**Hebrews 11: Persevering Faith in God’s Promises Draws Near to God**

**How many have studied this passage?**

* How many have studied it in the place of Hebrews?
* How easily we can lift these chapters
  + We often call it the hall of faith
  + And it stands alone with Psalm 23 / John 3:16 / 1 Corinthians 13 as well know passages whose context . . . is missed

**So what is the context?**

* What came just before it?
  + Hebrews 10:19–25
  + Hebrews 10:26–39 – How does that end?
* How does 10:32–35 inform our passage?
  + Reproach – 10:33 + 11:26
  + Prison – 10:34 + 11:36
  + Affliction / Afflicted – 10:35 + 11:37
  + **Better Possession (10:34) + Better Life (10:35)**
* What comes at the end? (12:1–3)
  + The Example of Jesus

**Order**

The Example of the Church (10:32–35)

(The Call to Endure – 10:36–39)

The Example of the Saints (11:1–40)

The Example of Jesus Christ (12:1–3)

**Faith Defined (vv. 1–2)**

Faith based on God promises (v. 1)

People of old “commended” for faith (v. 2)

Creation (v. 3) Abraham (vv. 17–19) – *New Creation*

Abel. . . Enoch . . . Noah (vv. 4–7) Isaac . . . Jacob . . . Joseph (vv. 20–22)

Abraham (vv. 8–10) Moses (vv. 23–28)

Sarah (vv. 11–12) People . . . [Israel ] . . . Rahab (vv. 29–31)

**Summary** (vv. 13–16) – *Better Country (v. 16)* **Summary** (vv. 32–40) – *Better Life (v. 36)*

**Faith completed (vv. 39–40)**

People of old “commended” for faith (vv. 39)

Promises perfected (v. 40)

**Introduction (vv. 1–2)**

* Faith defined

Faith is assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen.

* People of old commended

For by [faith] the people of old received their commendation.

**What have we learned about faith so far?**

**2:14 –** Faithful High Priest

**3:2, 6** – Jesus was faithful, like . . .

**3:2, 5** – Moses was faithful

**4:2 –** Many members of the OC did not unite promises to faith; the OC does not come with faith

**6:1 –** Faith is foundational for the NC; no one in the NC is without faith

**6:12 –** Those who have faith will inherit the promises

**10:22–23 –** The NC (priest, temple,etc.) gives us assurance to draw near = part of defining faith

**10:38 –** The just will live by faith

**10:39** – Faith overcomes the grave; on earth faith leads us forward

**What do we learn about faith?**

* Faith is an attribute of God (2:14; 10:23)
* Faith depends on the promises of God (4:2)
* Faith is foundational (6:1)
* Faith is patient (6:12) and endures (10:39)
* Faith overcomes the grave (10:39)

**Three points we will see throughout Hebrews 11**

1. Faith and the Word
2. Faith and the Resurrection
3. Faith and Enduring Action

**Who were the people of old? Why does he mention them?**

* The faith is NOT different than OC; but not everyone in the OC had faith
* He’s going to give a lens for seeing NC faith in the OC
* The goal is to show the unity of the NC church with the true Israel

