

Hebrews 11

Last time we finished Hebrews chapter 10, and started on chapter 11. And at the end of chapter 10 Paul was once again encouraging the Hebrews to hold fast their profession. To not draw back, but to continue to believe the word and work of the Son. He admonished them not to give up because of the persecution coming on them, but to continue to assemble together and exhort one another. He told them to be patient, because it was only a matter of time. One day Christ will come. And when he does come, he will come quickly and suddenly. And so each day they need to be ready, and prepared to enter into the promised rest, and receive the inheritance. Those that aren't ready, that do draw back, will be destroyed. But the just shall live by his faith. And they are not of those that draw back unto perdition, but those that believe to the saving of the soul. They need to have faith like their forefathers, that with them they might receive the promise.

So in Hebrews 11, Paul is talking about faith. That faith of their fathers. And faith is another one of those things that we talk about a lot, but sometimes are confused about. I think it is often difficult for us to define exactly what faith is. And so when we were going through Psalm 12, I taught a lesson just on the subject of faith. And since that was fairly recent, I'm not going to go through all of that again. But you can find that on ThePsalmsProject.org. And I'd encourage anyone, if you haven't already listened to that message, that you go ahead and do that before we go through Hebrews 11, because it will give you a better understanding of what faith is, of exactly what Paul is talking about here. You can go to ThePsalmsProject.org, and under the lesson audio you'll find a lesson on Psalm 12, titled Faith and Faithfulness. You can type that in the search bar on the site, and it will come right up. I called that Psalm 12 part 0, because it was just background, it didn't actually talk about Psalm 12 at all, just about the terms faith and faithfulness, and what they mean. So we went through a lot of scripture there, to see straight from the mouth of God what faith is. We looked at how Jesus defined faith, we looked at faith in the OT, we looked at various different NT passages that talk about faith. And we touched on Hebrews 11 as well. So if you want to get a fuller understanding of faith, of how the Bible defines it, then you can go to ThePsalmsProject.org, and listen to that message.

So I'm not going to go into all of that background, to show you how I derive a definition of faith. But what the Bible defines faith as, is a conformity between the word of God and your life. A reflection of the word of God, of his will declared in his word, so that there is a unity there, between what God said, and what you do. And that faith is a result of belief in the word of God. It comes from a particular quality of belief, sincere belief, that induces us to action. So that first our beliefs are faithful to the word of God, our beliefs align with the word of God. And then we arrange our lives, in accordance with those beliefs, so that our walk is a reflection of the word of God as well. Because our belief is not just an intellectual recognition of something, it is a faith such that our walk flows out of it.

And again, there's a lot of scriptural background that we could go into on that. But you can see that, in the things that we already covered in Hebrews 11. For example, it talked about Enoch walking with God. It said that by faith he was translated. And that faith was demonstrated by the fact that he pleased God. And he pleased God because he came to God, and walked with God. And Enoch did that, Paul says, its evident, because he believed some things. He believed that God exists, and that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him. Now, most everybody believes that. But Enoch didn't just believe that, he had faith. His belief was a heartfelt

conviction, that stirred him to action. Believing that God exists, he sought him. Believing that he rewards those who diligently seek him, he sought him diligently, and walked with him. And so he believed those things in such a manner that he ordered his life to reflect the truth of those beliefs. He not only thought it was true, but he lived like it was true. And that is faith. And you'll see that more as we talk about Abraham.

Verse 8

Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

So faith is conformity to the word of God. It is obedience to what God said.

God said to Abraham, go out into a place which you will after receive for an inheritance. And he went out. He obeyed. He believed God, that he would actually be the heir of that land, and went out, passed over to the other side of the river, and walked through it. He became the first Hebrew, the man sojourning from the other side.

And the quality of Abraham's faith is demonstrated by the fact that he had to just trust God in this. That when he went out, he knew not whither he went. He did not know where he was going. He didn't know what might befall him there. He didn't know if it was safe. He didn't know what the dangers were. He was a city dude, not a wilderness man. He didn't know how to deal with wild beasts or desert nomads, he didn't know how to be a keeper of chattels. He didn't know much about diplomacy, or how he was going to get along with the people who were already dwelling there. He didn't know how to build a great nation.

But that was OK. That was OK, because God wasn't calling Abraham to build a great nation, as we'll see. That was God's job, Abraham's job was just to believe that that was what God was going to do, and follow God's word as he gave him instruction.

Verses 9-10

Hebrews 11:9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

So Abraham left his city, and dwelt in tabernacles. Left the inheritance left him of his fathers, to take one given him of God. And he dwelt in those tabernacles, in tents and temporary dwellings, because he was following the word of God. God didn't tell him to build a city. He didn't tell him to settle down. He told him to wander through the land, through the length and breadth of it. And so he knew it wasn't for him to build a city. That if he was going to dwell in one, its builder and maker would have to be God. If it was not going to be a movable city, but one with eternal foundations.

