

# Hebrews 10-11

Last time we started off in chapter 7, where Paul took the comparison between the Hebrews and their father Abraham, that he'd been making, a step further. He had closed chapter six encouraging them to have faith like Abraham, since they have that same sure promise left to them. To through faith and patience inherit the promises.

And as he has done so many times before, he also brought into that a comparison with Christ. Paul demonstrated how Christ was their great high priest, just as Melchizedek was a priest to Abraham. A priest who was a king, a king of righteousness, and a king of peace, reigning from Salem. And that is the kind of priest that they have, one that is the heir, to reign on the throne of David from its seat in Zion.

And so Paul showed how Christ fulfilled that oath of God, which he had sworn in Psalm 110, that he would make a man a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

And he showed also how that was a superior priesthood for the heirs of the promise. How the blessing of that priesthood is what fulfilled that promise that God gave Abraham, that surely blessing he would bless him. How this is a strong priesthood, an unchangeable priesthood, confirmed by an oath. How this is a priesthood that endures for ever, and can save them to the uttermost, because their high priest ever liveth to make intercession for them. And so the priesthood of Christ is a profitable priesthood, the order of Melchizedek is profitable, while the Levite priesthood is not.

The Levite priesthood only offered the blood of bulls and goats, which can never take away sin. So that those sacrifices had to be made often, repeated every year. They could not make even him that did the service perfect concerning the conscience. The law only dealt with the flesh, it couldn't take a way the guilt of sin. It was only a shadow of things to come.

It was only a figure for the time then present. And in that figure God made clear, that there was a way to come before him into the holiest. But that way was not yet made manifest. It was temporarily shrouded by a veil, so that they could not enter in. Even the holiest man, the high priest, was not able to enter the holiest place, without blood to make atonement. And then he couldn't enter again until he brought in the blood of the sin offering again the next year.

So in that old testament, it was clear that there was a way of coming before God, into the true holy of holies in heaven, but that the way was not yet made known to man. But now, Jesus has become mediator of a new testament, established through his death, by which he has indeed entered into the holy place once, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

So seeing that the Hebrews have such a great high priest, who has perfected his ministry, and perfected us, let them leave off their sins, which are now taken away, and let them leave off the dead works of the law, from which their consciences have been purged, and let them serve the living God.

## Verse 19

**Hebrews 10:19** Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

So "therefore", based on the conclusions that we can draw from what Paul has just said, he's going to give them some more admonition.

And the first conclusion that we can draw is, that we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. And we pointed out before that that is something that even the high priests

couldn't do. They could only enter into the holiest once a year, not without blood. But Paul says that we can enter into the holiest by blood, not by the blood of animals, but by the blood of Jesus.

You see, in the holiest place was where the ark of the covenant was, and the mercy seat. And Paul admonished them in chapter 4 to come boldly before the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. And you might say, "how can we come boldly before the throne of grace, the throne of God? The high priests couldn't do that without blood." But now we can, we have boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus.

## Verse 20

**Hebrews 10:20** By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

So yes indeed, this is a new way of coming to God. The Levite priests couldn't enter into the holiest with boldness, but a new way has been opened up, by which we can enter in.

### LIVING

And he describes that new way that he's expounded to them here, by saying that it is a living way. Now why is that significant? Well, it's significant because the old way was not a living way. Remember how he described the old way. The old way was that the high priest would enter in once every year, not without blood. And so the blood of animals had to be shed in order for the high priest to be able to enter in. There had to be death. The only way that the high priest could enter into the holiest, was through death, the death of animal sacrifices.

But our new way is different. Our new way is not a way of death. It is not a dead way, it is living way. Because we enter in, without death. Jesus died once, but we don't just get to come before the throne once. We get to come before the throne again, and again, and again, without Jesus having to die. Without death. Because the way that he has consecrated for us, is a living way.

### CONSECRATE

Now, to consecrate something, is to make it sacred. It is as to sanctify it, to set it apart and declare it sacred and holy. And that word is mainly used in the Bible in reference to Aaron and his sons, the Levite priests, being consecrated to their priestly office. That office by which they were able to enter into the holiest. That office ordained by God through Moses.

And now we see that Jesus has consecrated for us a new way, so that each and every one of us can come directly before God. Just as a priest would. Just as if we are through him ordained priests unto God. We can each come before him, entering in through the veil.

### VEIL

Because in the tabernacle and the temple, the holiest place was blocked off by a curtain, a veil. And so to enter into it you had to go within the veil.

And Paul says that we do indeed pass through a veil when we enter into the holiest. That when we come to God by this new and living way, it is through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.

And so Paul says that the veil is the flesh of Christ.

Now, it is important to look carefully at what he says. Every word matters. And sometimes the words that seem less important are the most significant.

He says that we go *through* the veil. Now, you don't go *through* a veil. You move the veil aside and walk around it, you go underneath it, but you don't go through it. To go through something it has to have a hole in it, that you can go through. That is the way that the word "through" is consistently used in scripture.

