

Hebrews 11:35-40

The "Others" of Faith

- the "others" in vs.35-36 are the people not mentioned here or possibly ever in Scripture
(The passage is the Biblical "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier")

- these people had the kind of faith that looked beyond the present to the future and believes,
even in the face of overwhelming odds

Truth- we do have historical accounts of certain people enduring these things but many
went through them without anything ever being written about them

vs.35b- "not accepting deliverance"- these are the ones that were willing to die before they would
compromise their faith (in most cases, deliverance meant a denial of what they believed)

*they were not willing to sacrifice eternity on the altar of time so they chose to suffer that
they might obtain a "better resurrection" (Dan.3:17-18)

Think about this- James died while Peter was delivered in Acts 12

(The same James was the 1st apostle to die and only apostle's death recorded in Scripture
while his brother, John, would be the last to die)

vs.36- "cruel mockings"- ridiculed, insulted, cursed at, and treated with contempt

- "scourgings"- (mastic) this included Roman scourging but not exclusively as many were
whipped with leather whips

(either way, many times the recipient would die from the wounds a few days or even weeks
later from infections that set in on the wounds- II Cor.11:24-28)

- "bonds and imprisonment"- incarcerated sometimes for years

(Heb.13:3- we suffer with other believers because we are "one body")

vs.37- these unnamed heroes had the faith that desired God above all earthly ties and pleasures

- "stoned"- this was the Hebrew method for capital punishment
*it was done 1 of 2 ways-

1) the accused was tied up and stones were cast at him

(the witnesses were required to cast the first stone- Deut.13:9)

2) the accused was dropped into a pit and large stones were dropped on him

(Either way, it was a means of execution for the condemned)

*this is the way Stephen died unjustly

- and what did God do for him? He gave him the love to pray for his murderers

Truth- God did the same thing for Jim Elliot and his friends in Ecuador

(These men were carrying firearms when they were killed but didn't use them because their
attackers were not saved- they died instead of killing them)

- "sawn asunder"- Isaiah the prophet died this way by a wooden saw

- "tempted"- this is an enticement with sin (this is probably the writer reminding his readers again
that these had the opportunity to renounce their faith)

- "slain with the sword"- this would include beheading

- these people were also deprived of necessities of life like food, clothing, and shelter

vs.38- these people suffered both mental and physical persecution

*we must note the plurality used in these verses- (others, they, scourgings- it wasn't just one)

- "world was not worthy"- their lives were so Godly and their faith was so pure that they were
actually spared of God as He called them home and spared them from even more wickedness

- these people and even some now get rejected by society but received of the Savior

(Rom.8:18, I John 2:15)

- "wandered" - the idea is that they couldn't find permanent dwelling and rest in a world that they no longer belonged to

vs.39- "good report" - (martureo) to be a witness or to bear witness

(This is where we derive the English word for "martyr")

- "received not the promise" - they died before God fulfilled it through Christ

(The writer is still speaking about Old Testament saints)

*their faith gave them the confidence that God would do the necessary things to redeem them and reward them

Truth- not one Old Testament saint saw the consummation of his/her faith before they died

*and yet they remained faithful until the very end

*D.L. Moody- "a faith that fizzles before the finish had a fatal flaw from the first"

vs.40- "without us" - he is referring to the time of Christianity

(There was no Christians before Christ went to Calvary)

- no salvation was complete or "made perfect" - until Jesus' work on the Cross was completed

(Their salvation was based on what Christ would do while ours is based on what He has done)

- the "better thing" for us is the historical fact of Christ's redeeming death on the Cross

(We are not looking for that promise to be fulfilled- we are living in it because it has already taken place)