And so by faith Abraham followed God's command, and was as a stranger in the very land that God said was going to be his inheritance. A wanderer in that which should have been his to settle down in. Because he followed the word of God. He lived by God's command.

And so his children, Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise, did the same, dwelling in tabernacles. Not building their own city, but looking for one with foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

And Paul is implying that the Hebrews today are still in that same situation. They are still heirs with Abraham of the same promise. They still have not entered into God's rest. They are still scattered abroad, to wander through the earth. They are still vexed by their enemies and have no peace. God's word still calls them to treat their present habitations as temporary, and to look for another city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The heavenly Jerusalem, of which he will speak later. But as he said before, the things which are, are to be burnt up. Every city is but a tabernacle. Only those that are made heirs with Christ the Son, will enter into that city that abideth for ever. So just as Abraham walked by faith, the need to by faith and patience inherit the promise.

Verse 11

Hebrews 11:11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Now, we look at Sarah, and think, "But she laughed, but she *doubted* God, didn't she?" And we forget that when it came to Isaac, Abraham laughed, too. But look carefully at what it says. It says this one a little differently. Up to now it's been saying "by faith, by faith." But it doesn't say 'by faith Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed.' But "*through* faith Sarah also herself received strength to conceive seed."

So it wasn't *by* faith, it wasn't *because of* Sarah's faith, that she received strength. That wasn't what *she* did, by faith, because of what God said. That was something that *God* did, something that *God gave to her*, not because of her faith, but despite her doubt, despite their missteps. It was something that God gave her to fulfill his word, and that she received through faith.

In other words, faith was not the impetus that made that happen, but it was the channel through which it was received. God gave Sarah strength to conceive seed, and she, through faith in God, received it.

You see, when God gave Sarah strength, she could have just said, "This is impossible. We're not even going to try, this just isn't possible. If I tried to have a kid at my age, I'd end up killing myself. The baby might have all kinds of problems and not develop right. This is just impossible, this is a bad idea, we're not even going to try." But instead, when God gave Sarah strength, she accepted it, she embraced it. And she judged him faithful that had promised. She judged that God really was going to do what he said he was going to do, so she believed him, she then believed the word, and received that strength that he miraculously gave her, to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Had she not done that, had she not through faith received that which God was giving her, had she not reckoned that God really was going to do what he said, and had she and Abraham not acted on it, then she would not have conceived, though she had been given the strength, and would not have been delivered of a child, and would not have received the promise.

And you see, the Hebrews need to do the same thing. Israel is like Sarah. God gave them strength to conceive seed, to be delivered of a man child, to bring forth the heir of the promise. And it was through faith that they received that. Not *by* faith, not *because of* their faith. So many times Israel had doubts. But it was through faith. It was *through* faith that Zachariah and Elizabeth had a son, despite their doubts. It was *through* faith, that Mary accepted the grace God gave her, and conceived. It was *through* faith, that when Christ began preaching, people believed.

And so Israel, when it was past age, when it was no longer a great and noble kingdom, when the throne had all but passed away, received strength, just enough, to conceive seed, and be delivered of a child. And many of the Hebrews, through faith, received that strength, received that child, because seeing the grace of God being poured out, they judged him faithful who had promised.

And that is what the Hebrews need to do. Seeing that this generation, and the prior generation, received strength, and that the heir has been born, and caught up to God in heaven, they need to judge him faithful that promised. That he has through Christ begun to fulfill his word. They need to continue to receive the grace that they are given, through faith. That by that faith, they one day, might indeed receive the promise.

Do you understand what faith is? If you are one of those people who sees faith as a kind of inner resource; and many of us do, I used to look at faith that way. But if you've been looking at faith as an inner resource, then this passage should dispel that misunderstanding.

Faith is not something that we direct toward God, that causes him to take some action and things to happen. God gave Sarah strength, *even though she had doubted*. Sarah didn't sit there and think to herself, "Have faith that you are receiving strength from God, have faith that you are going to conceive." Sarah didn't will herself, she didn't faith herself into conceiving, or being able to conceive. Her faith was a response, a response to the strength that God was giving her.

Faith is always in response to God. Faith is always a response, it is never an initiator.

Let me say that again: Faith is always a response, it is never an initiator.

Faith does not initiate something, faith does not cause God to do something. Faith is a response to God, to the word of God, to the will of God, to the Spirit of God. To have faith, you have to have something that preexists, that you are having faith in. You can't faith something into existence.