For example, it speaks often of how the children of Israel passed *through* the Red sea. And in order to be able to do that, they had to have the sea divided for them, right? So that they could pass *through* it.

And that is the same thing that had to happen to the veil, in order for us to be able to pass through it.

**Mark 15:37** And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And **the veil** of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

And so Jesus made a new way for us to enter in, *through* the veil, as if passing between it. And that rending of the veil of the temple was symbolic of that. Symbolic of the rending of the true veil, that we pass through, which Paul says here is the flesh of Christ. And so indeed we see that that veil in the temple was rent at the same moment that Christ's flesh was rent, that his spirit left his body, and he gave up the ghost. At the moment of his death.

And so it is a living way, because there is no longer a veil to keep us out. The flesh of Christ, the veil, was rent in twain, as it were, at his death. It was through that, that as Paul said before, he delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. It was through that that our flesh is crucified, so that we're no longer under the law, we're dead to it, but like Christ, alive unto God.

And so we come to God by a living way, passing through the veil, that has once been rent. The death of Christ's flesh, once on the cross, by which sacrifice for sins for ever, we draw nigh unto God.

## Verse 21

**Hebrews 10:21** And having an high priest over the house of God;

And not only that, not only can we enter into the holiest, but we have a high priest over the house of God. A priest who can have compassion on us, and give us grace.

In chapter 3 he called them the house of God, just as Israel was called the house of God under Moses. And Moses was as a servant in God's house, but Christ is a son over his own house. And just as Moses ordained Aaron a high priest over that house, so God has now ordained the Son to be also the high priest over them.

And when those things were thus ordained, it meant that they were delivered from bondage, and were being brought unto the inheritance. When that first way into the holiest was ordained, it meant that their sins could be covered, so that could come into the inheritance.

And so now that a new way has been ordained, now that a new high priest has been ordained, that's an indicator that they've been delivered from bondage. They are no longer in the flesh, under the law. But they are the house of God, having a great high priest, that has made atonement for them. And who, as the Son, is ready to bring them into the inheritance. And so they need to be ready.

## Verse 22

**Hebrews 10:22** Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

And so based on that, based on the time, based on this ministry of Christ that he has perfected for them, let them draw near with a true heart. Not a hard heart, as he spoke of before. Not a heart hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. But a true heart, in full assurance of faith. Not doubting, not falling away, not refusing to hear his voice, but in full assurance of faith.

Having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. Just as he said before, that when those things were thus ordained, they were sprinkled with blood. That when the first testament was ordained, that Moses sprinkled both the book and all the people. And so they also have had their hearts sprinkled by the blood of Christ, that they might participate in this new testament, this new covenant, this new and living way to God. So let not their hearts be hard, they've been sprinkled from an evil conscience, they've had their sins removed. So let their hearts be true.

And likewise they have their bodies washed with pure water. Just as when the Levites were ordained, their bodies were washed with pure water, so that they could minister to Aaron and the priests. And so they also have their bodies washed with pure water, through the word of God, the doctrine of Christ, that has come unto them. They, like the Levites, are sanctified. And they are able to enter even into the tabernacle, and through the veil, into the holiest.

So just as these things were ordained in the wilderness, as they went to the promised land, the new testament has now been ordained. And so the Hebrews need to be ready, as they approach the day of inheritance.

## Verse 23

**Hebrews 10:23** Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

So they have professed faith in Christ, faith in God's promise of inheritance. And let them hold fast that profession. Without wavering. Not going back, not letting those things slip. Not being as their fathers were, when they transgressed in the wilderness. Not falling away, and coming back, and falling away, and coming back. But let them hold fast their profession without wavering.

For he is faithful that promised. They can have faith, they can hold fast, because they serve a faithful God, who confirmed that promise with an oath.

## Verse 24

**Hebrews 10:24** And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

And let them also admonish each other, lest any of them be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. But rather considering one another, and through exhortation provoking one another unto love and good works. That they might stay in the faith, and go on unto perfection.

## Verse 25

**Hebrews 10:25** Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

And so as we've said, all things are now ready, the new covenant is perfected, they've been sprinkled, washed, the high priest ordained, and the way into the holiest made plain. And so they are as their fathers in the wilderness, marching toward the promised land. They see the day approaching. The day when their hearts must be filled with faith, that the Hebrews might receive their inheritance.

So let them fear, lest any of them should seem to come short of it. Let them not forsake one another, let them not forsake the assembling of themselves together. Let them not leave the faith, or try to go it alone. But rather let them exhort one another, that when the salvation of Israel comes out of Zion, the Hebrews might be ready, and all Israel might be saved.

Now, this verse is frequently pulled out of context, and misused. In some cases by people who are well-meaning, and also by people who are distorting it for their own ends.

There are people that see the problems with this world's religious institutions, and don't associate with those institutions that call themselves "the church." And the institutionalists, the religious establishment, will use this verse to try and prod them back into institutional religion. You see, there is never a command, anywhere in scripture, for the Christian to be associated with an institution. With a religious order. And so the institutionalists have to resort to pulling verses out of context in order to condemn or rebuke those who don't participate in their institutions. And this verse is the best that they can do. There isn't another verse like it in the NT, it is the closest that they can get. And anyone who knows the book of Hebrews knows that those using this verse that way are only making a fool of themselves.

