Lord God of Elijah?

1. The Lord God of Elijah is the one who makes a way where there is no way. He can part your Jordan so that you can cross over.
2. The God who multiplies with nothing.
3. The God who brings the visible out of the invisible.
4. The God who can provide for His people by humanly impossible means. The Lord God of Elijah was the one who fed Elijah through the ravens.
5. He is the one who looks after all those who loose themselves in Him, like the widow of Zarephat.
6. He is the God of resurrection. He gave power unto dead bones, and they came alive again.
7. He is the Lord who can give supernatural strength. Elijah ran 30 miles by feet and the chariots could not catch up with him. The Lord of supernatural energy.
8. The Lord God of Elijah is the God who answereth by fire.

Maybe you are at the end of the road now and a particular problem seems to have caged you in, call on the Lord God of Elijah, let Him answer by fire. One big truth is that the man who can really pray has nothing to fear.

- Thomas Panicker

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 27

The God of Jephthah

Judges 11: 1

Jephthah was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a prostitute. What amazes us is how such a person, who has no dignity by birth, who has been driven out by his own countrymen, and who has grown up hearing insulting words since childhood, has become one of the heroes of faith. When we know that the God we depend on is a God who seeks to uplift and use those who trust in Him, it gives us the courage.

When we study the life of Jephthah, we see that although Jephthah was a mighty man, he always relied on God and not in his ability. The Ammonites have been persecuting the Israelites for 18 years. The elders of Gilead came to Jephthah because there was no one who could lead the battle against the Ammonites. The people and nobles of the land who had driven him away were calling for him to become their commander when the situation arose. Verse 9 - Will you make me leader, if Yahweh puts the enemy in my hand? What we find from this answer is that Jephthah was convinced that it is the Jehovah who could cause the victory over the enemy. Verse 11- This verse refers to a very complex matter. Jephthah repeated all his words before the Lord in Mizpah. We can understand that this is a prayer with an open mind to God. Another thing that can be seen in Jephthah is that everything being done patiently without jumping into anything.

First and foremost, he told the people who drove him away what was in his mind. Secondly, he went to God and talked to Him. Thirdly he spoke to the enemies for peace.

It is best to go to God and pray before doing anything. When I have a problem in my life, I often do not go to God but to call others on the phone for help. Another thing that proves Jephthah's faith is that when the Ammonites came to the battle, they said, "This is our place. Give it up or we're going to fight." Jephthah's answer to this question shows how much Jephthah knew about what God had done to their forefathers. In verse 23, he asks; "Now since the Lord, the God of Israel, has driven the Amorites out before his people Israel, what right have you to take it over?" It was his belief that the Lord gave them the land they occupy.

Verse 30-31 The verse says that Jephthah made a vow to the Lord." ...whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in triumph from the Ammonites will be the Lord's..."

Verse 34 When the battle was won, his only daughter came out to meet him. As difficult and heart-breaking this has been to Jephthah, *he still chose to keep his vow to God.*

(Some suggest that Jephthah didn't really kill his daughter, but that he offered her up as a burnt offering by having her stay unmarried and work in the sanctuary the rest of her life. In verse 37, she asks permission to roam around and mourn, because she would not get marry)

His Faith Is Revealed Through His Accomplishments

One important thing we can learn from Jephthah's life is that God will use us, no matter how flawed and weak we may be, if we leave it to God.

Let's remember that we are engaged in a battle to save many souls, let's fight that battle with much faith.
God bless you.

- Johnson, Cochin

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 28 The God of Hezekiah

Hezekiah, (Hebrew: Hizqiyya) is one of those kings whom the nation of Israel is very proud of. He had some amazing victories, proud achievements and he restored worship of God in the nation of Judah, as we can correctly observe, he himself had convictions to worship the Lord. His rule and achievements are well documented and we can find it in both the Jewish and Assyrian archeological evidences.

Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, following the footsteps of his forefather David. His father King Ahaz was evil, so much so that he even sacrificed another son his in fire for receiving favors from pagan gods. Kings before Ahaz, Jotham and Azariah were “OK” kings, but were not fully committed to the Lord, the worship of the Lord was breaking down steadily in the land. So there was no role model for Hezekiah, no one he could watch or hear and grow, while he was growing up. Yet, irrespective of all that Hezekiah decided to follow God whole heartedly. Bible refers to the times of Solomon in regarding the joy and strength the nation of Israel enjoyed during the reign of Hezekiah. 2 Kings 18:5 reads: ⁵ Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him.

We can learn tons of lessons from the life of Hezekiah, but as for today’s devotional, I would like to focus on two incidents from the life of Hezekiah.

Firstly: “The Lord Revives” (2 Chronicles 30:18-20)

¹⁸ Although most of the many people who came from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun had not purified themselves, yet they ate the Passover, contrary to what was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, “May the LORD, who is good, pardon everyone ¹⁹ who sets their heart on seeking God—the LORD, the God of their ancestors—even if they are not clean according to the rules of the sanctuary.” ²⁰ And the LORD heard Hezekiah and healed the people.

Hezekiah had a lot of zeal to bring back the temple worship in the chosen land of God. There was a tremendous revival and many hearts were turning to God, many were recommitting themselves to the Lord. But when Hezekiah, decided to celebrate the Passover together with the whole nation, some of tribes did not turn up, and some men from some of the tribes were casual. They did not consecrate themselves before taking part in the Passover. The Kings attitude was amazing; he decided to pray for them, invoking pardon from the Lord. And the Lord heard his prayers.