They were having faith in God's promise, in what he said. Their faith was a response to the promise of God. And that faith was not a means of them manipulating God. That faith was them hearing God's word, and manipulating themselves, manipulating their lives, to align with God's will.

That's what faith is. God said, "I'm going to do this," and so they lived as if God was going to do that. God gave Sarah strength, so she used it. God was the initiator, he was the one speaking the word, he was the one giving them something, he was the one deciding what was going to happen. And they could take it or leave it. Faith was them saying, "I'm going to follow God." And a lack of faith was them ignoring what God was doing, and just going on their merry way.

And so it was faith when Sarah *received* strength to conceive seed. Not when she willed herself into having strength, but when God gave her strength. And she through faith received it, and embraced it. That she might receive the promise, seeing that he that had promised was faithful.

Verse 12

Hebrews 11:12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

And so Abraham and Sarah did indeed receive the promise. He who made it was indeed faithful. Even though Abraham's body was as good as dead in its ability to produce seed, just like Sarah's, they through faith received the grace that God gave them. And it was by that faith that the promise ultimately was fulfilled. So that there sprang even of one, so many as the stars of

the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. Those Hebrews to whom Paul now speaks. Children of their father Abraham. Heirs with him of the promise. So let them walk by faith until the day that it is wholly fulfilled, and the inheritance of rest made theirs in truth.

Verse 13

Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

And so Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sarah, with their ancestors Abel, Seth, and Noah, died in faith. Even Enoch was translated out of this world, rather than receiving the promise of this world as his inheritance. They all died not having received the promises. But having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

They only got to see a small foretaste of the promise. Just as Paul said before that now we see not yet all things put under man, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. And so the Hebrews still only see the promise afar off. They see that the heir has been born, but they haven't yet seen the multitudes receiving the inheritance.

But like their fathers, though they only see the promises afar off, they need to be persuaded of them, and embrace them, and confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. That this city, is not the city they look for, that this world is not their home, but they look for one to come.

They need to confess before their brethren, and the rulers of the Jews, as Jacob did before Pharaoh:

Genesis 47:9 And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my **pilgrimage** are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their **pilgrimage**.

Verse 14

Hebrews 11:14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

So by saying that they were pilgrims and strangers, they were declaring that they seek a country. That they were looking for somewhere else to live, some other place to be permanent residents, and were only sojourning in the land. They were saying that they weren't citizens, they were foreigners, and they hoped one day to go to the true place of their desire.

Verse 15

Hebrews 11:15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

But that place that they wanted to go, was not the place that they came from. It was a different country that they sought. They wouldn't go back the land of the Chaldeans, not until carried there into captivity.

Abraham didn't want to go back to there. His children didn't want to go back to that city. They didn't want to go back over the river. If they had, they could have done so. They could have sought an opportunity to have returned, and found it, and gone back. But they didn't.

So they counted themselves pilgrims, and yet they didn't want to return to the place that they were from.

Verse 16

Hebrews 11:16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

Because they desired a better country than the one that they had come from, or those which they sojourned in. In fact, they desired a better country than can be found on earth. The country that they desired is a heavenly country. They looked for a city whose builder and maker is God. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. So God likes to be called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He's not ashamed of that. He's not ashamed of their conduct. They didn't blaspheme his name. They by faith followed him. And what they sought, is exactly what he's prepared them. What they desire is exactly what he's going to build. A city, which hath foundations.

And that is amazing faith. Paul is still talking about faith here. And he's demonstrating how great their faith was. Because what they *did*, what they *said*, and even what they *desired*, is what God *desired* for them, what he *said* he would do for them, and what he will indeed *do*.

That is faith. That is walking with God. That is being after his heart. Wanting what he wants.

Saying what he said. And doing that which is appropriate, based on what he said, he would do.

That is absolutely beautiful. It is living in sync with God. Without even be able to see what he is doing. Just by believing his word.

It is like doing synchronized gymnastics, synchronized swimming, but with a blindfold on. Only being able to hear what God is saying. And faith is when, because we hear and believe his word, we are perfectly in step, we are perfectly in sync, despite the blindfold.

And that is a beautiful, beautiful thing. That takes it to a whole new level.

And so the Hebrews need to stick with God's program. To keep walking by faith. To keep living as if they are pilgrims, to keep seeking an inheritance to come, because that is the inheritance God is preparing: he has prepared for them a city.

Verse 17

Hebrews 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

And it wasn't always easy. Sometimes it even seemed like the promise had been fulfilled, and then God was going to take it away.

But they kept living by faith.

And so the Hebrews did the same when this child was now brought forth. It seemed as though he was the Messiah, and the promise of God had been fulfilled. But then they were called upon to offer him up. Having received the promise, to offer up the only begotten son.

