

“By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions, quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight.” Hebrews 11:33-34 NLT

[lectio] // HEBREWS 11:32-40

In all of these great stories of faith in Hebrews, God takes the ordinary and does extraordinary things through their lives. It was clear and apparent that they did not pull off any of these miracles because of themselves. No, it was all God and they believed in him. It was NOT easy. It was always terrifying to take that step. Later Hebrew says something so interesting, “These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.” What does that mean? New living says, “so they would not reach perfection without us.” Whoa, they didn’t receive the promise? In their life on earth? They are still waiting until the endgame? And somehow the people of God NOW are a part of that completion, fulfillment? That’s some heavy stuff! This promise could not be Christ or his death, it has to be his return and final chapter of ALL THINGS. All the men and women of faith are still waiting (just like us) for the finality of God’s plan. Is there something powerful about us (all of those who lived by faith) coming together after Christ’s return? It seems so.

[oratio]

Dad,

I have figured out how important it is to think in terms of “together,” highlighting the one another’s and unity among believers. But I am still learning so much more about the idea of community of those who believe. Not in an “elitist” sense, but a humble, interdependence on each other. There is something even bigger than imagined about unity, that “dance of three” that exists within you (God). The beauty of love, acceptance, and wholeness that can only be found in common with others of faith - because it reflects you! I am so intrigued by this small phrase that Hebrews left us. The promise fulfilled is not just something we receive, it’s something we give and receive to and from each other? I need to think about this some more. What a mystery!

[contemplatio]

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root