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| **By Faith . . .** | **Verse(s)** |  |
| **Creation** | v. 3 | *By faith . . . we understand* [Genesis 1–2]   * The Word of God * Creation of Life   \*\* Those things which are seen are made by what is unseen  **What does this teach us about visible things ??**   * Visible is more real, more important * The visible are shadows of the substance (10:1)   **What else stands out in this passage ??**   * Who is exercising faith? * Cf. Hebrews 10:39; 11:39–40 |
| **Abel** | v. 4 | *By faith . . . Abel offered sacrifice* [Genesis 4]  **How did he offer a more acceptable sacrifice?**  **Was there any revelation to believe in?**   * The first sacrifice was offered by God * Abel brought the offering to the door – opening   **Is there anything that demonstrates resurrection life?**   * The blood still speaks * Hebrews 12:24 |
| **Enoch** | vv. 5–6 | *By faith . . . Enoch was taken up* [Genesis 5]  **Who was Enoch?**   * The seventh son of Adam – does this number matter? * He walked with God and was no more   **Walked?**   * **Genesis 3:8 –** God walked in the presence of A & E * **Genesis 5:22, 24** – Enoch walked with God * **Genesis 6:9** – Noah walked with God * **Genesis 17:1** – Abraham commanded to walk before me and be blameless (Priest)   **What is the significance of Enoch’s “no more”?**   * It undoes death – life after death is possible * He walked with God – he kept his word |
| **Noah** | v. 7 | *By faith . . . Noah . . . constructed for saving. . . condemned the world* (Genesis 6–9)  **What two themes do you see in this verse?**   * Salvation & Judgment   **Why does that matter?**   * S & J are best seen in baptism – which is prefigured * What is the pattern of baptism – death & resurrection   **Is there anything about the word here?**   * God warned him * He told him about events yet unseen   \*\* Notice again the pattern of visible and invisible |
| **Abraham (3x)** | vv. 8–10 | *By faith Abraham . . . obeyed*  What do we see here?   * A Word – called to go out * The obedience is found in going out (Genesis 12)   What else do we see?   * The Promise – land (v. 9), see (v. 9), God (v. 10)   \*\* The visible and invisible theme shows up again – he was looking for God / the builder of the city  \*\* This sets up verses 13–16, but first we need to see how Abraham’s faith is passed on to his bride |
| **Sarah** | vv. 11–12 | *By faith . . . Sarah received power to conceive*  **Do we see God’s Word here?**   * She considered him faithful – How? * Because God told her she would have a child (Ge 18:11) * Also, we see the promise answered – children like the sands of the seashore (Gen 15:5)   **What about resurrection life?**   * Power to conceive * Romans 4:17, 19; Genesis 18:9–15 (11) |

**Summary of Faith . . . So Far**

**What happens in verses 13–16**

* Verses 13–16 . . . depart from “By faith”
* No longer is it an individual, but “these”
* And death is introduced (v. 13) – this contrasts with the theme of resurrection

**Death is a problem. And death is the same problem facing the audience. So what is the solution?**

**Land** . . . was a shadow of things to come, just as . . . **Circumcision** was a shadow things to come.

For me, this is why **paedobaptism** and **Zionism** (the return to the land) are misguided

They both stress the type over the antitype and call the believer to go back in time

For Abraham . . . he is looking to the city; to you and I . . . the city has come

* In a word . . . **Eschatology is the Solution.**

**What is eschatology?**

* Where have we seen eschatology so far . . .
* How does Psalm 110 help our eschatology . . .
* What is the anchor of our eschatology . . .

**And what does Paul do with eschatology.**

1. **He shows how these men and women of faith . . . didn’t receive the promises**
   * Strangers and exiles (v. 13)
   * Homeland (v. 14)
   * Land (v. 15)
2. **He shows that the land is a pointer to the future . . .**
   * The land is a sign of things to come
   * The earthly country was not the goal; the heavenly one was (v. 16)
3. **He talks about a coming city . . . that God is preparing**
   * God is important than the signs he has given
   * But also . . . the city Abraham and Sarah were waiting for is here
   * Hebrews 12:22 . . . in the resurrection . . . in the high priesthood of Christ . . . access has been granted into the holy of holies . . .
   * The city is not something future only . . . it is also present
4. **How is the city present? (1) Word, (2) Resurrection Life, (3) Invisible > Visible**