Verse 18

Hebrews 11:18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

And when Abraham offered up Isaac, he was offering up the one that God had said was the heir, that was the one his seed would come through. And how could that be, if he died? It couldn't, could it? But Abraham by faith offered him up anyway:

Verse 19

Hebrews 11:19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Abraham was willing to offer up Isaac, because he counted that the God who could give a man as good as dead a son, could raise up that son from the dead.

And in a way that is what happened. God stopped Abraham before he actually killed Isaac, but it was a figure of how the only begotten son of God, the seed that was called, the heir, would be offered up. Because the God that could bring forth that seed from Israel, when they were passed age, could raise him again from the dead.

And so Paul is demonstrating that in these latter days, the Hebrews have indeed been called upon to have the same kind of faith as their forefathers, as Abraham did. This is the same kind of faith that the heirs of promise have always been called upon to have. Because it is the substance of things hoped for, and the hope is still in those same promises, which have yet only been seen afar off.

Verse 20

Hebrews 11:20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

And it was a faith that was passed down from generation to generation, from one heir of the promise to the next. So that when they blessed their children, they blessed them by faith, as if one day they would indeed receive the promised inheritance. They blessed them as if they were heirs of that promise, even though they didn't yet appear to be.

And so when Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, he blessed them as the heirs of the promised land, even though it wasn't something that he himself yet possessed.

And remember, he just compared Isaac to Christ. And a few chapters ago he quoted Christ as saying, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me." So like Isaac Christ does indeed have the Hebrews, and all the saints, for children. And just as Isaac blessed his children, so Christ has blessed his children concerning things to come, which even he himself, though the heir, has not yet fully received.

And just as Isaac had two sons, one of which received that good blessing, and the other not: so Christ's blessing is for those that follow in his faith, and those that do not will not partake of those good things to come.

Verse 21

Hebrews 11:21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

And so that faith was passed down to the next generations, so that that son that was blessed, when he died, also blessed his children, nay, grandchildren, and worshipped the LORD. Despite the fact that he hadn't received the promise, that he was still a stranger, sojourning in a strange land. He still believed, and blessed the sons of Joseph, allotting to them portions of an inheritance that he himself had not yet received.

And the Hebrews need to do the same, following in the footsteps of their fathers, and in the footsteps of Christ, and by faith bless their children as heirs of promise, and worship the LORD, though they die in faith, not yet having received the promises.

Verse 22

Hebrews 11:22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

And so they still believed that they would be heirs of that promise, heirs of the promised land, even though they no longer dwelt in it. But Joseph when he died spoke as if they would one day return to that land, and told them that when they did they were to carry up his bones. He spoke as if what God said were true. So that he lived by faith, and died by faith, leaving that promise to his children, his heirs.

He didn't leave them a promise of the glory of Egypt, though it was under his hand. He didn't ask that they continue to visit and garnish his sepulcher in that land. He promised them something greater, he spoke of a greater inheritance that the children of Israel should receive, and that was his desire, and it was there that he would be buried.

And the Hebrews need to take heed to that. Because in prophecy Egypt is a figure of Israel and Jerusalem. Jerusalem that now is. And the Hebrews at the time Paul was writing were yet princes in Israel, just as Joseph was prince of Egypt. But they need to not see that as their inheritance. They need to not look to that as their place of rest. They need to seek a better country, a heavenly. They need when they die to be still making mention to their children of the departing of the saints, and expecting that they also will be carried up with them.

Verse 23

Hebrews 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

And so when Moses was born, his parents defied the command that all of the male children be killed, and instead hid him.

And he says that they did that by faith. Because when they saw that little Israelite boy, knowing that he was the heir of so great a promise, they would not deprive him of the opportunity of perhaps one day obtaining that promise.

They were not afraid of the king's commandment. They rather hoped in the promise of God, that their children would one day receive the inheritance.

And you know, there was someone else that a similar thing happened to. Jesus was hid three months of Mary, after he was conceived:

Luke 1:39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

56 And Mary abode with her about **three months**, and returned to her own house.

And then later, when he was born, he was hid again of his parents. And they were not afraid of the king's commandment that all of the male children in Bethlehem be slain. Because they saw he was a proper child, and knew that he was the heir of the promise.

Verse 24

Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

And Moses, when he was grown, lived up to that faith and hope of his parents. Though he was raised by Pharaoh's daughter, was as a prince in Egypt, just as his ancestor Joseph, he too had a desire unto that better inheritance. He rejected being the heir of Pharaoh, the heir to the land of Egypt. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He wanted to be the heir of Abraham, an heir to the promise.

