

Pastor Clifford
January 31st, 2021

The Book of Hebrews: Chapter 11

(Blue text is Hebrews)

39 "But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have FAITH and preserve their souls." Hebrews 10:39

Hebrews 11

"Now FAITH is the CERTAINTY of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

FAITH: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,

In order to better understand **faith** we need to look at **hope**.

Hope is not "I hope my team wins the Super Bowl" or "I hope I get a raise." Biblical hope is not a hope-so but it is a know-so. It isn't wishing for the best. It isn't waiting to see what happens and hope that it turns out well. Hope is not a feeling or an emotion. Hope is the knowledge of facts. If someone says to you that "I hope you have a good day," there is no guarantee that the day will go well. To have a biblical hope is to have a sure anchor of the soul, not hoping for rain because the forecast says that there is a 60% chance of rain and you hope that you get your garden watered. That is not hope...that is wishful thinking and it is utterly undependable and has no power to bring anything to pass. Human hope pales in comparison to biblical hope, as we shall read.

A Christian's definition of hope is far superior to that of the world. Instead of wishing or hoping for something to happen, a believer knows that their hope is solid, concrete evidence because it is grounded in the Word of God and we know that God cannot lie (Heb 6:18; Num 23:19). The Christian has a hope that is "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb 11:1). It is a hope that is like faith...a faith that cannot be moved by circumstances or what the eyes see because an unseen God is seen in His faithfulness.

Paul may give us the best example of hope in Romans chapter 8. Whenever I encounter hopelessness in new believers and even among experienced Christians and there is doubt about their salvation, I usually direct them to **Romans 8:24-25** where Paul tells the believer, *"For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience"* because *"If God is for us, who can be against us"* (**Rom. 8:31**)? If God is on your side, how sure is that hope! I believe that every Christian has gone through or will go through a dark night of the soul where deep doubts and fears flare up but extinguishing those fears is as simple as staying in the Bible faithfully, day by day.

We see that hope and faith work hand in hand. Faith is the assurance (certainty) of things hoped for!

The conviction of things not seen.

The world says, "seeing is believing".
God says "I said it, that settles it"

- **2 Corinthians 5:6-10** "So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, **7** for we walk by faith, not by sight. **8** Yes, we are of good courage,

and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.”

For by it the people of old received their commendation.

- **2 Corinthians 3:1-3** “Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? ² You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. ³ And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”

³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

BY JAKE HEBERT, PH.D.

Explaining the origin of the universe is an enormous challenge for those seeking to deny their Creator: How could a universe come from nothing? The challenge is so great that some have argued that the universe simply did not even have a beginning, but has existed eternally. However, because most professing atheists have accepted the big bang model of the universe, they have accepted the premise that our universe did indeed have a beginning. Hence, they have a need to explain that beginning.

- **Job 38:19-27** "Where is the way to the dwelling of light, and where is the place of darkness, **20** that you may take it to its territory and that you may discern the paths to its home? **21** You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is great! **22** "Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, or have you seen the storehouses of the hail **23** which I have reserved for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war? **24** What is the way to the place where the light is distributed, or where the east wind is scattered upon the earth? **25** "Who has cleft a channel for the torrents of rain and a way for the thunderbolt, **26** to bring rain on a land where no man is, on the desert in which there is no man, **27** to satisfy the waste and desolate land, and to make the ground sprout with grass?"

4 By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. 5 By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. 6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

- Abel and Enoch are both commended by God.
- Why? Because of their faith.
- And their testimony today still speaks!

And without faith it is impossible to please him

- To please God, Abba Father, we must have **faith**.
- We are exhorted to draw near to God (James 4:8).
- We are more than conquerors in Christ! Romans 8:37

We must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

- **Romans 1:18-20** "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. **19** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. **20** For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse."
- **Revelation 22:12-13** "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. **13** I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

7 By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household.

Gen. 5:32 *"Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth."*

Gen. 6:14 *"Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch."*

Gen. 6:18 *"But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark – you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you."*

Gen. 7:11 *"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened."*

I think we can safely assume that it took Noah about 100 years to build the ark.

During his journey of faith Noah was basically alone. We (Christians today) on the other hand make up a 1/3 of the world's population. According to the Religion and Public Life Project at the Pew Research Center, there are 2.18 billion Christians worldwide, which is about 31.6 percent of the world population of 6.9 billion, as of 2010.

We need faith *from* God and faith *in* God to be able to persevere for the long haul.

By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

- **Romans 3:5-8** "But," some might say, "our sinfulness serves a good purpose, for it helps people see how righteous God is. Isn't it unfair, then, for him to punish us?" (This is merely a human point of view.) **6** Of course not! If God were not entirely fair, how would he be qualified to judge the world? **7** "But," someone might still argue, "how can God condemn me as a sinner if my dishonesty highlights his truthfulness and brings him more glory?" **8** And some people even slander us by claiming that we say, "The more we sin, the better it is!" Their condemnation is just.

We now, through the blood of Christ, can be made righteous before God.

- **Romans 4:1-3** "Abraham was, humanly speaking, the founder of our Jewish nation. What did he discover about being made right with God? **2** If his good deeds had made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that was not God's way. **3** For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith."
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** "For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ."