

6-25-2023 Sunday Sermon Message

Meditations of the Week: Psalm 91:1-16

Text: Hebrews 12:1-2

Word title: **Let us run looking forward to the day of the rapture!**

The writer of Hebrews testifies about a cloud of people of faith who lived before the appearance of Jesus Christ. They were all who fully believed in the things they hoped for. Also, through their faith, although invisible to people's eyes, it was evidence that the things they hoped for clearly exist.

We need to know that many people of faith like this have been resurrected and have already ascended to heaven to surround us and encourage us by cheering us about how faith has been fulfilled. Today, as we hear their voices through the Word, we must test and confirm whether our lives are denying ourselves, fighting and winning against sin in a life of believing in Jesus Christ, taking up our cross, and following Him by faith.

Abel offered with faith that a lamb had to be offered as a sacrifice for his sins in order for him to be righteous. Although his body died, God accepted Abel and his offering. But Cain, who gave his own righteousness to God, his offering was not accepted. God accepted Abel's faith and counted him righteous.

Enoch was shown as a type of Christians living a holy life that pleases God in the end times who will not face death, who watches for the day of Christ, the day of rapture, when the Lord Jesus Christ will appear to reward them at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Noah became a man of faith who saved himself and his family by preparing an ark for 120 years, believing in the warning that God would

judge the world with a flood, even though it had never rained from heaven at that time. His faith is a warning message to Christians living in today's harsh end times, and it is a foreshadowing of the faith that saved his family. The Holy Spirit gave testimony through the apostle Paul:

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. (Acts 16:31 KJV)

Apostle Peter testified of Noah as a preacher of righteousness:

And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; (2 Peter 2:5 KJV)

The Word testifies about Abraham's faith.

First, when he was called by God to leave for the land he was to inherit, he obeyed and left without knowing where to go (Hebrews 11:8).

Second, he waited for the city as long as there was a foundation. (Hebrews 11:10).

He believed in Jesus Christ, who was coming as his descendant, and foresaw the New Jerusalem, where the bride of Christ would live, and showed evidence that there is an invisible city. His faith was the evidence of the unseen.

Third, by faith Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice when he was tested. He offered his promised only begotten Son.

He believed God could raise Isaac from the dead.

Because of this, God, who is the resurrection and the life, appeared as a man and personally spoke about the faith that those who believe in Him should have:

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? (John 11:25-26 KJV)

Regarding this faith in the resurrection, Apostle Paul testified that these words of Jesus Christ are words of confirmation given to Christians who are living by faith as they look forward to the day of Christ:

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 KJV)

In addition, there were countless people of faith such as Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. The place they all yearned for was a better home, believing that God had prepared a heavenly city for them. Because the world was not suitable for them to live in, they were the overcomers of the world through their faith.

God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to fight against sin to the point of shedding blood and take away the sins of the world (John 1:29). Jesus, who came as the Son of Man, became the author and finisher of faith for the children of God who believe in Him and are born again by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus knew that when he died on the cross and was resurrected on the third day, many Old Testament saints of faith would be resurrected with him and ascend to heaven together. Looking forward to the day when he would rejoice together, He endured the cross, despised the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Apostle Matthew witnessed and testified to the scene where many Old Testament saints of faith were resurrected together upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

¶ Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the

temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. (Matthew 27:50-53 KJV)

The message the writer of Hebrews gives to Christians living in the end times should be taken to heart:

¶ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2 KJV)

Jesus said in advance to the disciples who followed him:

¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (Matthew 16:24 KJV)

The apostle Paul, who followed the Lord Jesus Christ to his death, testified to the pastor Timothy about the joyous rapture and millennial kingdom ahead of him:

¶ I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the

time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Timothy 4:1-8 KJV)

Amen! Hallelujah!