And Christ did the same thing. He did indeed fulfill that faith and hope of his parents. Because he too refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He didn't lay claim to being an heir to the throne of Israel, through his family line. As a son of David, he could have sought the earthly throne, by earthly means. But instead he refused it saying, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" Instead he sought a better country, and a better throne, by a better means, by a better promise, that is, an heavenly.

Verse 25

Hebrews 11:25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

So Moses, by faith, because he believed the promise, chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, in their bondage and persecution, rather than enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season, the glory of Egypt set before him.

Why? By faith. Because he believed that the inheritance promised to Abraham was better.

Verse 26

Hebrews 11:26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Because he esteemed that the reproach of Christ, the reproach he received for believing the promise, for believing in deliverance, for believing in Christ, that God would deliver them, that he'd send a Messiah; he esteemed that the reproach that he would receive for believing in that, would yield greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. That it would make him the heir of a greater, more glorious, and richer inheritance, with more riches and honor than Egypt could offer. For he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. He was counting on getting that inheritance and reward that God had promised. That is what he was acting in respect to, by faith.

And you see, Jesus Christ did the same thing. He did not seek the treasures in Jerusalem. He did not seek an earthly kingdom, by sight, but by faith. Faith in God's promise. He esteemed the reproach that he would receive as Christ, to be perfected as the captain of salvation, to be greater riches than the treasures offered him on this earth. For he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. He lived to receive the promise, to be the Son of God, and be made the heir of all things. And so he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, to suffer being tempted in all points as we are, rather than to enjoy pleasure.

Verse 27

Hebrews 11:27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

So Paul says that it was by faith that Moses left Egypt, not because he feared the wrath of the king.

You see, had he feared the wrath of the king, he would have stayed. He would have stayed and done penance before Pharaoh, sought to appease his wrath, and maintained that place as an heir of Egypt's riches.

But he didn't. He didn't fear the wrath of the king, he didn't try to appease it. Instead he forsook Egypt, forsook the king, forsook it all, to sojourn by the land of promise. Still believing that there was a greater inheritance for him, and a greater inheritance for Israel, and that they would still be delivered one day, by their God. That he himself might still be their deliverer, as he had thought.

Even though now that looked impossible. Even though now there was no way that he could deliver him, and there was no way that anyone else could deliver him. And if they couldn't even escape bondage, how could they conquer the land of promise? It looked impossible.

But Moses didn't live based just on what he could see, he continued to walk by faith. He endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

And so he would return to make that promise a reality.

And you know, Jesus did the same thing. He forsook Israel, forsook Jerusalem. He wandered about in Galilee, Samaria, and Zidon. He didn't fear the wrath of the Jewish leaders. He didn't try to appease them. Instead when they were angry he forsook them. Believing that he would return, and God would yet deliver Israel by his hand.

Verse 28

Hebrews 11:28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

And it was through faith that Moses kept the passover. It was through faith that he had them place the blood on their doorposts, and above the door, where it was sprinkled on those who passed through it. So that when God slew the firstborn of Egypt, Israel would be saved.

And it says that it was *through* faith that he did that. *Through* faith again, not *by* faith. Because once again this is something that God did for them. That God provided for them. Not by their faith, not because they had faith that he would. Moses didn't say, "I have faith that if we sprinkle blood on our doorposts God will save us alive," and that's what caused God to act. But it was God who told Moses, "Sprinkle blood on your doorposts, and I will save you alive," and that caused Moses to act, and through faith to cause Israel to do that.

So it was a way of escape that God provided, and they kept it through faith, though believing that what God said was true and taking action on it.

And this verse is also a most beautiful picture of Christ.

Because he also kept a passover. He literally kept the passover with his disciples on the night that he was betrayed. But we know also that that was just a figure for the time then present. That he was the lamb of God, who was slain for the Hebrews, and for the whole world, that they might be sprinkled with his blood. That his blood might be sprinkled on the door posts, that we might enter in by it, through the veil.

And that is a passover, because it has the same effect that the passover had. It delivers the Hebrews, lest he that destroyed the firstborn, his only begotten Son, should touch them.

And Paul says that it was through faith that Jesus did that. It was in response to God's word, his will revealed to him by the Spirit, that Jesus did that. God declared the way of escape, and Jesus fulfilled it, through faith.

And Israel needs to keep that passover with him. They need to accept that way of escape. They need to be sprinkled with his blood. They need to enter through the door. Only then will they be saved, and not destroyed.

Verse 29

Hebrews 11:29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

So the Israelites by faith left Egypt. By faith they cried out to him when Pharaoh's armies trapped them by the Red sea, and by faith when God opened up the sea, they passed through. By faith they followed God, he made a way of escape, a way of salvation, and they took it. And when the Egyptians attempted to follow them, to catch up with them and destroy them, they were drowned.