Paul's entire point, in the book of Hebrews, is to get the Hebrews to come out of an institutional religion. To come out of Judaism.

So he's not telling them here that they need to be sure to continue to participate in a religion, to continue to be associated with an institution. That's the exact opposite of what he is saying. He is telling them, rather, to continue assembling together, to exhort one another, that they might go on unto perfection. Not to go back to dead works. Not to go back to earthly priests.

You see, as Hebrews professing Christ, they were suffering persecution. The institutional religious leaders were trying to either kill them, or bring them back under Judaism. And so Paul has repeatedly spoken of the temptation that they would have, to neglect their salvation, let these things slip, and fall away. To stop professing Christ, and go back under the law. Go back under the OT. Go back into the Judaism. Go back to the earthly priests. Go back to religion. And he's repeatedly told them, "don't do it, hold fast your profession." And that is what he is doing again here. He's just summarizing here everything that he's said in the last few chapters. And so he's telling them once again not to quit the faith. Not to say, "well, it is dangerous for us to assemble together, let's stop. Let's give in and go back into Judaism. Let's give up and stop teaching and preaching, and pretend to be normal Jews, but just know in our hearts that we're saved."

And Paul says, "No! Don't do that. That's more dangerous than the persecution. If you stop assembling together, if you stop exhorting one another, if you neglect this, you may let it slip, you may fall away, you may transgress the word, as your fathers did in the wilderness."

And so Paul's point here has nothing to do with participating in some kind of an institution. In being a member of some kind of formal organization. The assembling part, is actually irrelevant.

His focus is on the exhortation. “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; *but exhorting one another.*” The only reason that he even mentions assembling is because that is when they exhorted one another. They couldn’t exhort one another very well without assembling together in one place. And in many ways that is still the best way to exhort one another even today. But with modern technology we can assemble virtually, we can exhort one another in real time from halfway around the world.

But the irony is, that if you are assembling together, and are not exhorting one another, that you are not fulfilling what Paul was talking about here. If you are participating in an institutional religion, but aren’t receiving the kind of exhortation that Paul has been giving them here, prodding them to go on unto perfection, then you are not fulfilling Paul’s admonition here. And the only way for you to fulfill it, would likely be to do the same thing that the Hebrews in Paul’s day did. To leave the institutional religion, and assemble themselves together. And so Paul calls on them to stand fast in doing that.

And I think that it is also important to note, that what Paul is talking about here, is not just somebody getting up and teaching scripture. That’s important, that’s a part of it. But the exhortation he is talking about is on a personal level. In the last verse he said, “let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works.” So he says that they should consider one another, as individuals, provoking one another unto love and good works. Lest any of them be hardened. What the Hebrews need to do here, so that they can all, generally, as a people, be ready, when that day comes, is to each consider those around them, and exhort each other. Each of them considering, each of them exhorting, each of them receiving exhortation. Lest any of them come short of the inheritance. So it is more intimate exhortation that he is speaking of here. Something that would likely take place in small assemblies, where two or three were gathered together in his name. In underground churches, for fear of persecution. Encouraging one another to not quit, to not buckle under the pressure, to not leave the faith. That’s more the kind of thing that he is talking about.

And there is certainly a more general principle that we can learn from that, but it was something that was particularly important for the Hebrews. And that will be again, during their tribulation.

And I’ll note, that when he talked about exhortation before, how often did he tell them to exhort one another? Did he tell them to exhort one another weekly? Twice a week? No. He told them to exhort one another *daily*. So if you were going to fulfill what Paul is saying here, that wouldn’t be a command to go to church once a week, or twice a week. It would be a command to go to church every day. But it isn’t a command to do that, because in their persecution, they couldn’t have formal gathering places where hundreds or thousands of them could come together. But to avoid getting caught, they likely had to assemble in small groups, at various places, at various times. And so Paul encourages them to keep doing that, and exhort one another daily.

## Verse 26

**Hebrews 10:26** For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

And by sin here, his focus is the same sin that he's been talking about all along: falling away, denying Christ, stopping believing.

And so they need to exhort one another to stay in the faith, exhort one another to go on unto perfection. If they sin willfully, if they let these things slip, and transgress the word, after having received a knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. As we said before, it is a one shot deal. Christ died once. He made one sacrifice for sins for ever. You cannot crucify him unto you afresh.

So they must, *they must*, stay in the faith, because if they leave it, there will be no hope for them.

## Verse 27

**Hebrews 10:27** But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Instead they'll be damned. They will be judged for their sin, and the fiery indignation of God shall devour them with all of his adversaries.

