

Sons of Korah #2: Lesson of Faith: Psalms 44

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon teaches that faith is a living reality that comes from God and is experienced in our lives, and that it is tested and tried in order to be strengthened and triumphant.

Duration: 54:01

Scripture: Psalm 44, Romans 8:31-34, Romans 8:36, Hebrews 12:2

Topics: "Sons of Korah"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of looking to Jesus as the source of our faith. He explains that we cannot find faith within ourselves or by looking around us, but only by fixing our gaze on Jesus. The sermon is based on Psalm 44, which teaches the lesson of faith. The speaker divides the psalm into four parts: the testimony of faith, the testing of faith, the prevail of faith, and the triumph of faith. He concludes by highlighting the three essentials of the Christian life: faith, hope, and love.

Transcript

Will you please turn to psalm, psalm 44, psalm 44, psalm 44. To the chief musicians of the Friends of Korah and instruction. Oh God, with our ears have we heard, our fathers have told us, the work thou wroughtest in their days, in the days of old.

Thou by thy hand didst dispossess the nations, for them thou didst plant, thou didst afflict the people, for them didst thou cause to spread out. For not by thy own sword did they take possession of the land, neither did their own arm save them. For thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hast delight in them.

Thou thyself art my king, oh God, command deliverance for Jacob. Through thee we will push down our adversaries, through thy name will we tread them under, the rise up against us. For I will not put confidence in my bow, neither shall my sword save me, for thou hast saved me from our adversaries, and hast put them to shame that hate us.

In God will we boast all the day, and we will pray thy name forever, Selah. But thou hast cast off and put us to confusion, and doth not go forth with our armies. Thou hast made us to turn back from the adversary, and they that hate us spoil for themselves.

Thou hast given us over like sheep appointed for meat, and hast scattered us among the nations. Thou hast sold thy people for naught, and hast not increased thy wealth by their price. Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbors, and mockery and adoration for them that are round about us.

Thou makest us a byword among the nations, a shaking of the heads among the people, all the day my confusion is before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me, because of the voice of him that reproaches and blasphemeth by reason of the enemy and the avenger. All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely against thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy path.

Thou hast crushed us in the place of jackals, and covered us with the shadow of death. If we had forgotten the name of our God, and stretched out our hands to estrange God, would not God search this out? For he knoweth the secret of the heart. But for thy sake are we killed all the day long.

We are reckoned as sheep for slaughter. Awake, why sleepest thou, Lord? Arise, cast us not off forever. Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression? For our soul is bowed down to the dust, our belly cleaveth unto the earth.

Rise up for our help, and redeem us for thy loving kindness' sake. Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father, we do thank thee for thy precious word. We know that thy word is meant for us.

Therefore we ask that thy Holy Spirit will breathe upon thy word, and make it living, real, operative in our lives. We ask thee, O Lord, that thou would teach us the lesson that thou want us to learn, that thou mayest be glorified in our lives. To thee be all the praise and glory.

In the precious name of our Lord Jesus. Amen. This is another song of the sons of Korah.

We mentioned before that the sons of Korah were spared from destruction through the mercy of God. And because they were spared, because they had gone through, as it were, the experience of the cross, therefore they appreciate God in a very special way. And they were called to be singers in the temple.

Now this song is called an instruction. In other words, there is a lesson in this song. And through this song, this lesson is to be taught.

Now what is the lesson that is taught in this song? You know Psalm 42 and Psalm 43 actually are one. Because in Psalm 42 and 43 it teaches us the lesson of hope. Hope thou in God.

Why art thou cast down my soul and art disquieted in me? Hope in God. For I will yet praise him for the health of his countenance. Why art thou cast down my soul and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God.

For I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God. Why art thou cast down my soul and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God. For I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God.

You'll find in these two songs in the three divisions that we have they all end up with hope in God. So these two songs teach us the lesson of hope. But Psalm 44 teaches us the lesson of faith.

And then Psalm 45 teaches the lesson of love. There about us now faith, hope and love. These are the three essentials of our Christian life.

And these are the three things that we need to learn very much before God. Faith to the psalmist and to the sons of Korah is not a theory or a theology. Faith to the psalmist whoever he may be and the singers is a living reality.

Something they have experienced in their life. To put it in another way faith is their way of life. And is it not true that faith is the way of our life? Faith is the gift of God.

Faith is not something that we can manufacture ourselves. Faith is not something we can work it out. You know often times people try to work up a faith.

It's a faith. Faith is the gift of God. In Ephesians chapter 2 verse 8 we are told we are saved by grace through faith.

And this not of yourself. It is the gift of God. Not on the principle of work.