And the Hebrews need to once again, by faith, take the way of salvation opened up to them by their Savior. Seeing that their passover has been sacrificed, Christ's blood has been sprinkled.

They need to follow their Deliverer, as he calls them out of this country, and into another. By a way that those without faith cannot follow. As Jesus said unto the unbelieving Jews, "whither I go, ye cannot come."

Those Jews that will not accept by faith the way of escape, that follow after their brethren only to persecute them, and try bring them back into bondage: they will ultimately fail, the waters will close in upon them, and they will be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt.

And you know, that's exactly what happened. Paul was affirming a prophecy here, from back in the OT. A prophecy that was restated by Christ. A prophecy that unbelieving Israel would be destroyed, just as the armies of Egypt that persecuted the faithful Hebrews were destroyed in the Red sea.

Christ said:

Matthew 7:24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

So he is talking about someone who hears the word of the Son, and does it. Hears his word, and lives like it is true.

What is that? That's faith, right? That is the definition of faith.

Christ said a man like that would be as a house built upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

So rain and winds and *floods* were coming, according to Christ. Figuratively speaking. And somebody who had faith would not be destroyed by the floods.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

So this is a man who hears, but doesn't do. He doesn't have faith.

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

And so those without faith *would* be destroyed when the flood came.

Now what does that storm and flood represent? If you look in OT prophecy, you find that that is the way that God describes armies coming to invade and destroy a land. That is how they are described in prophecy.

So when Jesus said that a flood was coming, he was saying that an army was going to invade Israel, and it was going to be destroyed. Everybody that built their house on the sand, on religion, on Judaism, on the temple system, on the Levite priesthood, that house was going to fall, and they were going to be destroyed.

And that is of course exactly what happened, in 70 AD.

But those that had faith in him, those that followed his sayings, would be delivered.

Now, how was that going to happen? Why wouldn't they be destroyed? Because they were founded on a rock, on the Lord Jesus Christ, and not on an earthly system. They did not need to

stay in Israel, they did not need to congregate around Jerusalem, to participate in the temple system, so that they could maintain their position as heirs of the promise. Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly.

And so God provided a way, a parting of the waters, for them to flee out and escape. They no longer needed to stay there, they were no longer tied down, and so they could follow Christ out into the world, and escape the destruction.

And in fact just as the Egyptians chased the Israelites through the Red sea, it was their unfaithful brethren, the unbelieving Jews, that persecuted them, chasing them out of the the land of Israel. But as a consequence, just as it was at the Red sea, the “Egyptians,” the unfaithful Jews were destroyed by the armies of Rome, by the waters closing in upon them, even as their brethren fled out, and so escaped.

And they did that, by faith. They were able to go out into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. They were able to leave the promised land, because they knew that in Christ they were the heirs of an even greater inheritance. And so like Christ they could forsake “Egypt”, not fearing the wrath of the king, because they had respect unto the recompense of the reward. They esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in “Egypt.”

Verse 30

Hebrews 11:30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

So now he’s talking about when they then finally came into promised inheritance. By faith Joshua led them to follow God’s instructions, and walk around the city for seven days, until the walls came tumbling down.

But as he said before, Jesus did not give them rest. There remaineth yet a rest to people of God. Their new Savior, Jesus the Son of God, must one day bring them into rest. There remaineth yet a Jericho to compass seven days, until its walls fall down.

And that is exactly what Christ is going to do. He will one day lead the armies of heaven, after seven years of tribulation on this earth, to enter in and take the kingdom. The earth will shake at his presence, and the walls will come crashing down.

Verse 31

Hebrews 11:31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

And when Christ returns, and destroys the wicked inhabitants of the earth, there will be a harlot that is delivered. Just as Joshua delivered Rahab, when he destroyed Jericho.

And who is that?

That’s the Hebrews. The tribulation Hebrews, who by faith, like the harlot Rahab, will be delivered.

Because they will receive the spies with peace.

There were two Israelite spies that entered into Jericho, that Rahab helped to escape. And those spies were able to hide for three days without being apprehended by the authorities. Well, in like manner, there are going to be two Israelite spies come down to earth, ahead of the armies of Christ. The two witnesses it speaks of in Revelation 11. The two olive branches that appeared before God on the mount of transfiguration. Moses and Elijah. And the Hebrews will receive them with peace, and protect them. While the antichrist will seek for three and a half years to destroy them, and not be able. And so like Rahab the harlot, Israel will walk by faith, receive the spies, and be delivered.

And why compare them to a harlot? Because Israel played the harlot with all of their idols. God called it their whoredom. And so they are as a harlot, yet one that by faith will be saved.