## Verse 28

**Hebrews 10:28** He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

You see, the law of Moses made allowances for somebody who sinned through ignorance. They could make a sacrifice for sins. If they didn't know, if they weren't aware that they were breaking the law, then there remained a sacrifice that they could make, and God would forgive them. But if they sinned willfully, knowing the truth, there remained no more sacrifice for sins. They would be put to death without mercy. If there were two or three witnesses to testify that they were indeed guilty, then they would be put to death. They would be cut off from the inheritance. They despised the word.

## Verse 29

**Hebrews 10:29** Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

They died without mercy when they despised the law of Moses. How much more sore a punishment will the Hebrews receive, if they despise the word of Son? If they tread under foot the Son of God?

And to tread someone under foot, that is how the Bible describes what a mighty man would do to his hated enemies. He would slay them and then tread them under foot, walk right over their dead carcass. That's what they do when they leave the faith. They tread down the body of Christ in the dust. Treat it as nothing more than a worthless carcass, rather than a holy sacrifice. Counting the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing. Saying that the blood that Christ shed, to establish the new testament, was not holy blood. Treating it as insufficient, as if it could not sanctify them, as if they still have to go to earthly priests to be sanctified. Or to enter into the holiest through a dead way, treading down again and again the Son of God. Doing despite unto the Spirit of grace.

Despising the grace given them by Christ through the Spirit. The Holy Ghost, which he has called the heavenly gift. Rejecting that grace, instead of taking it to help in time of need.

If those that transgressed the OT received damnation, without having been given a Spirit of grace, without having a high priest who was the Son of God, without being sanctified by the blood of Christ, having transgressed only the word of the angels, how shall they escape, if they neglect so great salvation, which was first declared unto them by the Lord, and was confirmed unto them by those that heard him?

## Verse 30

**Hebrews 10:30** For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

So he paraphrases Deuteronomy 32:

**Deuteronomy 32:35** *To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence*; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

36 *For the LORD shall judge his people*, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.

So they have a God, who declared to Israel, even in that first covenant, that when they sinned against him, judgement would be brought upon them. And in Deuteronomy 32 it is speaking also of the latter days, when God will come and judge his people. And so this applies to them, to the Hebrews living in the latter days. Which means that the wicked, those that despised the word of the LORD, will be destroyed. But his servants will be delivered.

## Verse 31

**Hebrews 10:31** It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

**Jeremiah 10:10** But the LORD is the true God, he is **the living God**, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

It is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

## Verse 32

**Hebrews 10:32** But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

But Paul is persuaded better things of them, and calls on them again to consider the former days. To consider what they had done before. That they were indeed in the faith, and had the fruit of it. That they did not despise the word, nor neglect their salvation. After they were illuminated by it, they endured a great fight of afflictions, holding fast in persecution.

## Verse 33

**Hebrews 10:33** Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

Partly persecution that came upon them personally, and partly just by association, by making a profession, and becoming the companions of those who were suffering affliction, and being reproached.

## Verse 34

**Hebrews 10:34** For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

And so when Paul was bound in the land of Israel, one of the most persecuted, most reproached, most hated men by the Jews, the Hebrew Christians had compassion on him. They didn't despise him, but they helped him, giving him whatever things he had need of when he was in prison, and for his journey to Rome.

They didn't shrink from persecution, because they knew that they have in heaven a better and enduring substance. Freely giving of their earthly things, having a promise of a better inheritance.

## Verse 35

**Hebrews 10:35** Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

So don't stop believing, don't stop rejoicing in the hope, don't neglect so great salvation now, don't cast away your confidence. The Hebrews had indeed been enlightened, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. So let them not fall away. For there is indeed a sure promise of inheritance, there is indeed a great recompense of reward. A recompense to be given those who serve God in truth, and not just a vengeance to be poured out on his enemies.

## Verse 36

**Hebrews 10:36** For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

So they need to have patience, and stand fast in continued persecution. They need to continue to do the will of God, declared in the new testament, that having done so, they might receive the promise. Because that is the only way to get it. Through the word of the Son, through the ministry of the Son. And they can be sure that through that word and ministry, when they hold fast to it, they will receive the promise. They will be heirs with Christ, and receive the inheritance.

## Verse 37

**Hebrews 10:37** For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

And Paul encourages them by saying that it is not that long that they have to wait and endure. As the day approaches, it is yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. And so as Christ said in the Revelation, “Behold, I come quickly.”

And Paul is actually paraphrasing from Habakkuk 2 here, which he’s going to quote some more from in the next verses. So let’s look at Habakkuk 2 to get some context for what he’s saying.

**Habakkuk 2:1** I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

So Habakkuk said some things in chapter 1, asking some things of God, saying, “Why are you doing what you are doing, why are you letting the wicked destroy the righteous?” And he’s expecting that maybe he was too bold, and God would reprove him for that. But here is what the LORD says:

2 And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

So God has a vision to give to Habakkuk, that answers his question, his accusation. And he tells him he wants Habakkuk to write the vision down, and make it plain. To write it upon tables, upon a tablet rather than a scroll or book, so that somebody could read it as they ran.

And so God says that people are going to run, and as they run, he wants them to be able to read this vision.

