



2021

SEMINAR ONE
THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES
BY
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INTRODUCTION

Men and Women attending this conference, please let us note that the faith of our fathers was a "HOLY FAITH"! This is the uncompromising and sacrificial faith of old. It is the faith of our fathers and mothers of faith, written out for us in Chapter 11 of the Book of Hebrews of The Holy Scriptures - Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the Prophets. It is worthy to note as stated in the Scripture (Hebrews 11:39 & 40) that, though they did not receive the totality of THE PROMISE, they all remained faithful till the end. The totality of "the Promise" was and is "The Messiah"! Thanks be to God who gave Him to us as our free gift of Salvation by His infinite mercy, during this dispensation of His grace. May we live to appreciate this great, priceless and invaluable gift while we live in this world of vanity and emptiness in Jesus' name.

THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

For the purpose of our discussion, we will need to look at the origin of these words in the Scriptures: Hebrews 12:1.

1.1 WHO ARE THEY?

They are men and women of great faith listed in Hebrews 11, along with millions of Saints including our fathers and mothers in the faith, who have gone before us, form "the cloud of witnesses" being discussed here. They are the warriors of faith. They are the warriors of righteousness and holiness. They are the true pilgrims who passed through this world living by faith, with unshakable belief and trust in the only true and living God.

They are the true Saints who endured and persevered through great tribulations, trials and various adversities. They are the ones whose lives testify of the unfailing love and faithfulness of God from generation to generation. They are the ones enjoying eternity now, with Jesus Christ, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Alpha and Omega.

1.2 WHAT IS THEIR RELEVANCE TO OUR WALK OF FAITH OR CHRISTIAN RACE?

Their race of faith is expected to inspire and encourage us as we run the same race of faith “set before us” in our own generation. They are bearing testimonies of the truth to our faith-race, even as their own faith race was borne testimony of. (Hebrews 12:1-AMPL Bible).

Doubtless, they persevered and endured to the end, finished well and received their crowns. Hence, we must copy them in running our own race in our generation; in this world in order to finish well and receive our own crowns. May we start, finish well and receive our crowns too in Jesus’ name.

1.3 HOW SHOULD WE THEN RUN OUR OWN RACE SUCCESSFULLY TO THE END, AVOIDING MANY PITFALLS WHICH THEY WERE ABLE TO AVOID?

This is succinctly summarized in Hebrews 12:1-2.

- ✓ Lay aside every weight that slows us down (NLT); strip off and throw away every encumbrance or unnecessary weight (AMPL).
- ✓ Get rid of that sin that does easily beset us, or so readily and easily trips us. What is this one sin? UNBELIEF. Let’s remind ourselves with Heb. 3:12-19 & 4:1-6.
- ✓ Get rid of other physical distractions: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life (John 2:16).
- ✓ Run the race set before us with patient endurance. It is not a sprint but a Marathon!
- ✓ Be totally well-focused, keeping our eyes on Jesus alone, the Author, Leader and Source of our Faith.

CONCLUSION

Is the Church and we Christians of today conscious of the fact that we are surrounded or compassed by so great a cloud of Witnesses? I doubt it very much! Our Christian lives and faith walk today, is the reverse of what the Word of God instructs us to do in Hebrews 12. Unfortunately, there is little time left for us the ‘so-called Christians’ of today. Jesus is no longer “coming soon”. He is coming now and the trumpet may sound any moment! I am pleading today with every participant of this year’s SUPER FEST, no matter who we are (General Overseers, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Lay men/Congregants), to return to our original selves as God’s Sons and no longer bastards (Hebrews 12:7-9).

Let us remember daily that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses and hence, work out our individual salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). May the Lord help us and be gracious unto us, in Jesus’ name.