The antidote for spiritual lethargy and internal complacency is prayer - Luke 21:34-36 ³⁴ “Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

Secondly: The Lord Purifies (2 Kings 20:19)

When everything looked great and Hezekiah felt so good about himself and his reign, God decided to purify Hezekiah. Some men from the King of Babylon came to visit Hezekiah, for they have heard the miraculous sign God had done to him (the sun going back ten steps on the dial), and he displayed all the wealth he had in front of them. 2 Chronicles 32:31 reads like this: ³¹ But when envoys were sent by the rulers of Babylon to ask him about the miraculous sign that had occurred in the land, God left him to test him and to know everything that was in his heart.

God was not happy with this, He send Isaiah the prophet to challenge Hezekiah for what he has done. Hezekiah's response was rather cold; "Will there not be peace and security in my lifetime?"

Walking with God, does not ensure a secure, peaceful and joyful life as many would assume. Hezekiah's walk with God was amazing, but the moment his heart was filled with pride and self-reliance, God brought discipline in his life. Later, the Babylonians came and conquered the land, confiscating everything from the land and the temple of the Lord. Watch out for pride invading in to our hearts, dear brothers and sisters.

Let us pray earnestly that the Lord of Hezekiah could restore every heart in the Kochi church. Remember, pride lurks behind every success. When pride invades into our hearts, we become God's enemy. The God of Hezekiah wants us to be pure and holy, as he is pure and holy. God bless.

- Benny Soza

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 29 The God of Job

Job is the answer to the question, “why the righteous suffer?”

The very first verse of the first chapter tells us who Job was. He was blameless, upright, and God-fearing. In verses 4 to 7 we see Job rejoicing with his children as a father and offering sacrifices and praying to God for the remission of his children’s sins.

Job believed in God. At the same time, God had faith in Job. The words of Job 1: 8 are the greatest recognition God gives to a man.

One day in the life of Job who was a rich man, a godly man who rejoiced in righteousness, all his riches were lost. Even in those difficult times, Job’s words are very inspiring. Job 1:21 *“Naked I came forth from my mother’s womb, and will return naked: for the LORD hath given, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD”*.

Then we see how great Job’s attitude was when he had serious illnesses in his body, even when his wife told him to deny God, Job did not sin with his lips. Job 2:10 *“He replied, you are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?”*

Job, who comforted many others through loving counsel when they were going through hardships (Job 4: 3-4), did not receive words of comfort from friends who came to comfort him in his time of distress. His own wife mocked his faith, friends who came to comfort him eventually discouraged him. This is where Job begins to speak to God. Job 13: 3.

Even at this time, Job’s attitude becomes clear to us in 13:15, “Even if he kills me, I will wait for him. I will prove my ways before him.”

Then Job asks God questions. In response, God asks Job some questions -Many questions that no human in the world can answer to this day

Today, we too often ask God many questions. One of them is the question of why suffering comes again and again despite doing good. The answer is that God has many plans beyond our comprehension and thoughts. We are not wise enough to question them. We need to recognize how submissive we are to our God in any situation

Finally, in chapter 42, Job apologizes to God. You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?’ Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. (42:3)

Job 42: 5 says, “I have only heard of you, and now I see you with my own eyes.”

Later we see that when Job prayed for his friends, the Lord changed his condition and doubled everything he had before.

Brothers and sisters Job is a perfect example of the Hero of Faith before us. Job shows us how our dedication to God should be in any situation. Let us follow the example of Job. -Johnson, Thrissur

HEROES OF FAITH

DAY - 30 The God of Abraham

Dear brothers & sisters, hope you had a great time of learning over the last one month from the **Heroes of Faith**, more precisely about the **God** of these heroes.

Terah, the father of Abraham, along with his family set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan, but when they came to Harran, they settled there (Gen 11:29)

While Abram was in Harran, God called him “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you”. (Gen 12:1). So Abram obeyed the Lord and set out for Canaan.

In Gen 17: 4-5 “As for me, this is my covenant with you; You will be father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations”. God has changed his status from “Exalted Father” to “Father of many Nations”.

Please remember that Sarah was barren and both of them were very old at that point time when God promised Abraham that he will be the father of many nations. Against all hope, **Abraham, in hope, believed and so became the father of many nations**, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Even though they were old, in Romans 4:20-21, we see that Abraham “*did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.*”

Abraham started his journey of faith by simply obeying God to leave his country, his people and his father’s household and go to an unseen/unknown land shown by God. I think this simple act of obedience and faith in the promise of God which resulted out of his complete trust in the Lord made him the Father of Faith and not necessarily because of his willingness to sacrifice his Son at God’s command. Heb 11: 8 confirms this – “By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going”. No wonder why Jesus called those who put the faith in him as Sons and Daughters of Abraham.

God’s plan to bring His gift of Salvation to mankind through His Son began with Abraham. He was the root of **man’s redemption**, through which the genealogy of Jesus Christ would be established.

How is our journey of faith? Are we stuck at Harran? Are we wavering through unbelief regarding the promise of God? God has called you to experience the unseen, reach the unreachable, touch the intangible and dream the impossible...

As we have come to the last day of our Quiet Time Series which was initiated as part of the 30th anniversary of the Cochin Church, I take this opportunity to thank Benny Soza for doing the translation and compiling the lessons for easy view on the mobile screen. Also wish to thank Josin for his efforts in creating the audio files. Appreciate all the brothers and sisters who have taken time to prepare the lessons for us. God bless you all to become the Heroes of Faith.

With warm regards,

- Philipose