

# A FAITHFUL GOD IN THE MIDST OF A FAITHLESS GENERATION

BY ERIC HENDRICKS

*Let us hold fast the profession of [our] faith without wavering; (for he [is] faithful that promised;)*

During “Easter” or what we, as Christians, know as the resurrection season, it is common for television stations to begin airing shows like *The Ten Commandments*. This movie is Hollywood’s depiction of the book of Exodus. As a child I was told by my parents to watch this movie. I never thought much of it. I saw a powerful God doing things that no one else could do and my thought was to not be caught in His wrath. As an adult and a born again believer, my view of this movie has changed. I have compared the movie to the bible hundreds of times and have always been a bit annoyed with the children of Israel. As a young Christian I would ask, “How could they not trust, love and honor God?” I watched as the Red Sea was parted and I said to myself if God would show me that kind of miracle I would have no problem trusting him... that was my thought as a young Christian.

As I have grown as a Christian, I realize that we are just as faithless as the Israelites. As I read the book of Exodus, I saw the needs or should I say the wants of the Israelites always growing and their faith stunted by their inability to trust God. God wanted his children to be free from bondage; God wanted to show how powerful and faithful He would be and how much He loved His children. In Exodus 6:9, Moses, instructed by God, went to Pharaoh and commanded him to let God’s people go. Annoyed, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters to make the work even harder for the people of God. We don’t always understand why or how God chooses the methods He uses. As with the children of Israel, when God is about to set us free or make a significant change in our lives for the better, it seems like things get harder.

The Israelites didn’t believe Moses or the God he served. The people that God already saw as set free cursed Moses and begged him to leave them alone. Not only was the Pharaoh angry but their plight was now worse. Again, we see the parallel with today believers. We believe that the decision to start living for God makes our situation worse. The truth is that in Egypt the Israelites’ situation had become worse but it was only for a season.

*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you (1 Thess. 5:18).*

The Israelites were not only set free but the state they found themselves in was better than their former state. God had made it so that when they left Egypt, the Egyptians gave them gold, silver,

precious stones and fine clothing. The children of Israel were now free! One would think that being free would be enough to praise God forever. However, their song of praise and thanksgiving didn't last. Just as ours doesn't last today; we tend to only praise and give thanks when things are going well.

When they got to another point in their walk and a need arose, they had forgotten the miracles that took place when they were set free – how God led them by a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day and how God had parted the Red Sea. Our Lord provided a way for them again and again.

*[Let your] conversation [be] without covetousness; [and be] content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee (Heb. 13:5).*

I am reminded once again of my thoughts about the children of Israel when I was a young Christian. The truth is that we are more like the children of Israel than we care to admit. They are a chosen people; we are a chosen people. They went through trials and tribulations; we go through trials and tribulations. God delivered them from their enemy; God has delivered us from Satan's grips. As a result, when trials and tribulations come, instead of complaining and becoming frustrated why do we not recall all that God has done for us - His faithfulness, His power and His love toward us? Why do we get angry when these things come upon us? How many times does our Lord and Savior have to show us He is with us? How often does He have to remind us of his faithfulness? How would you feel knowing that a friend or loved one didn't trust you and no matter how many times you showed them you will be there for them in their time of need they still question if you really care? Would you continue to shower them with love and patience? That is exactly what God does, continues to love us patiently.

*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end (Jer. 29:11).*

The third chapter of the book of Exodus has these words being spoken by our heavenly Father: "I have seen..."; "I have heard..."; "I have come..."; "I will send..."; "I will be with you..."; "I will give..."; and "...for I am...". I have seen your situation; I have heard your cry; I have come to make you free; I will send you a comforter; I will be with you always; I will give you rest... for I am the great I am. These truths still apply to us as Christians today. As a result, we should show our appreciation as children to a loving and caring Father.

We have served the Lord with the knowledge that God will help us and deliver us through everything that we face. Every battle was God's and our faith to believe in God was all that was required on our part to experience a victorious end. God has promised us that he would be with us in our trials and troubles. God has left examples of these promises in His holy Word. There is

Daniel in the lions' den, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace, Joshua and the wall of Jericho, and David and Goliath. There are many others spread throughout the Old and New Testaments.

*Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (1 Pet. 1:6-7).*

I would admonish you to read the book of Exodus and ask yourself if you resemble the Israelites in any way. If we are honest, we would all have to say yes. We must pray and continue to pray asking for God to strengthen our faith. Understand, that your faith will be tried but that the trying of your faith builds character shaping you into the person God wants you to be.

The children of Israel were unable to walk into their promise because of their lack of faith in God and their unbelief. God is so faithful that since He made a promise and cannot lie the promise was handed down to the children of the faithless generation.

Have the faith of God! Let your children receive their own promises. †