

Week of Lent 4: The Faith of the Israelites

By faith, generations of Israelites wandered the wilderness, entered the promised land, heard the words of the prophets, and suffered persecution. Amid life's joys and difficulties, how do we persevere in our faith?

Gathering Song

"By Faith"

vs 1,2&4

Verse 1 By faith we see the hand of God
In the light of creation's grand design
In the lives of those who prove His faithfulness
Who walk by faith and not by sight

Verse 2 By faith our fathers roamed the earth
With the pow'r of His promise in their hearts
Of a holy city built by God's own hand
A place where peace and justice reign

Chorus We will stand as children of the promise
We will fix our eyes on Him our soul's reward
Till the race is finished and the work is done
We'll walk by faith and not by sight

Verse 4 By faith the church was called to go
In the pow'r of the Spirit to the lost
To deliver captives and to preach good news
In ev'ry corner of the earth **Chorus**

Opening Dialogue

P: Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways, by the prophets,

C: but in these last days God has spoken to us by the Son.

P: Jesus is the reflection of God's glory and the imprint of God's very being,

C: and He sustains all things by his powerful word.

P: Since we have confidence by the new and living way opened for us by Jesus,

C: let us live our lives with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

Prayer of the Day

P: Living God,

C: Give us faith to be sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see.

When we are fearful and worn down from life's challenges, help us to leave our burdens with you, trusting that we will find rest for our souls. Like the Israelites, amid life's joys and difficulties, help us to persevere in faith. We place our trust in you, our rock and redeemer, grant us your grace and your peace. In your precious and holy name we pray. Amen.

First Reading: Hebrew 11: 1, 29-40

¹Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ²Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval.

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

³²And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets — ³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented — ³⁸of whom

the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Reflection

Pastor Kathy

"Amid life's joys and difficulties, how do we persevere in our faith?"

P: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,

C: the conviction of things not seen.

Hymn of the Day

"I Am Thine O Lord (Draw Me Nearer)"

Verse 1

I am Thine O Lord
I have heard Your voice
And it told Your love to me
But I long to rise in the arms of faith
And be closer drawn to Thee

Chorus

Draw me nearer
To the cross where Thou hast died
Draw me nearer
To Your precious bleeding side
Draw me nearer, Draw me nearer

Verse 2

Consecrate me now to Your service Lord
By the pow'r of grace divine
Let my soul look up with a steady hope
And my will be lost in Thine (Chorus)

Verse 3

There are depths of love
That I cannot know
'Til I cross the narrow sea
There are heights of joy
That I may not reach
'Til I rest in peace with Thee (Chorus)

CCLI Song # 4429971

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Prayers

P: Surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

P: Faithful God, shower the world with your loving kindness,

C: that all may know your peace.

P: Open our eyes to the needs of our neighbors,

C: that all may know your love.

P: Comfort the sick and dying,

C: that all may know your mercy.

P: Guide our leaders in the way of truth,

C: that all may know your justice.

P: Focus our hearts on the way of the cross,

C: that all may have faith in you.

P: Let us pray in the words of Martin Luther:

C: Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith; strengthen me. I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent, that my love may go out to my neighbor. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust you altogether. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you. In you I have sealed the treasure of all I have. I am poor; you are rich and came to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner; you are upright. With me, there is an abundance of sin; in you is the fullness of righteousness. Therefore I will remain with you, of whom I can receive, but to whom I may not give. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer - Setting by David Haas



Our Fa-ther in heav-en, hal-low-ed be your
name, your king-dom come, your will be done on
earth as in heav-en. Give us to-day our
dai-ly bread. For-give us our sins as we for-give
those who sin a-gainst us. Save us from the
time of trial and de-liv-er us from e-vil, for the

king - dom, the pow'r and the glo - ry are yours,
now and for ev - er.

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Blessing

P: The God of peace,
who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus,
the great shepherd of the sheep,
make you complete in everything good
so that you may do God's will,
through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

C: Amen.

Postlude



Senior Pastor: Kathleen Ulland-Klinkner
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Vocalist: Madeline Cacciatore