That no man may doubt. Faith is something that God gives. It is a gift.

But on the other hand faith is something that we need to learn. No one is born with faith. Faith is not something inborn.

Faith is something that we need to learn as we walk before God. In Romans chapter 10 verse 17 we are told that faith comes by report. And report by the word of God.

When the word of God is reported it needs to be received. And when it is received then faith comes forth. Abraham the father of faith was not born with faith.

It is through his obedience. It is through many trials. It is even through failures that he learned what faith is.

Any gift of God needs to be received. If a gift is not received it is not yours. But when it is received then it becomes your portion.

You know in history more modern history there is one man who is known as a man of faith. George Muller. He was a German.

He went to England to study that he might be a missionary to the Jews. But then while he was studying the Lord changed his course. And finally he resided in England and God used him to have an orphanage.

He felt that the world at that time the Christians at that time did not know what faith is. Therefore he founded that orphanage he took care of thousands of orphans he never told people his wants he told God. And by faith he did this marvelous work of the orphanage.

In his lifetime he had half a million prayers answered that can be traced. He is a man of faith. So when people ask him Muller you must have the gift of faith.

Oh he said no I don't have the gift of faith I have the grace of faith he received what God had given. So dear brothers and sisters here you will find in this psalm it teaches us what faith is. Look off unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

If we want to try to find faith in ourselves we won't find it there. If we want to find faith by looking around we will not find it. But if we look off from ourselves look away from our environment and look steadfastly unto Jesus the author the originator the giver of our faith then we will have faith.

Now in this psalm we find how the lesson of faith is learned. Roughly this psalm can be divided into four parts. Four standards.

The first standard is from verse 1 to verse 8. Shall we call it the testimony of faith. The second part is from verse 9 to verse 16 the testing of faith. The third part is verse 17 to verse 22 to prevail of faith.

And the last part verse 23 to verse 26 the triumph of faith. How does faith arise in the heart of a person? Here you will find the psalmist beginning with Oh God! Now remember these psalms have a continuity there. If you read the preceding two psalms you will find the psalmist was looking into himself.

While he was looking into himself his soul was cast down. He was disquieted. He was looking at his environment and while he was looking at his environment he was disquieted.

His soul was in trouble. He sank. Just like Peter.

When Peter's eyes were upon the Lord he walked upon the water. But when he looked at the water he sank. That you find in Psalm 42 and Psalm 43.

But thank God at the beginning of Psalm 44 he said Oh God! In other words he turned his eyes away from himself away from his environment and turned his eyes upon God. While he turned his eyes upon God then he heard better. You know if you want to hear somebody especially with people like me my ears is not too good.

You know often times some brothers and sisters mention him I didn't hear it. If you sit by me you may notice. I'm trying to find out him because I haven't heard.

I will appreciate if you speak louder. But anyway you'll find if people whose hearing is somewhat impaired if you are able to look at that person you'll hear better. And it is true without hearing of God's voice.

If our eyes are not upon him he may speak but we don't hear. Oh we do not hear right? But if we turn our eyes upon the Lord then we shall hear his voice. You know this is the way that faith begins.

Oh God! With our ears have we heard. The eyes of the psalmist is upon the Lord and now his ears begin to hear. He heard the voice of history.

Of divine history. Faith comes by report. So he heard the report.

And what does the psalmist hear? He said our fathers have told us the work thou wroughtest in their days in the days of old. Thou by thy hand didst dispossess the nations but then thou didst then thou didst plant thou didst afflict the peoples but then thou didst cause to spread out. In other words when his eyes are turned upon the Lord then his ears begin to hear what God had done with the nation of Israel.

God brought them out of Egypt. God brought them through the terrible wilderness. And God brought them into the promised land.

God dispossessed the nations that occupy the promised land. And God planted his people in the land. Now this is something of tremendous work.

Think of that. How God did such a marvelous thing. This possessed the seven tribes of Canaan.

And planted the children of Israel in the promised land. When the psalmist heard the report his faith began to rise within him. If God had done such marvelous work to our fathers what is it that he cannot do with us? If such a great work he had accomplished the thing that we are involved with is of minute.

Why? Certainly there is nothing that God cannot do. Now that is the way that faith began to rise up within our hearts. You know dear brothers and sisters do you remember or have you heard what God has done for you in the past? What God has done for us he has not only delivered us out of the power of darkness he has translated us into the kingdom of the son of his love.

Do you not know that God has dispossessed our enemies and has planted us in the promised land? Do you not know that we are in the promised land? We have been planted there. We are not squatters there. We are planted there by God.

