

“The TWO avenues of Faith”

Written April of 2012

Scripture Reading: Psalms 46:10

Introduction

The Message I bring for you today was brought to my mind by the Holy Spirit so that we can see a deeper side of Faith in all our lives. We all know the distinct differences of: NOT having Faith at all and having Faith in God. However, through the help of the Holy Spirit today we will have revealed to us the TWO avenues of Faith. There are two distinct pathways or approaches we will explore today of the two avenues we choose to take when we say that we have Faith in what God has promised us. Let us bow our heads in prayer so that we may have the Spiritual Vision to see what our Lord God is trying to show us all through today's Message.

Sermon

Before we begin today, I want to make sure that everyone understands exactly what the Sermon title means or is implying. I want to take a few minutes and define the key word in the title “AVENUES”. Webster Dictionary defines this word as the following:

- **Avenue** = Approach or pathway taken, with or without a road or handsome street.

Think of it this way, if someone ask you for directions on how to get to your house or where you live, you normally give more or less the same cross streets and avenues to get to your house. But in our Humanity, we always try to put our two sense into finding our way and we try to take a different route thinking it should logically get us to the destination faster, and in our stubbornness, it takes longer to get there and sometimes we even get lost. **The purpose of directions is to get to a destination by taking certain avenues to get there.**

Our Faith is the same way; there are TWO main avenues we can choose in order for us to reach the fulfillment of Gods' Promises to us. Today we are going to briefly look at three separate examples so that we can better define these **TWO** very vital **AVENUES** so that we can all understand where they lead on our journey of Faith, so that we to can reach the destination God has prepared for us.

As I may have confessed to you on previous occasions, Faith for me was a very difficult concept to grasp. My nature is to be very logical and scientific in understanding and believing something, which was one of the key reasons that Atheism made sense to me before my Born Again conversion.

It wasn't until my Born Again conversion that my Mind began to be transformed from physical thinking (*focused on the limitations of the Physical Dimension*) to Spiritual thinking (*focused on the unlimited Power of God*). In **Romans 12:1, 2 the Apostle Paul elaborates on this further.**

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is good, and acceptable, and perfect Will of God”

Through many trails and tribulations, the Lord God continued to refine my Faith and show me how to trust in and live by Gods unlimited Power on a daily basis. Its only in daily submitting to the conversion Power of the Holy Spirit that we can truly know the Will of God for our lives.

Our Physical Mind is the greatest enemy we have my dear Brothers and Sisters. Its our Physical Mind that limits the Power of God in our lives. Its our Physical Mind that causes us to doubt the many great promises of God. Let’s move into the Scriptures to see (3) examples of three different women that will help us better understand what the **TWO AVENUES** of Faith are. Let’s turn in our Bibles to **Genesis 12:1-4** so that we can study the life of one of the Great Heroes of Faith. We are going to focus in particular on Sarai and the Faith she exhibited as our first avenue of Faith.

Here in **Genesis 12** we see the story of Abraham, and in **Verse 1** we see the Faith of Abraham and his wife when they leave all they have ever known, their family and land to obey what God had told them. We see that they begin their journey with great Faith, as many of do as well.

Let’s look further down in this journey to **Genesis 12:12, 13**. Here we see a bump in the road for Abram and we see his wife Sarai choosing to go along with her husbands plan instead of choosing to trust in God. Here Abraham the great hero of Faith decides to help God and comes up with his own plan to get out the situation he was in, instead of trusting God.

We tend to do the same thing when things get a little bumpy, or a trail comes across our path that creates an apparent detour when seen through our Physical eyes and in our Humanity. At this point in this encounter what they should’ve done was as it tells us in our Scripture Reading today:

“Be still and know that I am God”

If they would’ve trusted truly in Gods’ Word and His Promises they would’ve never gotten into that predicament in Egypt. But let’s keep moving forward to **Genesis 15:5, 6** where we find a great Promise that God gives Abraham and his wife. Abraham was **75 years old** when he began this journey and now at around **85 years** of age they both began to doubt the promise God had given them that: ***“that his seed would be as many in number as the stars”***.

Lets jump forward to **Genesis 16:1-3** we see another bump in the road, as we all know the story Abram took Hagar and Ishmael was born. In the eyes of Mankind, we see the limitations and the impossibility of a circumstance, but as it tells us in **Matthew 19:26** we must remember:

“With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible”

Again, here we see a perfect example to Husbands and Wives of today; that we must always obey and trust in God instead of trying to help God in delivering us from a bump in the road, a trail and tribulation. God still blessed Ishmael and made of him a nation, but to this day in the Middle East there is turmoil from the decision Sarai made to help God, instead of:

“Be still and know that I am God”

We all know how the story ends, Sarai at the age of 90 and Abraham at the age of 100 conceived the son of the Promise God had given, Isaac (***Genesis 21:1-3***). In this encounter we see the **First Avenue of Faith** as evidenced by Sarai and her husband. Sarai began her Faith walk trusting in God, then she trusted her husband in Egypt instead of God, and then she focused on the Physical impossibility that in her old age she could never bear a son.

In this **First Avenue of Faith** we see Sarai having Faith, but only when things were going great and there were no bumps in road. **Its easy to have Faith when things are going perfect and there aren't any detours along the way. What is of extreme importance on this First Avenue of Faith is to see that in our Humanity we CAN NEVER HELP GOD.**

In our Humanity we will try to rationalize or to bring a human logic to justify our decisions to go against the Will of God. As evidenced by the decisions made by Sarai and her husband which only prolonged the Destination, which was the Blessing from God. Because they trusted in what they could see and their human logic, they weren't able to experience the Power of God operating through true Faith, and there was a delay or detour along the way.