Now why would they be running? Well, maybe to escape the persecution that is coming against them. And he knows that like Habakkuk, they would wonder how God could allow the wicked to slay the righteous. And so God wants Habakkuk to write his vision upon tables, so that when the righteous are fleeing away in their persecution, running from the wicked, they’d be able to read it, and understand the will of God, understand why he was allowing this to happen.

3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

And so the latter part of this verse is what Paul paraphrases here.

And in this verse God tells Habakkuk that the vision he’s going to receive is yet for an appointed time. It is about the future. It is for the time of the end. And at the end it will speak, and not lie.

And so those that run, will read the vision in the end times, on the iPads and tablets, and understand what will happen to those who persecute them. It will speak to them through their iPods, on audio, and it will speak the truth, it will not lie.

Now, then it says, “though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”

So first it says, “though it tarry,” as if to imply that it will tarry, and “wait for it,” again implying that it is going to tarry, and that they are going to have to wait while it does. They will have to wait for the vision to be fulfilled, and the things that it declares to happen.

But then it says, “it will surely come, it will not tarry.” So he implied that it would tarry, and then he said that it’s not going to tarry. That seems contradictory.

But it's actually not.

You see, it is like Jesus saying, "Behold, I come quickly," and we think, "It's been 2000 years, he *hasn't* come quickly." But that's not what Jesus said. He didn't say that he was coming *soon*. He said that he was coming *quickly*. That when he came, he would be coming in a quick and lively manner. That he would not tarry, but that when the time came, he would come, and quickly. And so when Paul paraphrases Habakkuk here, he says it this way, "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." So there is a little while, a while that they have to wait, before he will come. But then after that period, after that time, he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

And so it is a twofold admonition. First off, they need to have patience, as they wait for Christ to come. Because it is yet for an appointed time, at the end, and though it tarry, they need to wait for it. Because, secondly, when it does come, it will not tarry. And when the time does come, when Christ does come, he will come quickly. So they need to have patience, and *remain ready* in the mean time, because when the time does come, there will be no tarrying, it will come quickly. There will be no time for last-minute preparation. On the day that Christ begins to come, that is the day that he will arrive, he will not turn aside to tarry for a night, he will come quickly. And so they need to be ready each day, because one day they are going to wake up, and before the day is out Christ will return to bring in the kingdom and dispense the inheritance. And so they need to exhort one another daily, that on that day they will be ready. Have patience, and stay prepared, for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

## Verse 38

**Hebrews 10:38** Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

And so Paul continues to draw from Habakkuk 2, as the general outline of what he's saying here. He's not quoting it word for word, but he's taking the basic elements and creating his own exhortation for them from it.

And so the next thing that God told Habakkuk, was this:

**Habakkuk 2:4** Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

And so in the end, when the vision comes, it is going to bring judgement. And many people are going to be destroyed. And Habakkuk wanted God to save the righteous. And God says, here is who I am going to save. I *am* going to save the upright. But his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him.

So some of the people who think that they are righteous, who think that they will be saved, whose souls are lifted up, he said, they won't be, if their soul is lifted up, it isn't upright in them. If their pride is in their own righteousness, them keeping the law, that won't save them. Here is who will live: the just shall live by his faith.

And so the ones that are truly upright, that are truly just, that are truly righteous, are those of faith. Those whose sense of righteousness is not their own righteousness, but a belief in God's righteousness. Whose sense of justice is not their own justice, but a belief in God's justice. Who

are not just and righteous by their own measure, by their own work, but by faith in the word of God.

Those are the ones that God will come to save and deliver from their persecution, and give them eternal life.

And so Paul says, “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”

So as he has told the Hebrews repeatedly, they need to stay in the faith. They need to keep believing in the promise, and rejoicing in the hope. They need to not draw back. Because if they do, Christ will have no pleasure in them.

## Verse 39

**Hebrews 10:39** But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

But the Hebrews are not of them who draw back unto perdition, who God will destroy, but those that continue to believe until Christ returns to save their soul.

And so they should continue to have patience, to have faith, until he that shall come, will come. That they might be counted in that day just, and live by their faith.

Because as Hebrews, they're not of them who draw back unto perdition. The Hebrews have a history of being people who believe unto the saving of the soul. Yes, some did not believe in the wilderness, but their unbelief shall not make the faith of God without effect. Paul has already pointed to Abraham as an example of the kind of faith that they need to have. And in the next chapter he's going to point to other people throughout history that have had that faith.

## Chapter 11 Verse 1

**Hebrews 11:1** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

And Paul begins with a brief synopsis, in the first three verses, on the nature of faith itself. He's going to give them some examples of faith, of people who had faith, and what that faith looked like, but he begins with just the general principles of what faith is.

So he starts off by saying that “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

So the Hebrews have a promise that God made to them, of things that are not seen. A hope, that Paul has called on them to continue to rejoice in. And he's called on them to continue to have faith, because faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, of the promise that they've been given.