We are planted in Christ Jesus. Christ is our promised land and God has planted us in the promised land that we may enjoy all the riches that is in Christ. This is what God has done for us.

This is divine history. This is something that we need to hear and if we are able to hear it afresh in the Spirit how can faith not rise up within us? It is impossible. It is supernaturally natural for us to believe in God.

To unbelieve is so unnatural. It's so difficult. It is but natural for us to believe Him.

What is it? What are we involved with? When you compare it with what God has already done in our lives, great things He has done. For not by their own sword did they take possession of the land. Neither did their own arms save them for Thy right hand and Thine arm and the light of Thy countenance.

This great feat was not done by themselves. The children of Israel were few in number. They were weak.

So they couldn't save them. They couldn't dispossess their enemies by their own sword or with their arms. No.

It was clear. It was the right hand of God, the arm of God and the light of His countenance. In other words, it was God's doing.

And why did God do such a great work? Because Thou has delight in them. There is no other reason. Because God had delight in them.

Therefore God did it. It was according to His good pleasure, the good pleasure of His will that He had brought us into Christ. And had planted us in Christ.

But it is true that faith comes by report. And report by the Word of God. But faith is something more.

When you really believe, it means that you make a commitment. If you really believe, you surrender yourself to God. If you really believe, you give yourself to obey God.

And that's the reason why when faith begins to rise up in the heart of the psalmist, in verse four he said, Thou thyself are my king, God, command deliverance for Jacob. I have heard of what you have done in the past, and I believe it. And I believe you are the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Therefore, I commit myself to you. I take you as my king. You shall have full authority over my life.

I am committed to you. I yield myself to you. I am going to obey you.

You are my king. Now, brothers and sisters, the problem with some people today is when they hear what the Lord has and they really feel they will believe in God, and yet there is no committal. They do not commit themselves to God.

Now, if we do not commit ourselves to God, how can you expect God to commit himself to you? Faith demands a committal. Faith demands a surrender. Faith demands obedience.

We have to take him as our king. If we take him as our king, then our king shall rule over us and rule over all things for us. And it is on the basis of that committal and obedience.

He asked God to command and him for Jacob. The psalmist takes a position of faith. The psalmist declares his position of faith.

He said, through thee will we push down our adversaries, through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us. For I will not put confidence in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. In other words, here you'll find this psalmist takes a position of faith.

I believe in God. He will save us. I will not put my confidence in myself.

This is a position of faith that we must take. And when he takes that position of faith, then he begins to declare. He said, for thou hast saved us from our adversaries and thou hast put them to shame that hate us.

Notice the tense there. When he takes that position of faith and declare it, it becomes something that God has already done. Thou hast.

Thou hast saved us. Thou hast put them to shame. Now, of course, we know.

When the psalmist declared this as a testimony, he wasn't really delivered. He wasn't really delivered, but he was delivered. That is Mark 11 24.

Whatever you shall ask, believe that ye shall have it and it shall come to pass. In other words, if you have faith, real faith from God, by faith you have already received what is coming to pass. So, in other words, you receive it by faith first and then you receive it by faith.

You know, the problem with us is we want to receive it by faith before we receive it by faith. Now, if that is the case, this is no faith, this is faith. Faith is something that haven't come to pass yet, in fact, and yet.

In faith it has already been done. If you believe you have received it, then you shall receive it. I remember, dear brother, one said, he said, what is faith? Faith is not only believing that God can.

God is able. Of course God is able. He is omnipotent.

Faith is not only believing that God is willing. Of course God is willing. He is love.

He said, faith is believing that God has done it. Not only He is able, not only He is willing, but He has done it. And that is faith.

Now you say, how can it be? Why? Because faith is the substantiating of the things unseen. Hebrews 11.
1. Faith substantiates.

Faith makes real the unseen. It is still unseen. And yet faith has seen it.

And therefore faith substantiates it before the substance is realized. Now that is faith. And because of that He said, in God will He boast all the day and will praise Thy name forever.

He began to praise. Now you cannot praise if you are still in the stage of begging. You start to praise when by faith you have apprehended what God has promised.

So we will call this the testimony of faith. You know usually to give a testimony you have to experience it first before you can testify. But the testimony of faith is different.

You testify it before it comes. Because you know it when it is coming. It is the testimony of faith.

And then don't forget that word selah. Now that word selah in Hebrew means a pause, a rest. You know just like in music, in the music you come to a place where there is a pause.

You rest for a while. And selah is a pause. Not only that you may meditate upon it in quietness, but you may gather up more strength to go on that which is to follow.

In other words, you are going to rise to a higher note. So you need to pause and breathe in order to prepare to sing a higher note. Now, that is selah.