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| **Abraham** | vv. 17–19 | *By faith Abraham . . . offered up Isaac*   * This repeats Abel’s action * This also is in response to God’s Word * This is a priestly act   **And what about resurrection? How does Hebrews 11:17–19 capture it?**   * Notice how he reads the OT – he doesn’t say it was a resurrection, but the pattern of death and life is *figuratively like a resurrection* * It was a living parable – Notice: the book of Genesis is filled with living parables |
| **Isaac, Jacob, Joseph** |  | *By faith . . . Isaac invoked promises*  *By faith . . . Jacob blessed each of his sons*  *By faith . . . Joseph made mention of the exodus . . . gave directions about his bones*  **What is common to each of these actions?**   * Each deal with gospel promises / spoken words   **Do we see anything about resurrection?**   * The mention of bones includes Joseph’s confidence that God would raise his people out of Egypt in the Exodus * He wants to be in the promise land   **However, what do we know about the bones of the saints?**   * It is hope in the future work of God * Where his bones are indicates . . . his death is not the end * *This may also inform the way Hebrews 10:35–36 speaks*   **Any thing else?** |

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| **Moses ( )** | vv. 23–28 | *By faith . . . Moses parents hid him*  *By faith . . . Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter*  *By faith . . . he left Egypt*  *By faith . . . he kept the Passover*  Do we see anything about our themes here? Word, Resurrection,   * Moses was baptized . . . and would lead his people in baptism (v. 29) * Moses refuses to identify himself as a son of Egypt   **What’s the importance of sonship in Exodus / Hebrews?**   * Sonship ~ Priesthood ~ Kingship * Moses identified himself with Christ . . . this must come through the Word * In Exodus . . . the whole book recalls the word of God leading Moses * Key Point: Moses is willing to suffer   **Look at all of Moses actions: What unites them?**   * They all focus on Moses following God by enduring suffering * **How might the audience of Hebrews benefitted from this?** * **How does this give us faith? Help us not shrink back?**   My entire goal in ministry is to build your faith . . . to help you see the invisible things of God . . . so that when the visible things come to kill you . . . and me . . . you will endure.  I should add . . . the purposes and plans of God for his leaders is also to let them suffer . . . so that they might model faith with patience and endurance . . .  **Who comes next?**   * People, Israel, Rahab (vv. 29–31) * This seems to balance the place of Sarah – as Abraham led his bride into faith; Moses led his people into faith . . . so now Christ leads his people into faith |

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| **People** | v. 29 | *By faith . . . the people crossed the Red Sea*  **What people?**   * Only those who believe * The Egyptians who did not believe died in the way * **The implication; those who do not have faith will die** |
| **[Israel]** | v. 30 | *By faith . . . the walls of Jericho fell down*  **How did this happen? Did they just fall down?**   * There’s no mention of anyone here * But in Joshua 6 . . . the priests lead the people – the seven days highlights this * The priests obeyed and because they did the victory was won |
| **Rahab** | v. 31 | *By faith . . . Rahab the Prostitute did not perish . . . because she had hospitality . . .*   * We see salvation and judgment again * And because of her faith in the word of God, she was saved * When the judgment came she survived . . . and remember she was in the city wall that fell down   Why is she included in this list?   * It includes a Gentile * It also shows how God saves his people through judgment – what could provide a better picture * And it sets us up for the summary he gives in verses 32–40 |

**Summary of Actions**

*Quickly . . . we find*

* **7 names (vv. 32)**
* **21 actions (vv. 33–38)**
  + **Half are positive**
  + **Half are negative**
* **1 reason for these actions (v. 35)**

**And this leads to the conclusion (vv. 39–40)**

* Faith completed
* People of old commended

**How does this passage work?**

* The examples are motivations to keep going
* Those who have faith don’t go back . . . but are active in their faith
* Those who have faith . . . do not fear death . . . they are living for the resurrection
* Faith is bolstered by the word of God . . .
* Faith moves towards God (v. 6) . . . but this is not a secret, personal piety . . . it is the public gathering of Christians . . . as the city of God made visible

**How does this passage encourage you?**

1. Different situations . . . for different children
2. There is no glory-only . . . or suffering only
3. The goal is a better life . . . better resurrection . . .
4. Life is lived with eschatology in view