So faith is the substance, it substantiates the fact, that there is something that they are hoping in. They claim that they have hope in a promise from God. And faith is those things that you see, when you look at them, that demonstrates that they have that hope. That give substance to that hope, that substantiate the claim that they are hoping in something. It is the substance of things hoped for.

And it is the evidence of things not seen. There is something that is not seen. They don't yet see Christ returned, his kingdom come. And nobody else can see that either. It's unseen. But their faith is the evidence for it. When you look at them, and see their faith, it shows that there is

something unseen, that is affecting their behavior. That they aren't living simply in reference to what they can see, but in reference to something that you can't see.

And so it is faith, and he's going to give them examples of it, it is faith, that substantiates their claim that they have a hope. It is what provides the evidence that there really is something that is not yet seen, that they are believing in.

It provides that evidence to those around them, and most importantly, it provides that evidence before God, who will return to judge the quick and the dead. It demonstrates their belief, that they are the just, who will live.

## Verse 2

**Hebrews 11:2** For by it the elders obtained a good report.

And Paul explains further what he means. He says that it is by faith that the elders obtained a good report. And by elders he means the patriarchs, the past people of faith that he is going to talk about in the rest of the chapter.

He says that faith is the evidence of things not seen, because by it the elders obtained a good report.

You see, faith provides evidence for the reality of those unseen things, not just because it demonstrates that they really do believe it, but also because when they had faith, they received a good report. God acknowledged that faith, and gave them a good report, said in his word that they were righteous, commended them for their faith in those unseen things.

So their faith provides evidence that those unseen things really exist, because when they believed in those things, and by faith lived in reference to that unseen reality, God commended them for it, confirming that indeed the promise was sure unto them, that those things were real.

So the faith not only manifests that they really believed those things, that they did indeed have that hope, but also provides evidence of the actual existence those unseen things, because God, which cannot lie, commended them for that belief.

And so you see, it is not just as if the elders had some crazy imaginary things that they were believing in. The fact that they could live like those things were actually real, and God would commend them in his word, and they would still survive all of the persecution, beat all of the odds, and even escape divine judgment poured out on the wicked, demonstrates to all who see, that those things that they were believing in, were real. That faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.

And you'll see that as we go through these examples that Paul is going to give.

And so when the time comes for them to receive the inheritance, they want to receive a good report before God. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." And for that they need faith. For by faith the elders obtained a good report.

## Verse 3

**Hebrews 11:3** Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Now, Paul is going to give a bunch of examples of faith from the elders. But his first example goes back further than that. Back before Abraham, back before Abel, back even before Adam. Back before all the elders, back before all men, all the way back to the very beginning, the creation of the worlds.

And he says that it is through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. And so in referencing that he isn't giving us an example of the faith of some person, of somebody there at the time; there was no man there at the time. Instead he said it is through faith that we understand. So what he's actually still doing is talking about the nature of faith, explaining what faith is as it relates to the inheritance.

And what he's actually done here, is twofold.

First he's made a connection to us, to our faith, to something that we already have faith in, that should give us confidence to have faith of the promises of the things to come. You see, through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. And so through faith we understand that the world that exists now, at one time did not exist, and God, by his word, made them, from things which were not seen. *The world that exists now was at one time unseen.*

So what if the world to come, whereof he speaks, is also unseen to us today? God made this one out of unseen things, and we have faith in that, so we can have faith that he can also make that one out of unseen things. We can be fully persuaded that what he hath promised he is able to perform.

But there is also another aspect to this. What Paul says here about the worlds being framed, is also itself a picture of faith. You see, in the rest of the chapter he's going to give us a picture of people's faith, but here he gives us a picture of the worlds' faith.

Look at what he says. He says that "the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

So he says that the worlds were framed by the word of God. And that is what he is calling them to, here. To be framed by the word of God. To frame their lives by the word of God. To live in faith, as if what God said is true.

So that the things which are seen would not be made only of things which do appear.

You see when God made the worlds, God simply spoke. And when he spoke, the things that he commanded to be made, simply materialized. God's words caused substance to be given to the things which are not seen.

And so now that they have heard the word of God, they should by faith give substance to those things that are not seen. Those unseen things should be evidenced in them, in their lives, as they frame them by the word of God. Things should be seen in them, that are not made of things which do appear.

And so that is a beautiful picture of faith.

## Verse 4

**Hebrews 11:4** By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

And so now he begins showing them examples of faith in the elders. And he starts with Cain and Abel. One of whom had faith, and the other who didn't.

And their story is found in Genesis chapter 4.

**Genesis 4:1** And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

So Cain was apparently Eve's firstborn, the first man she had gotten from the LORD.

2 And she again bare his brother Abel. ...

And so then she had some more kids, and one of them was Able. He may have been the next one, or he may not have been. But he was born after Cain, Cain was the eldest, the firstborn.

...And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

So Cain brings an offering unto God, of vegetables, of the fruit of the ground.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. ...

And Abel also made an offering of an animal sacrifice before God.

...And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. ...