So Paul has provided a pattern of faith for those who are heirs of the promise. This is what the faith of those who will receive the inheritance looks like. This is what they do, how they respond to those promises.

And so the Hebrews, being left those same promises as Abraham, need to follow in his footsteps. Having a Savior like Moses and Joshua over the house of God, they need to receive so great salvation. They need to walk in faith like their fathers did, until the day that they all receive the inheritance.

Verse 32

Hebrews 11:32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

And it doesn't stop there. Paul says that he could go right on through the rest of the OT talking about the faith of these men.

But if he did we'd be here all day.

So those that are interested can go back and read through the OT, and see the faith of these men. But Paul has made his point. So he's just going to summarize it for us.

Verse 33

Hebrews 11:33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

So it is through faith that they did these things. *Through* faith again.

In other words it was God that made it possible, that gave them the opportunity to do these things, and through faith, they took it. Through believing God.

So here is what they did through faith. And if the Hebrews want to do these things, then they need to do them through faith.

SUBDUED KINGDOMS

Through faith, they subdued kingdoms. You want to subdue a kingdom, bring it under your power? They did that, through faith.

If the Hebrews want to do that, they need to wait until God says it's time to subdue the kingdom, and then through faith do it.

And the Hebrews would have liked to subdue kingdoms. They'd have liked the kingdom of Israel back. They'd have liked to have gotten Rome off of their back. But if they want to subdue kingdoms they need to do it through faith. Through following God's direction. Not by taking their own initiative, and doing something contrary to his timing, his word, and his will. They need to follow his word, and live by it, and if they do, like their fathers, as heirs of the promise, they will one day subdue kingdoms, through faith.

You see, God's original command to man was to subdue the earth.

Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and **subdue** it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

So man was not to leave the earth as a wilderness, he was to go out and subdue it, and have the dominion of it.

And so in Joshua, and Judges, and Samuel, and the books of the Kings, it talks about how God subdued people under them. It speaks of how they subdued kingdoms. That God promised them that inheritance of the promised land, and through faith they entered into it, and destroyed its inhabitants, and so their kingdoms, and the wild beasts, and the wilderness, were subdued unto them.

And so when the time comes to enter into the promised land, that's not the end. The promise, the dominion that God gave man, was of a world to be subdued, a land to be subdued. And when Israel came into the promised land, that is exactly what they found. A land of beasts, of wilderness, and of kingdoms, that all had to be subdued.

And so when you enter into the promised land, you then have to subdue kingdoms.

And so when Christ brings the Hebrews into the promised land, after their time of trouble, they will once again need, through faith, to subdue kingdoms.

1 Corinthians 15:27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.
28 And when all things shall be **subdued** unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

And so although all things have been put under the feet of man, although God has put all things under the Son, it's not just going to acquiesce. All things aren't just going to say, "OK, you're Lord." He is going to have to subdue all things unto him. Just as Israel had to subdue kingdoms to receive their inheritance.

So when Christ returns, he will subdue kingdoms. And his brethren of Israel will participate in that. They will form an army that will subdue kingdoms.
It talks about that in Zechariah chapter 9.

Zechariah 9:1 The burden of the word of the LORD in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be the rest thereof: when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the LORD.

So there will come a time, when the eyes of man, generally, all the eyes of man, just as the eyes of the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the LORD. Because he'll have just come in the clouds of heaven, and every eye shall have beheld him.

And so this prophecy of Zechariah is for that time. It is a prophecy of the future. And it is a prophecy of the burden, of what is going to happen in the land of Hadrach and Damascus. And it is called a burden, because it isn't good.

2 And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise.

And so it isn't just Damascus, but also Tyrus and Zidon, on the north part of Israel. Though it be very wise. The people of Tyrus obviously thought that they were very wise, because God repeatedly mocks them for it in prophecy. He does here, just as he did in Ezekiel 28.

3 And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.

4 Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.

And that is in fact the very same prophecy of Tyrus that we find there in Ezekiel.

5 Ashkelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza also shall see it, and be very sorrowful, and Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

And it isn't just them that need to fear what will come on them either. Even those in Gaza, those in the land of the Philistines, on the opposite end, on the south of Israel, will be afraid.

6 And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

7 And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite.

And so what is going to happen, is all of the bloody and abominable of these will be destroyed. Those that have devoured Israel, the bloody mouth and teeth of these lands.

But there will also be those of these people that escape, and remain. And they will be for the LORD, and will be as a governor in Judah.

Now, Judah was the chief of the tribes of Israel. It was the seat of the government. Judah was the lawgiver. And it was also the seat of the temple system. So saying that these people would be as a governor in Judah, is no small thing. That is saying that they will be as a mighty and holy ruler, close to the seat of power.

