

Unexpected Members of the “Hall of Faith” in Hebrews 11

While it is certainly not my or anyone’s place to judge the eternal destiny of anyone else, nor do I assume that an OT character who’s not listed in Hebrews 11 has/will fail to attain heaven, portions of the list may intrigue and surprise us.

Obviously, some extraordinary OT individuals are included along with a partial catalogue of their *faithful deeds*, Hebrews 11:7-28. But there are some other notable OT individuals that we might expect to be included that aren’t- like the son of a king who became the *wisest man* ever, the *wealthiest* of his generation, and the *king* who ruled Israel in and through its zenith period, Solomon. And yet he’s not included while a Canaanite prostitute is, Hebrews 11:31! Additionally, several others are included in Hebrews 11:32 that you or I probably would have never considered worthy to be listed, like:

A hesitant man who was apparently full of doubts and misgivings, **Gideon**, Judges 6;

An excessively cautious man who refused to go into battle unless a particular woman went with him, **Barak**, Judges 4:4-10;

An immature, lustful, and vengeful man, **Samson**; Judges 13:1 – 17:22;

A man who was the illegitimate son of a harlot, and made a foolish/reckless vow, **Jephthah**, Judges 11;

A king who shirked his duty and committed adultery and murder, **David**, 2Sam.11; and,

A prophet/judge who appointed his sons to exalted positions of authority and leadership despite the fact that they took bribes and perverted justice for dishonest gain, **Samuel**, 1Samuel 8.

All of which well-illustrate a principle of truth expressly stated in 1Samuel 16:7, “*God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.*”

If we can so misjudge men/women of *the past*, are we not just as apt to misjudge those of our *present* for the same reasons and in the same ways? “*Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment,*” John 7:24.

But what if we can become more patient with the *doubting* so that they can become courageous soldiers in the Lord’s army like Gideon, Judges 7:1 – 8:32; more forbearing with the *dubiously cautious* so that they can become faithfully supportive and sing the song of victory like Barak, Judges 4:12 - 5:31; more willing assess others on their present and future potential instead of their *violent past* so they can accomplish tremendous feats of strength and sacrifice while suffering like Samson, Judges 17:23-31; less judgmental of a *single rash moment of folly* so that they can become *faithfully fierce* leaders like Jephthah, Judges 12; more forgiving to even those who’ve committed *mortally tragic sins* so that they can return to being “*a man after My (God’s) heart*” who “*do(es) all*” of God’s will, Acts 13:22; and more understanding of a father’s *misguided love for his children* by seeing an otherwise dedicated and faithful life speaking (and acting) for God like Samuel, 1Sam.25:1; Acts 3:24. Think about it, won’t you?

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