

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 known 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

By Faith . . .	Verse(s)	
Creation	v. 3	<p><i>By faith . . . we understand</i> [Genesis 1–2]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Word of God • Creation of Life <p>** Those things which are seen are made by what is unseen</p> <p>What does this teach us about visible things ??</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible is more real, more important • The visible are shadows of the substance (10:1) <p>What else stands out in this passage ??</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is exercising faith? • Cf. Hebrews 10:39; 11:39–40
Abel	v. 4	<p><i>By faith . . . Abel offered sacrifice</i> [Genesis 4]</p> <p>How did he offer a more acceptable sacrifice?</p> <p>Was there any revelation to believe in?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first sacrifice was offered by God • Abel brought the offering to the door – opening <p>Is there anything that demonstrates resurrection life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The blood still speaks • Hebrews 12:24
Enoch	vv. 5–6	<p><i>By faith . . . Enoch was taken up</i> [Genesis 5]</p> <p>Who was Enoch?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The seventh son of Adam – does this number matter? • He walked with God and was no more <p>Walked?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) <p>What is the significance of Enoch’s “no more”?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It undoes death – life after death is possible • He walked with God – he kept his word

<p>Noah</p>	<p>v. 7</p>	<p><i>By faith . . . Noah . . . constructed for saving. . . condemned the world (Genesis 6–9)</i></p> <p>What two themes do you see in this verse?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation & Judgment <p>Why does that matter?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S & J are best seen in baptism – which is prefigured • What is the pattern of baptism – death & resurrection <p>Is there anything about the word here?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God warned him • He told him about events yet unseen <p>** Notice again the pattern of visible and invisible</p>
<p>Abraham (3x)</p>	<p>vv. 8–10</p>	<p><i>By faith Abraham . . . obeyed</i></p> <p>What do we see here?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Word – called to go out • The obedience is found in going out (Genesis 12) <p>What else do we see?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Promise – land (v. 9), see (v. 9), God (v. 10) <p>** The visible and invisible theme shows up again – he was looking for God / the builder of the city</p> <p>** This sets up verses 13–16, but first we need to see how Abraham’s faith is passed on to his bride</p>
<p>Sarah</p>	<p>vv. 11–12</p>	<p><i>By faith . . . Sarah received power to conceive</i></p> <p>Do we see God’s Word here?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) <p>What about resurrection life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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?

- 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**

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

<p>Abraham</p>	<p>vv. 17–19</p>	<p><i>By faith Abraham . . . offered up Isaac</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This repeats Abel’s action • This also is in response to God’s Word • This is a priestly act <p>And what about resurrection? How does Hebrews 11:17–19 capture it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice how he reads the OT – he doesn’t say it was a resurrection, but the pattern of death and life is <i>figuratively like a resurrection</i> • It was a living parable – Notice: the book of Genesis is filled with living parables
<p>Isaac, Jacob, Joseph</p>		<p><i>By faith . . . Isaac invoked promises</i></p> <p><i>By faith . . . Jacob blessed each of his sons</i></p> <p><i>By faith . . . Joseph made mention of the exodus . . . gave directions about his bones</i></p> <p>What is common to each of these actions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each deal with gospel promises / spoken words <p>Do we see anything about resurrection?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>However, what do we know about the bones of the saints?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is hope in the future work of God • Where his bones are indicates . . . his death is not the end • <i>This may also inform the way Hebrews 10:35–36 speaks</i> <p>Any thing else?</p>

<p>Moses ()</p>	<p>vv. 23–28</p>	<p><i>By faith . . . Moses parents hid him</i></p> <p><i>By faith . . . Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter</i></p> <p><i>By faith . . . he left Egypt</i></p> <p><i>By faith . . . he kept the Passover</i></p> <p>Do we see anything about our themes here? Word, Resurrection,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moses was baptized . . . and would lead his people in baptism (v. 29) • Moses refuses to identify himself as a son of Egypt <p>What's the importance of sonship in Exodus / Hebrews?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>Look at all of Moses actions: What unites them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? <p>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.</p> <p>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 . . .</p> <p>Who comes next?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p><i>By faith . . . the people crossed the Red Sea</i></p> <p>What people?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p><i>By faith . . . the walls of Jericho fell down</i></p> <p>How did this happen? Did they just fall down?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p><i>By faith . . . Rahab the Prostitute did not perish . . . because she had hospitality . . .</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>Why is she included in this list?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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