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### Saints Tested to the Limit

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## SAINTS TESTED TO THE LIMIT

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS  
NUMBER 115  
HEBREWS 11:34-38

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We have studied what the Bible says about warfare. Let us get a quick review of the things we studied just to get our minds ready for the truth of these next verses--

Concepts of warfare--In Matthew 24:4 and 6 and 7  
Isaiah 2:4  
Ecclesiastes 3:8  
Numbers 21:14  
Matthew 26:52

The Bible Concept Of The Military  
The spiritual factor--Nehemiah 4:8 and 9  
The establishment factor--Nehemiah 4:13-15

The Military Image Of Jesus Christ  
We usually think of him as God and Saviour, and he is. We think of him as the God of Israel, the head of the church and the future ruler of the world when he takes the world over from Satan. We usually think of him as the loving, kind and gentle Saviour. But he has a military image also. At the Red Sea we heard the words "The Lord will fight for you today." In Joshua 5:13 and 6:2 we read, "The Lord of the armies of Israel." In Zechariah 14:3-4 he will destroy the armies of Armageddon. In Isaiah 37:36 he holds the record of killing on a single morning. But he will break his own record as described in Revelation 19:11 and 15 when he destroys millions at Armageddon.

The Principle of Universal Military Training  
We see this in Numbers 1:2 and 3. The principle of mobilization in Numbers 31:3-5. Then we saw how God deliberately left some foreign and pagan nations in the land to test Israel. (Judges 3:1 and 2) These were the Philistines, the Canaanites, the Sidonians, the Hittites, The Ammorites, and the Jebusites. These were left so the men who had not been tested in earlier wars might have that experience. There must be a professional staff in the military. (Luke 14:31) The true motivation for the military is from God himself. (2 Sam. 22:35 Psalm 18:34, 144:1 also 1 Chronicles 5:19-22) Draft dodgers are sinful before the Lord. (Num. 32:6, 32:14, 32:20 and 23)

Before we go on to the next verses let us get a corrected translation of verses 32-34.

Verse 32

"And what more can I say? For time would fail me as I go on telling about Gideon, Barak, Sampson, Jephthae, both David and Samuel also the prophets."

Verse 33

"Who themselves by means of doctrine resident in their souls conquered kingdoms, accomplished righteousness, attained promises, shut the mouths of lions."

Verse 34

"Neutralized the power of fire, escaped from the mouths of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became courageous in battle, put to flight the hostile invading armies."

Verse 35 "Women receive their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:" Now we come to the ladies. Doctrine takes a female and turns her into a lady. We are going to study about the shocking things that happen to ladies here. There is nothing more wonderful in all the world than a woman with doctrine in her soul. What really makes a great lady is what is in her soul. Don't love a woman for her body or her personal and physical beauty, but love her for what is in her soul.

We are going to see two women mentioned here and each had an only son. Women instinctively love their children and they have a gift in communicating with them. ( I would like to stop here and pay tribute to the many women who so faithfully teach children in this church. It is fantastic what they are able to do with the minds of children. In those younger departments and in the mission organizations and in the choirs.)

### Two Prophets And Physical Miracles

In each of these stories a prophet was present. The first one was Elijah and the second one was Elisha.

The first one was the widow of Zarephath. (1 Kings 17:17-24)

The second one was the Shunammite woman. (2 Kings 4:18-37)

Let us gather some principles out of this verse and out of these two incidents.

1. The loss of a loved one is harder on a woman than a man because a woman is a responder and she must be taught how to take sorrow.
2. In each case the woman went to the prophet, the man of God, and in each case the dead boy was brought back to life.
3. We have the word "received" and this is the aorist, active, indicative of Lambano. Then we have autos nekros and it means their very own dead, their beloved dead. Next we have ek anastasis and it means "out from the dead" and it means resuscitation and not resurrection. Later on these two boys would die and are awaiting the resurrection just like everybody else.
4. These women were in a hopeless situation but had enough doctrine to handle it.
5. In each case they went to a man with authority and they were used by God and God performed a miracle and raised up the dead boys.
6. Please notice these women did not go off the deep end and fall into despair. They took their problem to God and with doctrine in their souls, they met their problem. Women, without doctrine in your souls, you can't handle the problems of life.

