

**Series:** Hebrews

**Lesson:** #48

**Title:** **The Salvation of Faith; the Destruction of Unbelief**

**Text:** Hebrews 11: 29

**Date:** Sunday, August 10, 2008

**Place:** Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Princeton, New Jersey

The reason that the apostle gives so many examples of faith in Hebrews chapter 11 is to show believers that true faith in God overcomes every kind of difficulty which we face in this life. Every example given has been accompanied with a great trial; a trial so great that the strongest strength and wisest wisdom of the best of men was too weak and too foolish to overcome. Yet, over and over we see frail, sinful men and women prevailing.

True faith overcomes, not because of any power in the believer, but because of the power of God in whom the believer's faith rests. Frail believers overcome indeed, but it is God in whom faith rests who works in us to make us more than conquerors in him.

The Spirit of God gives the one and only reason they prevailed by repeating one phrase over and over...by faith Abel, by faith Enoch, by faith Noah, by faith Abraham. And once again we meet with the phrase in our text this morning.

**Hebrews 11: 29: By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.**

Here we have a contrast between faith and unbelief. Faith passed through the Red Sea. Unbelief was drowned.

The title of the lesson: **The Salvation of Faith; the Destruction of Unbelief.**

**Proposition:** By faith the believing Israelites did something they had no power within themselves to do, obey the LORD and pass safely through the mighty Red Sea on dry ground. In their hatred for God and God's people, Pharaoh and the Egyptian army presumed they could cross the Red Sea by the power of their own strength and God drowned every one of them.

**Divisions:**

**I. The Trial of Israel's Faith**

**II. The Salvation of Faith**

**III. The Destruction of Unbelief**

**IV. Faith's Rejoicing**

## **I. The Trial of Faith**

It is true that by faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land. But it was not without a great trial of their faith. If God saves you through the Red Sea of salvation and trial, he will first put a hedge about you so that in your utter inability you have no where else to turn but him.

A. The children of Israel went out of Egypt with a high hand--that is they went out rejoicing and claiming to trust God with all their hearts.

1. They had eaten the Passover and seen God spare their firstborn.
2. Miraculously the Egyptians had given them their gold and silver just as the Lord said they would.
3. They walked out of Egypt in the night just as the Lord had commanded.
4. They rejoiced over Moses and followed his leadership with much delight.
5. So 600,000 men, plus women and children, followed Moses to the plains of **Pi-ha-hiroth**, (a pass between the wilderness and two great rocks)
7. There they camped between a great fortified wall called **Migdol** and the **Red Sea**, over against one of the Egyptian idols called **Baal-zephon**.
8. In all their zeal they may or may not have realized it but the place they camped had them shut in on every side with one way in and one way out. And that one way was soon filled with Pharaoh and his mighty Egyptian army.

**Exodus 14: 9: But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon. 10: And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD. 11: And they said unto Moses, Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? 12: *Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.***

1. Their hands were not so high now, but hanged down. They were sore afraid. They chided with Moses. But they did not understand that it was not Moses who put this great trial before them, but the LORD who they claimed to believe.

### C. The LORD's Sovereign Work

Back when they had reached Etham they could have continued east through the desert where Pharaoh's chariot wheels could have never pursued them. They would have been across Egypt's border and in the wilderness in no time. But the LORD works entirely opposite to human reasoning and he did it to teach both Israel and the Egyptians that he is LORD.

**Exodus 14: 1: And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2: Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea. 3: For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They *are* entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. 4: And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD. And they did so. 5: And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? 6: And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him: 7: And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. 8: And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out with an high hand. 9: But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon. 10: And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD. 11: And they said unto Moses, Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? 12: *Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.***

1. The Lord gave this great trial to test whether or not their "high hand" would remain "high by faith in him" even when faced with the impossible. And almost every one of them proved that while they professed to believe God, all along they did not believe his promise, did not trust his faithfulness, and that they were looking to their own strength rather than the power of God. So when the LORD made the way impossible, their flesh failed them. These are those whom the Lord later said, **De 32:20: I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end *shall be*: for they *are* a very froward generation, children in whom *is* no faith.**

2. When Hebrews 11: 29: By faith they passed through the Red Sea it does not say the children of Israel passed through, because it does not speak of all the children of Israel but it speaks of Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Caleb, Miriam and the small remnant who

possessed true faith. Yet, they were of the same frail dust as the rest. They too needed to be saved from their unbelief. But the Lord

- Brought them to a place where they could not flee for themselves.
- They could not fight for themselves.
- They could only trust the Lord.
- And that is exactly why he brings the trial, God hems in his saints so that we have to trust him.
- And by faith we behold his faithfulness and thus learn to trust him at all times.