So, as Paul says here, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. God liked the blood offering of Abel, but he rejected the offering of Cain.

...And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

So Cain got upset at God about that. And God asked him why. Because God didn't have anything personal against him. If he did the right thing, he'd be accepted just like Abel was. So it is his own fault. And it is foolish for him to get upset about it, it is his own fault, and he can correct his error. And if he doesn't correct his error, then he's about to fall into sin. And so instead of being angry, he ought to be thankful, because this happening gave him the opportunity to see his error and correct it before it was too late.

And if he does do that, if he does well, and is accepted of God, then as the firstborn, as Abel's elder brother, he'll get a bigger piece of the inheritance. He'll be the head man, and he'll rule over Abel and his other brethren. There was a world out there for the taking, and he was going to get the biggest piece of it, because he was the first man born.

So he has too much to loose to throw it away. He shouldn't throw away his inheritance, he shouldn't get angry, just because he didn't offer the right sacrifice before God.

Now, I've given you that larger background on this, because I want you to see how it relates to the Hebrews, to their present situation. How the Hebrews are in a similar place as Abel, and their persecutors are like Cain.

In fact, John says something similar in his general epistle:

**1 John 3:11** For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

So they need to love one another, not as Cain, who slew his brother. When the world hates them, and they suffer persecution, it is because their persecutors' own works are evil, while they are righteous.

You see, for the Hebrews, and for the early church, it was often the Jews that were persecuting them. Those who, like Cain, were really the primary heirs of the world. But who were persecuting their brethren who would share that inheritance with them. Because they didn't like that their brethren were offering a different kind of sacrifice, that was accepted of God, when their's was not. They didn't like that the Christian Hebrews were leaving behind the Jewish temple system, were leaving behind the animal sacrifices, and putting their trust in the sacrifice of Christ instead.

But like Cain, if they had done well, they would have been accepted. But they did not do well, they did not follow God: and so they persecuted their brethren, even unto death. And thus they wouldn't receive the inheritance.

And so the Hebrews are indeed in the same situation as Abel was.

They understand the need for a sacrifice, an offering to be made before God. And religion was telling them to make one kind of sacrifice, but the word of the Son was telling them of another. And like Abel they need to have faith.

Because you see, Abel understood what kind of offerings there were to be made, and knew which one was right before God, which one he would respect.

Abel understood that from the word of God, who had said, "in the day that thou eat thereof, thou shalt surely *die*." He understood that when his father and mother had sinned, that God had killed animals to cover their nakedness. And so by faith, he followed God's example, and offered a sacrifice before God of an animal, a blood offering.

And now the Hebrews need to also hear the word of God, and discern what is the offering, the sacrifice for sins, that will be accepted of God. It is no longer the animal sacrifices, no longer the blood of bulls and goats, but his own blood, which he has offered once for all. And so they need to heed the word of the Son, and like Abel, by faith, put their trust in the right kind of sacrifice, to which God will have respect. And to endure the persecutions of their brethren, who will hate them for it, as they offer sacrifices that cannot take away sins.

And so God said unto Cain:

**Genesis 4:10** And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

And so Paul says here, that "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: *and by it he being dead yet speaketh.*"

And so Abel still spoke before God, even after death. Even when he was dead, God still had respect to him. And testified that he was righteous, because of his gifts, his acceptable, more excellent offering.

And so the Hebrews need to follow the faith of Abel, if they want to speak even after death. If they want God to testify that they are righteous, and have had offered for them an acceptable offering, by which they have no sin.

And so if they have that kind of faith, if they follow God, and cling to the one offering made for them by his Son, they need not fear death. God will still respect them and count them righteous, and they will receive their inheritance.

Those that persecute them, will not. Those that kill them will not receive the inheritance. Just as Cain and his seed did not. They didn't inherit the world. Instead God made him a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. And he appointed another seed to be the heirs, instead of Abel:

**Genesis 4:25** And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

And so Abel still had respect before God, and a seed was appointed in his stead, after his name and his ways, after his faith, to inherit the earth.

And Paul talks about them next. About the great grandson of Seth, Enoch.

## Verse 5

**Hebrews 11:5** By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

And so Paul is declaring unto the Hebrews the glories of faith. Abel, by his faith, by his living out of what he knew by God's word to be God's will, gained respect before God, and was counted righteous, and spoke even after death.

And Enoch also received amazing grace, by faith. He couldn't just speak before God after death, but actually escaped death altogether. God translated him straight from this earth into his own presence in heaven.

And Paul says that Enoch achieved that by faith, because before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

**Genesis 5:21** And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah:

22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

So God took Enoch, and before he took him, Enoch walked with God. God didn't just run a lottery and randomly choose somebody from earth to take to heaven. He choose Enoch because he walked with him, because he pleased him. He gave that testimony of Enoch before he translated him.

And Paul says that was faith:

## Verse 6

**Hebrews 11:6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

So Paul says that the proof that that was faith, that it was by faith that Enoch was translated, was that he pleased God. That's clear based on God's testimony of him, prior to him being taken. He didn't walk with God because God took him, God took him because he walked with God.

