

This Is What's Holding You Back From Stepping Out as a Faith Hero

The book of Hebrews is a powerful book that shares with us Yeshua's (Jesus') role as high priest. The letter covers both the similarities and the differences between the Aaronic priesthood and the priesthood of Melchizedek. The first 10 chapters lay a foundation and go on to establish Yeshua's rightful place as high priest. Then we arrive at chapter 11, which is a list of biblical faith heroes. This list provides example after example of biblical characters and how, by faith, they did amazing things. As we read, we see "by faith Abel," "by faith Enoch," "by faith Noah," "by faith Abraham"—one after another, we see a compilation of great people who were examples of walking in faith with G-D. What an exciting faith-building chapter Hebrews 11 is to read. It is almost impossible to read these words without feeling somewhat challenged to step out in faith in the same way that they did. Yet, most of us do not make that step or at least not completely.

The key to understanding why so many fall short and fail to make that first faith step is our misunderstanding of the first verse of Hebrews 12: "Therefore, since we are encompassed with such a great cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).

In order to understand the verse above, it is necessary to note that there are two things all the faith heroes in Hebrews 11 have in common. The first is that they had great faith. The second is that they also were all sinners. Yes they were all sinners, according to Psalm 51:7, "Purify me with hyssop, and

I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow" and Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23).

When reading the list of faith heroes of Hebrews 11 and the amazing and miraculous things that G-D did through their lives, we note that the chapter does not list their times of doubt, unbelief and, in many cases, outright sin. Instead, all we see is their faith and faithfulness.

Hebrews 12 switches from the faith heroes of the Bible to those reading the text, even those reading today. Instead of pointing to the faith of those in the past, it now speaks to the present and instructs us to get rid of every weight and entangling sin. Notice it isn't just speaking of sin; it speaks of weight and entanglement. These two words hold the key to walking in faith. These words follow the faith heroes chapter so that those reading these words would understand they are not simply about choosing to no longer sin, which, by itself, is a very important message vital to a believer in Yeshua. These words were placed where they were so that those reading would see that although these heroes were all sinners; their legacy was not, "Here is a sinner who had great faith in G-D." No! What was eternally recorded was simply, "Here is someone who had great faith in G-D." The weight of their sins and those sins' entanglements on their lives had been forever removed, just as those who read beyond chapter 11 and into chapter 12 are encouraged to get rid of these weights and entanglements. Notice the instruction is not to let G-D rid us of these weights and entanglements. This is because He already has.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

The key to being included as a hero of faith is very simple. It isn't being born perfect. It is being born again to

perfection, remembering that 1 Corinthians 6 tells us, " Such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, and you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

We can walk in the power of faith when we see ourselves not as sinners but as set right and made holy. Our faith in His redemption is the first step to being a faith hero. {eoa}

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