And they will rule over their brethren which were not so righteous. The remainder of Ekron will be as a Jebusite. And the Jebusites were those that inhabited the land of Judah, and Jerusalem in particular. But that were subdued by David and the governors of Judah, and brought in service unto Israel.

And so that is what will happen to the remainder of the Philistines and of these other kingdoms. They will be subdued, and those that are righteous of them will rule over them as mighty governors.

8 And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

And so there will indeed be an army. An army that will encamp about the house of God, about Jerusalem, in order to protect the many people that are coming there to Zion at that time and then going back out into the land. They'll protect them from every oppressor, so that no oppressor shall pass through any more.

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Now, we all know who that is a prophecy of. And it is that same lowly and just king, who will one day come unto Zion bringing salvation, and subdue the people under him.

10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

So there is going to be this army initially, that will destroy the wicked from these various kingdoms.

But once that is complete, Christ will speak peace to the heathen. He will make him that remaineth as a governor of Judah, and he will dismantle the army of Israel, and destroy the weapons of war.

11 As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.

And through the blood of the covenant of Christ, every prisoner also would be delivered at that time, to have been part of that army.

12 Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee;

And when they are delivered, they will conquer. He will render double unto them, and they will destroy their enemies.

13 When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.

So the people of Israel would be raised up, and Christ would use them to destroy the sons of Greece, the sons of the Gentiles, like the sword of a mighty man.

14 And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.

And God will go out to battle with them. He'll blow a trumpet, and lead them into the fray.

15 The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and **subdue** with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar.

But God isn't going to be cutting down all of their enemies for them. His main part is just going to be to defend them from all of the attacks of the enemy. And it will be them, the sons of Zion, that will let out a rebel yell and subdue their enemies under them.

So this is not the battle of Armageddon. This isn't the armies that are gathered together, that Christ destroyed when he comes down to earth. In that battle Christ alone will fight. Remember how we studied on that when we went through Psalms. So this is after that. This is after the people of Israel begin to be gathered together to Jerusalem. And after they are gathered together, Christ will lead them out of Zion to subdue kingdoms.

And so God will speak, he will go forth, and they will follow him into the battle, and through faith they will subdue kingdoms. Just as their fathers did. Just like David, Samuel, Jephthah, Gideon, and Barack.

And so the Hebrews need to have faith like their fathers, wait on God, and through faith subdue kingdoms.

WROUGHT RIGHTEOUSNESS

And Paul says that their fathers through faith also wrought righteousness.

And that is something that the Hebrews want to do now as well. They want to work righteousness, that they might be accepted of God.

But they need to look to their fathers, and see that righteousness comes through faith. That it is the works that spring from faith that are righteousness. That the just shall live by faith. That God testified that Abel was righteous, because of his faith, because he followed the word of God.

And so it is only those of faith that God counts as righteous. Because it is only through faith that one can work true righteousness.

And through faith one can indeed work true righteousness.

You see, Paul is not saying that God counts faith as righteousness, even when there is sin. That God just pretended that they were righteous anyhow. He's not saying that God just counts the work of faith for righteousness, but that through faith, they actually worked righteousness.

Remember how we said that *through* faith Sarah received strength to conceive seed? This is *through* faith here, not *by* faith. It is *through* faith that they wrought righteousness. God made that possible by his grace, and so they followed God, and did it. Just as Sarah received strength, and used it to actually conceive seed and bare a son. Through faith, when they followed what God said, he gave them the strength to work righteousness, and so through faith, they did.

He is saying that they did righteousness, by following in the will of God, by believing in the word of God. That out of that faith flowed works of righteousness.

He's saying that the way to work righteousness, is through faith. By believing what God has said, and receiving from him the strength to live like it is true. That if you want to be righteous, that that is the way to achieve it. That righteousness flows out of faith.

In fact, in another place it says that whatsoever is not of faith, is sin. Any work, flowing out of a religious conviction, that isn't based on God's word, that isn't through faith in his revealed will, is sin.

And so through faith they wrought righteousness. Through faith. Through receiving strength that God gave them, and doing what God told them to do, what he said was right. Not by their own works, but through believing what God said, and following him. Through faith.

And so the Hebrews need to do the same.

OBTAINED PROMISES

Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, and obtained promises.

And the Hebrews have been left a promise of entering into his rest, a promise of the inheritance. And if they, like their fathers, want to obtain that promise, then they need to have faith like their fathers. If they want to, like Christ, obtain that promise, then they need to do it through faith in Christ. By following the word of God declared by the Son. Through faith. That is how the promises were obtained, that is the only way to get them, is through faith.