And so it was by faith because Enoch pleased God, and without faith it is impossible to please him. Paul says that it is impossible to please God without faith. Because when you come to God, you have to believe some things. For starters have to believe that he is, that God exists. And then, you have to believe that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. So that by faith you will act on that belief, and come before God, diligently seeking him.

And so it was by faith that Enoch was translated from earth to heaven. Enoch, the son of Seth, of the seed appointed to the inheritance instead of Abel who Cain slew. Just as Christ has now been translated from this earth into heaven, to sit at the right hand of God, as the heir of the kingdom.

So faith is believing in God, and diligently seeking him. And those that have faith like that, will one day be made like unto their forerunner Christ, and be caught up to God to await the inheritance. Those that are in Christ, both Gentile and Hebrew, will be translated before God brings judgment on this earth. But just as when Enoch was translated, his brethren were left behind, so those that do not have that faith in Jacob will have to go through that time of trouble. But in that trouble all Israel will be brought to faith, so that in the end of it all Israel might be saved. Just as Enoch was taken up beforehand, but later Noah his grandson had to be brought through the judgement. For:

## Verse 7

**Hebrews 11:7** By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

So Noah was warned by God about things not yet seen. About a judgement coming on the earth. Just as Paul has told them that one day Christ is going to destroy this earth, and inherit a new. And just as then, before that, God will pour out his wrath during the tribulation. So the Hebrews are warned of God, of things not seen as yet. Of judgments that God has not heretofore brought on this earth.

**Daniel 12:1** And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

And so they've been warned of God, of things not seen as yet. Things that they need to believe are going to happen, things that they must take action to avoid. Things that they must respond in faith to, that are not seen, but they need to live like they are real anyhow, because they *are* going to come to pass.

Just as Noah was moved with fear, when God told him of the flood coming on the earth, and prepared an ark to the saving of his house.

And the good news for the Hebrews is, that the ark is already prepared for them, that can save their whole house, just as Noah's entire family was saved. Christ is that ark, his ministry, he's already prepared the ark that can save his house, his brethren, the people of Israel. But they need to enter into it, they need to not neglect so great salvation, if they want to be saved.

And when Noah did that by faith, when he entered into the ark, though he'd never seen the things that God had warned of, couldn't conceive of how a flood could destroy the entire earth, but by faith lived by the word of the God, the warning that he had heard, rather than the things that he could see, when he did that, Paul says that he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Because you see, it was then that the seed of Seth, stood up by God in the stead of the seed of Abel the righteous, it was then that it was finally manifested that they would be the heirs of the earth, that they would get the inheritance, and not the firstborn Cain. It was then that all of the seed of Cain was destroyed, and only the seed of Seth, the seed of Noah, remained.

Because you see, up to that time, we hear of the city that Cain built, that he ruled over. We hear of the exploits of his seed, how they filled the earth. And what did Seth's family have? It doesn't say that they had anything. People probably laughed at them, thought that they were crazy to believe that God was actually going to give them the inheritance of both Cain and Abel, that they were going to inherit the earth. Seemed like they were just disappearing off of the face of the earth. And instead of building a city to rule over, they built a giant ark, designed for animals to live in.

But when Noah built that ark, he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

You see, he not only became heir of the world, as the only people who would be left to inherit it, but he actually condemned the world, and became heir instead of something even better. By doing that he upped the ante, and became the heir, not just of the world, but even of the righteousness, which is by faith.

You see Paul isn't calling the Hebrews here just to be heirs of this world. But rather of the righteousness which is by faith, that they might be worthy heirs of a world to come. That they might be saved in their ark when this world is destroyed.

He's calling them to heed God's warning, and by faith in Christ, to enter into him as their ark, and be made heirs of righteousness given them by his grace.

And so what Paul is doing here, is he is beginning to unfold the story of the inheritance. And of who those that became heirs, became heirs of that promise of inheritance, by faith. It was their faith, their belief in the word of God, belief that prompted them to appropriate action based on that word, that gave them a good report, and a sure hope of one day receiving that promise.

And so if the Hebrews want to receive a good report, if they want to please God, if they want to have a sure hope, and one day receive that promise, then they too must walk by faith. For without faith it is impossible to please him.

They need to consider the faith of their fathers, because as he said before, the same promise that they were given, is now left to them. It is still a promise of inheritance. And it still needs to be obtained through the right kind of offering, and the wrong kind will still get you kicked out. It still comes with a chance of being saved from wrath, being translated from earth, if you walk with God. It still comes with a need to enter into an ark of refuge to escape the judgment of the world.

It is the same promise that God gave before, and so they need to have the same kind of faith that their fathers had. Seeing that they now have a great high priest, that is passed into the

heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let them hold fast their profession. Let them receive from him the grace to help them, that they might walk in the footsteps of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

And so next time we'll see him turn once again to that oft-cited figure of faith, the Hebrews' father, Abraham. And he'll show them how his faith was necessary, for him to receive the promise.