Brothers and sisters, do we know selah in our lives? You know, sometimes in our individual lives, we need a pause. We cannot go on being excited all the time. You cannot do that.

Very soon you are exhausted and then there will be a reaction. When God begins to work in your life, you come to a point, you need to rest. Selah.

Pause. That you may gather up more strength to strike a higher note. We need that selah.

And you know, sometimes in a worship time, I feel we need a little selah. Not a long pause of death, of course not. But sometimes we need a pause, a selah of life.

Oh, when the Lord is beginning to stir us up and beginning to show himself to us, our heart or tooth touched, it is a time that we be quiet before the Lord. As if we need to gather more strength in order to strike a higher note. Because if we continue on that, we will drop.

And how often you find this happen, we need some selah. Of course, in the spirit. Do nothing that we have to go on and on and on and on, you know, just like the horse rushing forward and you cannot stop.

Now, we need selah. Because something higher is to follow. And what is it? In the second part you find the word right.

Here the psalmist seems to be full of faith. And because he is so full of faith, he expects immediate deliverance. And certainly what else can he expect? He has already received it in faith.

And he is waiting to receive him in fact. But the as expected does not come. On the contrary, the unexpected arrives.

But thou has cast off and put us to confusion and does not go forth with our armies. Thou has made us to turn back from the adversary and made the haters spoil for themselves. Thou has given us over like sheep appointed for meat and has scattered us among the nations.

In other words, you find the psalmist fully expect deliverance from God. Deliverance from the enemies, from oppressions. Deliver into that broad place that God has promised.

Deliver into the riches of Christ. But instead, you find the situation becomes worse. This is the testing of faith.

Dear brothers and sisters, do not think that faith is so simple. That because you believe, therefore, the minute you believe, in split seconds, the thing will happen according to what you believe. Sometimes it does, because God knows our frailty.

But oftentimes, He does not. Why? Because He wants to test our faith. He wants to draw out within us the faith that He has planted in.

And you remember the word of Peter? In 1 Peter chapter 1, verses 6 and 7, querying He exhorts for a little while at present if needed, put to grieve by various trials, that the proving of your faith, much more precious than of gold which perishes, though it be proved by fire, be found to praise and glory and honor in the revelation of Jesus Christ. Because you have faith, therefore God puts you into the fiery furnace to prove that faith, so that that faith may be more precious than gold, even if it is as if through fire, and yet it will be unto the praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is the trial, the testing of faith.

You know, sometimes we have such, well, it's natural. There is a sense of heroism in us. Oh, we want to be spiritual heroes, giants, and we try to work out of faith.

Oh, we have great faith in God, and because we have such faith, God has to do it right now. And if God does, who gets the glory? You do. There is no heroism in the spiritual realm.

Yes, when you believe in God, and you begin to testify of your faith in God, there is no heroism there. Because you testify of your faith, you will be put into fiery furnace. Your faith will be tried and tested and proved until it comes out more precious than gold.

You remember the three friends of Daniel? King Nebuchadnezzar built up a fire sevenfold in that furnace. And these three friends testified to King Nebuchadnezzar, I said, if it be so, our God is well able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace and deliver us from your hand, O King, but if not, we tell you that we will never worship your image. That's the testing of faith.

Thou hast sold thy people for naught and hast not increased thy wealth by their pride. Oh, oftentimes it seems as if God has sold us into the hands of our enemies and we wonder whether God had made some increase by our pride. Do you not sometimes feel that way when your faith is tested? You feel that God does not gain anything by delivering us to the hands of the enemies.

If God could increase his wealth then maybe it's worthwhile. But God does not seem to increase his wealth anymore. On the contrary, you find that God's name is being put to shame.

Why should God allow such things to happen? The trial, the testing of faith. The third part. All this has come upon us yet have we not forgotten thee.

Neither have we dealt falsely against thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back. Neither have our steps declined from thy path.

Brothers and sisters, when our faith is being tested many are crushed because their faith in God seems to fail to produce its expected anticipated result. They turn against God. God is not to be trusted.

God is not there. God does not care. But dear brothers and sisters, when faith is tested this is the time for the travail of faith.

You have to travail in testing. Yes, it is like death. Like a woman who is in travail, who is going to give birth, he is going through the process of death in order that life may come forth.

But dear brothers and sisters, often times we are not willing to pay the cost of travelling. When things begin to be too hard we give up and say, now God does not care. Why trusting Him? There is no use.

Let's turn our back and you get a spiritual abortion. But when faith is tested, dear brothers and sisters, we are not cost of We are not willing to pay the cost of life. We are not willing to pay the cost of life.

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