Now having seen the Trial of Israel's Faith, let's pass on to the second point:

**II. The Salvation of Faith**--In Moses we see what true faith does.

**Exodus 14: 13: And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. 14: The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.**

A. Here is a contrast between unbelief and faith

1. Unbelief **blamed God's servant**--by faith Moses ignored them.

2. Unbelief **lifted up their eyes, and, beheld, the Egyptians and were sore afraid**--By faith Moses, turned his eyes from the Egyptians to the LORD and said **Fear not**.

3. Unbelief clamored about seeing only death before them--By faith Moses said, **Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he shall shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever.**

4. Unbelief looked for a way out of this trap by their own hands---By faith Moses said, **The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.**

Faith believes the Lord. Faith sees the Lord's salvation before it ever comes to pass. Faith sees that with God all things are possible. Once the soul is able to rest on that fact, doubting ends and alarms are silenced.
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B. By faith, Moses was all along engaged in silent supplication to the Lord.

**V15: And the LORD said unto Moses,...**The Lord did not answer the children of Israel but **the Lord said unto Moses...**

1. Some might say, "Well if the Lord spoke to me, I would believe him."

2. He has spoken to you, right here in this written word, but you don't believe him.

C. Salvation is by revelation of the LORD in the heart, in spirit, not in the flesh.

**V15: And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: 16: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea. 17: And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. 18: And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.**

1. Moses stayed himself upon the LORD, he was praying, waiting the word of command, and until it was given, he stood still, but when the LORD revealed in his heart the way, by faith Moses obeyed.

**V19: And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: 20: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*: so that the one came not near the other all the night.** (remember the scripture where the Lord said I will be your reward--this is it--the Lord was their rear ward to protect them from behind.) **21: And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided. 22: And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground*: and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.**

### **III. The Destruction of Unbelief**

#### **A. Pharaoh refused to believe God.**

1. He was a king why should he bow to God.
2. He had an army why should he turn to God for strength.
3. In his mind, he thought he could do anything and everything that the children of Israel did without ever bowing to God.
4. So in his presumption he lead the army right into the Red Sea.

**Exodus 14: 23: And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, *even* all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24: And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, 25: And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians. 26: And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. 27: And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the**

**Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. 28: And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.**

5. Just as Pharaoh and the Egyptians had drowned the male Hebrew children in the river, so the Lord drowned his enemies.

**IV. The Rejoicing of Faith--**Those who believe on God will always be brought to rejoice before God for the great things he hath done for us.

**A. The Lord Made His People To Recognize Him and His Servant**

**Exodus 14: 29: But the children of Israel walked upon dry *land* in the midst of the sea; and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 30: Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. 31: And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.**

1. Moses could have reasoned with them on the other side to try to get the folks to believe him.
2. Instead, he declared the truth, prayed on behalf of the people, and led them as God commanded.
3. The result was, the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.

**B. The LORD made his people sing with delight**

**Exodus 15: 1: Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. 2: The LORD *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. 3: The LORD *is* a man of war: the LORD *is* his name. 4: Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. 5: The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. 6: Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.**

**Application:Believer's face 3 powerful enemies.**

1. Trials--we often face some Red Sea that we have no power to overcome.
2. Our former sins--like the Egyptians our former sins bear down hard upon us at times
3. Like the unbelieving children of Israel that surrounded Moses, there is an old nature which often causes our believing heart to tremble.

But remember who brought Israel to the Red Sea, remember who hemmed them in, and remember why he did it.

- One of the greatest blessing is that the LORD appoints trials for those he loves so that we might not forget that He is all our Salvation.
- He allows us to remember our former sins then reminds us that he remembers them no more.
- When our hearts begin to tremble in fear, he speaks comfort saying, **Isaiah 43: 1: But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel,** [he calls us by our earthly, fleshly name first then by the heavenly, spiritual name which he named us--Israel] **Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. 2: When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee:**