

## Hope, Belief, Faith and Trust Within Your Life

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### Scripture: Exodus 14:19-22 (NIV)

<sup>19</sup> Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them,

<sup>20</sup> coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long.

<sup>21</sup> Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided,

<sup>22</sup> and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.”

### Introduction

There was once a tight rope walker Blondin who could perform death-defying feats without support or lifesaving equipment. Crowds gathered to watch his feats. He would walk across Niagara falls over the tight rope. At one event, he took a wheelbarrow over the tight rope and asked the audience, “Do you believe that I can take the wheelbarrow over the tight rope?” Everyone believed that he could carry the wheelbarrow over the tight rope and cheered him on. He then asked who will sit on the wheelbarrow'. There were no volunteers.

Everybody hoped he could carry on crossing, everybody believed that he can cross, but missing was faith and trust.

### Recapping

With this in mind, lets recap on last week and then explore belief, hope, faith and trust in the context of Israel’s crossing the sea, and then draw some valuable lessons.

Israel had the Egyptians behind them, mountains and the desert next to them and the sea in front of them. Their options were to fight, flee, take a long swim or do nothing (Exodus 14:14). Our conclusion was:

- Don't be afraid. Don't panic. Turn instead to God.
- Stand still. Trust God, praise and worship God.
- See the salvation of God.

Israel showed hope, belief, faith and trust and we must exercise the same in both the hard and good times. But what do they mean? Let's create for ourselves, a definition.

### **Hope, Belief, Faith and Trust**

- Hope has no evidence and speaks to a positive future. Hope alone, is fragile and is best supported by belief, faith and trust. Hope is to be cultivated.
- Belief is rational and factual. Belief speaks to what the mind sees as true.
- Faith, on the other hand, is deeper. Faith is never disappointing and faith never hopes because faith is an assurance. Faith is where the mind and soul join in a deep conviction of the truth, even though, some things may not yet be seen.
- Trust is supported by previous experience and evidence. Trust is fact-based, has a memory and is intelligent. Trust is specific and refers to someone or something.

### **The Israelites**

After Moses told the Israelites to hold their peace, the Lord told all of them to move on. The Lord gave Moses further instructions and then "the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel" (Ex. 14:19-20).

Here is how things stood, the Egyptians, in darkness, had to overcome God to get to the Israelites. The Lord's light was shining on His favoured ones and He was leading and protecting them, leaving the enemy in darkness and uncertainty.

Moses stretched out his hand, the sea parted and dry ground lay ahead of them framed by 2 large "fish tanks," and they were to cross over, walking the unmistakable light of the Lord.

- The Israelites hoped that God will keep the sea parted and they hoped for a better future in the promised land.
- Israel believed that the water had parted because it was an unquestionable fact. They also had to believe that the water would not close in on them while they were crossing.
- Without faith, the Israelites could not have begun to cross the sea. Their faith was not in the wind that parted the sea, but in God who drove back the sea with a strong wind.
- Israel could trust God because of a long line of evidence, culminating into stepping where there used to be sea, and will again be a sea.

### **You and Me**

Now, if I had to publicly ask whose hope is in God, who believes in God, who has faith in God and who trusts God, everyone will naturally raise their hand.

But what if I changed the question and asked, "who is willing to sit in Blondin's wheelbarrow as he tightropes the Niagara falls?" A lot of hands would go down.

What if I asked you to put yourself in Israel's position and step onto what was, a few minutes ago sea, and move onward? A lot of hands will go up again.

What if I asked you to bring to mind, a difficult situation that you face, it may be a crisis, death of a loved one ... some situation where you really need to see the deliverance and salvation of the Lord.

Now, where are you at with God?

- Hoping that God will help?

- Believing that God will help?
- Having faith that God will help?
- Trusting that God will help?

How do you plan to convince yourself where are you at? What are you looking for? It is that faith and doubt are on a see-saw and faith is winning? Are you being emotionally, intellectually and spiritually honest with yourself?

What is your relationship with God saying?

1. I am stuck at the edge of what, a few moments ago was a sea. I hope the Lord will bring me through this. I believe that God can do this. But ... but ... but.
2. I am moving forward in the light of the Lord along the way the Lord is directing. I have faith and I trust God. Let's do this!

### **Faith is the Only Step Toward Salvation**

A basic choice is before you. Either you can do this without God or God can do this for you? Before you answer, know that you have been saved by faith alone, Ephesians 2:8 makes it very clear, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Remember, what we said about faith. You don't have enough faith in your own for your mind and your soul to join in a deep conviction about those things which you may not already see. That is why faith is a gift from God.

You have faith in God and are trusting God with your very life on the evidence of His love expressed through His work on the cross, resurrection and ascension and the fact that He is coming again.

### **Conclusion**

Brothers and sisters, you do not have what it takes to part the sea. Only God can do this. As for you and me, we do what Romans 10:13 says to do, "for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Call anytime, not only when the Egyptians are chasing you.

Pray this prayer with me, in closing, to remind yourself of how hope, belief, faith and trust have come together in your life, and will continue to do so for the rest of your days – all to the glory of God, *“God, I know that I am a sinner. I know that I deserve the consequences of my sin. However, I am trusting in Jesus Christ as my Saviour. I believe that His death and resurrection provided for my forgiveness. I trust in Jesus and Jesus alone as my personal Lord and Saviour. Thank you, Lord, for saving me and forgiving me! Amen!”*