Now before we move forward to our **Second Avenue of Faith** which is found in the **Gospel of Luke**, I would like to make a brief stop in the **book of Job**.

We all know the story, Job had great riches and then satan had to ask permission to God in order to test Job and his Faith. In one day, everything was taken from him. His possessions, his wealth, his beloved family and his physical health as well; which is evidenced by the painful sores that he was afflicted with.

His own wife in **Job 2:9** tells him to ***“Curse God and die”***. Here Jobs' wife was only focused on the Physical dimension and not in the awesome Power of God as a deliverer. See how dirty satan is; the person closest to Job attacks his Faith head on. This is why Solomon said in **Proverbs 12:4** ***“A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband”***. Behind every great man is a great woman, satan even took the support of his wife away, the support of his friends was gone and stripped him down to the point that nothing in the Physical Dimension could help him.

Please turn to **Job 1:21** because here we see the perfect transition point to our **Second Avenue of Faith**.

“Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; BUT BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD”

In the middle of this great Storm that Job endured, he simply raised his hands to Praise God. There wasn’t any logical reason for him to do this. In fact, it would be complete insanity by our Human measurements to do this after everything had been taken away and he had nothing.

Yet Job raised his hands and proclaimed: ***“God gives and God takes away, but Blessed be the name of the LORD”***. He was still and knew who his God was. That is true FAITH in action my dear brothers and sisters. This leads us into our final example pertaining to the **Second Avenue of Faith**. Please turn in your Bibles to **Luke 1:26-38**.

In case you’re not familiar with this story, it’s the story of Mary the mother of Jesus. This encounter with the Angel Gabriel in my opinion is one of the greatest examples of True Faith recorded in the Scriptures. We are going to analyze this encounter text by text so that we can truly capture how this a such a perfect example of the **Second Avenue of Faith**.

Verse 26 and 27 tell us that the Angel appeared to Mary who was already promised or engaged as a virgin to her future husband Joseph of the lineage of the house of David. During this engagement period it was the Law that she had to maintain herself pure (*a Virgin*), if not she would be stoned to death for the act of adultery. This was the culture of that time and great respect was given to the observance of these laws.

Now lets jump to **Verse 30 and 31** the Angel tells her that she is going to conceive a Son. Now we come to **Verse 34 and 35** where Mary says how can this be when she is Virgin. Gabriel explains that it shall be the seed of the Holy Spirit and through his Power that this shall come to pass.

Think about this for second, during this whole encounter Mary is very conscious of the laws pertaining to women who were engaged, I am sure that in the back of her mind she knows that what the Angel was saying would bring great dishonor to her family and death to her. Yet she continues to listen with an open heart. In **Verse 37** she realizes:

“For with God nothing shall be impossible”

I want to pause for a second before we read the final text in this encounter which is **Verse 38**. I want to review again all the implications in the Physical Dimension and through human logic what the Angel Gabriel was asking her to do. *

***By accepting the Word of the Angel Gabriel which was directed by God himself, Mary would basically be sacrificing everything she ever knew, everything she ever had and even sacrificing her own life.**

Think about this for a second, it is speculated that Mary was between the ages of 15-16. Here is a young girl with the rest of her life in front of her considering which Avenue to take. In **Verse 38** we see the mighty reply of one the greatest Women of Faith. **Verse 38:**

“Mary said, behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the Angel departed from her”

In Mary, (*the Mother of Jesus*) we see the perfect example of the **Second Avenue of Faith!** It didn't matter the cost in the eyes of Humanity and in the Physical Dimension, she was going to trust in the Word from God and lay her body up as a living Sacrifice unto the Lord; How mighty was the reply of Mary, and what an awesome example of a young woman going against the critics and just doing the Will of God.

I believe in the transition of **Verse 37** and **38**, Mary paused in her Heart, Mind and spirit and echoed the words of the Psalmist David, **“Be still and know that I am God”**. She went against her logical, physical rational and made the decision to: **“Walk by FAITH, not sight”**. **Isaiah 41:10** says to trust in Him to supply all of our needs.

In Closing

In closing I leave you with the final Scripture reading today found in **Mark 8:34:** **“He said unto them, whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and FOLLOW ME”**

What are you willing to sacrifice to truly live your Faith? What avenue will you choose today? Will you choose the Avenue of Sarai; or will you choose the Avenue of Mary (*Mother of Jesus*).

We live in a World full of uncertainty, full of heartache, grief and pain my dear Brothers and Sisters. But today I bring to you from the Holy Spirit a certainty that if we give our all to God, if we live for Him and Him alone that God will fulfill His Word to us in the Scriptures.

Are you Bold enough in your Faith to declare today that you will deny yourself, your perceived comforts and security to take up your cross and follow? Our life force and power flow from God in us, not from anything this World has to offer. All we have to do is **“Be still and know that He is God”**

Altar Call

As the final song plays “Mi todo eres Señor” (*You are my all Lord*) please listen to lyrics and allow them to speak to your heart. Allow the Holy Spirit to help you see that God lives in you and that He wants you to give it ALL to Him and Trust Him that HE not only can bless us, but that He will bless us if we allow HIM to operate in our lives by living out True Faith in him.

Which Avenue will you choose to take today?