The word "again" is not in the text, so drop it out for it is not needed to complete the statement.

Next we have the word "others" and it is allos so it means "other women." This is a lady's verse. We are still talking about women. (Heteros would have meant others of a different kind, and we would know he had switched to men.)

"Other women were tortured." This is the aorist, passive, indicative of tumpanizo, and it means to torture with instruments of torture. It implies rape and destruction of the female body. (Tie them up naked and pour sand in their mouths.) Next we have "not accepting deliverance" and this is the aorist, active, participle of prosdechomai and it means "They refused to accept deliverance rather than to betray someone." The word for deliverance is apolutrosis and it means "total

release from their torture." The only way to be able to do something like this is to have doctrine in the soul. These are super great women. Now we have the word "that" from hina and it means "in order that." Next we have "they might obtain" and this is the aorist, active, subjunctive of tugchano. Now we need to correct the next statement "A better resurrection." Well, when you get a resurrection body, it is perfect and there can't be anything better than that. The word for "better" is the objective genitive singular of kreisson which is the comparative of agathos and it should be translated "something better after resurrection."

This verse correctly translated says, "Women received their dead by means of resuscitation and other super grace women were tortured not accepting their release in order that they might attain something better after resurrection." This something better is life with God forever and forever.

Verse 36 "And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:" Please remember this, that Jesus Christ controls history.

Illustration--At Dunkirk Hitler commanded the German generals to stop right where they were and Dunkirk changed the course of the war. Why did Hitler do that? The English were able to take out 338,000 troops in 800 ships and there were only 2,000 casualties. This made it possible for the British to hold out until we got there and it was the turning point in the war. Germany had already conquered France and this strange turn in history is an illustration of who is in control of history. By the time Hitler was persuaded to change his mind, it was too late. Jesus Christ is in control of history.

Now in verse 36 we have heteros and it refers to men again. This means others of a different kind. We have the word "had" but it is the aorist, active, indicative of lambano and it means "received." The next word "trial" is from peira and it means "testing type experiences." We experience first saving grace, then we move into living grace and remember, in living grace, God gives us all we ever need to face every experience of life. (Remember it is like this--Saving grace and that comes from the cross--then we move into living grace and he provides all we will ever need. Next, when we learn doctrine, we move into super grace. Then when we die, we receive dying grace and he throws down the golden drawbridge and we move into surpassing grace.) "Mockings" is a descriptive genitive of empaigmos and it means "scorn," torture inflicted bodily, torture by impudence and ridicule." This is nakedness, rape, molestation and it is done publically and it means soul torture.

The word "scourgings" is from mastixz and it means floggings and this is torture of the body.

The next word translated "yea" is the temporal use of eti and should be translated "in addition." Then we have "bonds and imprisonments." Bonds is the genitive plural of the noun desmos and it means "shackles, something that ties the hands and feet down." Then we have the singular of phulake and it means "torture by confinement or isolation." All of these are an attack on the freedom of the soul and the body.

So verse 36 says, "And others received testing type experience, that is torture by ridicule and impudence and floggings, and in addition to floggings and imprisonment in isolation."

So in this verse we have both the torture of the soul and the torture of the body and also the removal of personal freedom. But when you have doctrine in the soul, you can handle any of these.

### A Major Conclusion

At this juncture in our study in Hebrews, we can reach the conclusion that when you take in doctrine, you are being prepared for anything that comes in life. No matter what comes, doctrine resident in the soul prepares you for it.

Verse 37 "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented;" "They were stoned" is the aorist, passive, indicative of lithazo and it means to be killed with stones. The priest Zechariah was stoned in 836 B.C. in front of the Temple. He was the son of the high priest Jehoida. Now this is not the same one who wrote the book Zechariah that we have in the Bible. In the reign of King Joash the priest Zechariah was stoned to death because he was faithful in teaching the Word of God and in exposing idolatry. It is in 2 Chronicles 24:20-21. He stood above the people and he spoke with authority to them. He said, "Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord--you are reversionists." He warned them of the coming of the fifth cycle of discipline. Matthew 23:35 mentions the same event. The words "Son of Barachias" is not in the original so drop it out.

The next words we have are "They were sawn asunder" and this refers to how super grace Isaiah was killed. "Sawn asunder" is the aorist, passive indicative of prizo. (This word only used one time in the Bible.) They tied him down and cut him in two pieces by a saw. A very terrible way to die but God gave him dying grace to stand it. Next we have "They were tempted" and this is the aorist, passive, indicative of peirozo and it means to test to see what is inside, like the assayer tests gold to see what is in it. Abraham in offering Isaac as a sacrifice is such an illustration. "Were slain" is the aorist, active, indicative of apothenesko and it means to be murdered. Then we have en phonos and it means "from a sword." Gataliah was removed in such a fashion and he was the governor of Jerusalem. Sometimes it is the plan of God to remove a super grace believer in this way, but remember, it is no tragedy with God. God always removes a super grace believer at the right time. This is illustrated by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as they were about to be thrown into the fiery furnace as related in Daniel 3:17 and 18. They refused to kneel to the chunk of gold and they said, "Our God is able to deliver us." Job 13:15 expressed exactly the same thing, "I still have my confidence in him." (So don't run to some healer when the doctor tells you that you have cancer. Don't run down to Mexico and eat peach pits or garlic.)

### Most Will Die Alone

Some want to take refuge in the Rapture and all go together, but most of us will die alone. Don't try to rush things. Some said Napoleon was the anti-christ and then others said Mussolini was, and Hitler. Then others say that because the Jews are back in the land that this is a sign the end is near. It doesn't mean any such thing. You probably will die and go out alone, but remember that God will provide the golden drawbridge for you. Isaiah was alone when he died and Paul was alone when he died.

Isolation From Normal Society

"They wandered about" means to wander without roots. This is the aorist, active, indicative of perierchomai. Then we have en melote and it doesn't mean soft sheepskin but it means a very rough uncomfortable clothing. Goatskin is the same idea.

Illustration

This happened much later than the time to which the writer of the Hebrews referred to here. A man by the name of Peter Waldo had this happen to him in Europe. He was a prominent Roman Catholic layman. Translated the Bible from the Latin into French and many were converted and they were called Waldensians. This was long before the Reformation. At the council of Verona in 1184 A.D., they put an anathema on Peter Waldo. The Pope went out to investigate it. And we read, "The Waldensians went about in sheepskins and goatskin and had all things in common like the apostles." The Pope started a crusade against these people and Pope Innocent the eighth had the Waldensians persecuted and raped and tortured. They were hunted down and they lived in caves. Next we have the words "Being destitute" and this is the present, passive, participle of husterio and it means without home and food and clothing. "Afflicted" is the present, passive, participle of thlibo and this means maximum pressure. "Tormented" means tortured. So this verse says--

"They were stoned to death, they were sawed in two, they were tested by pressure, they died by murder from a sword, they wandered about in sheepskin and goatskin, being destitute, suffering harrassment, being oppressed.

Verse 38 "(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Now we have the word hos and it should be translated "concerning whom." Next we have the words ho kosmos and it refers to the world ruled by Satan. Then we have the imperfect, active, indicative of eimi plus ouk. Then we have the predicate nominative of oxzois and it means "was not worthy."

"They wandered" is the present, middle, participle of planao and it means to go astray and be hunted down like lost sheep hunted down by wolves. "In deserts" is epi ereemia and it means barren wastes. Then we have spelaion for "dens" and opee for "caves."

So this verse says, "Of whom the world was not worthy, they themselves wandered about over deserts and mountains both in caves and holes in the earth."

A reversionistic society always excommunicates the super grace believer. In reality these are the people who preserve our society. There is no one more inconsistent than the unbeliever. Remember, the only way you will change history is to stand your ground. Get history straight and it is truth and only truth that will prepare you for any eventuality.