

Book of Hebrews Part 39:10-39, 11:1-4; Faith, Belief, and Unbelief; Prepare for War (1/4/2020)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://cornerfringe.com/media/khxycc5/book-of-hebrews-part-39>.

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

Today we are going to be breaking into chapter eleven of the epistle to the Hebrews. This chapter is commonly known as the chapter of faith or even the Hall of Faith. I would even argue this chapter is probably one of the most venerated, most well-known chapters in all of the New Testament. I would suggest it ranks up there with 1 Corinthians chapter thirteen.

We are going to break into this chapter, but we're not going to get very far because today is just preparation. We are going to really prepare today for getting into this chapter on a very deep level. There are things that need to be brought to the table. There are things we need to talk about. There's some backdrop to chapter eleven that needs to be covered otherwise you're not going to appreciate this chapter in the way you need to. I think even after today's laying of groundwork and kind of setting the stage, you are going to approach this chapter completely different than you ever have before. So today is all about preparation.

So we're actually not going to begin in verse one. We have to go back to Hebrews 10:26. This verse is one of those verses you probably don't want to see anymore. You have seen quite a bit of it. This is one of those verses we don't want to spend too much time on because it really hits you hard and cuts you to the heart. This is the verse, **For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins** (Hebrews 10:26).

This is one of the most terrifying and frightening passages in all of Scripture. To give a quick reiteration; if you turn your back on God, you know to do good, but you don't; you know His Commandments, but you willingly walk away from them, then there will be no grace. There will be no mercy for you. There will be nothing but judgment in your future. This is absolutely terrifying.

However, the writer rounds out the statement in the very last verse of chapter ten, and he says, **But we are not of those who draw back to perdition** (Hebrews 10:39). In other words, all those men, his Jewish brethren in the first century, we are not them. We are not dogs returning to our vomit. Who are we? We are these men, **but of those who believe to the saving of the soul** (Hebrews 10:39).

I want to specifically point out, **of those who believe**. Why is it significant that we are of those who believe? Because what he is doing is attaching himself and his Jewish audience to the men he's about to list in Hebrews chapter eleven. We are of these men.

Now, I want you to think about something. If Hebrews 10:26 is scary, what does that mean for Hebrews chapter eleven? I ask because if we're listening to this guy, and we understand exactly what he is saying, what he is telling us is these guys we are about to read about are the bar. These guys are the measuring rod. If you want to get into the kingdom of God, you're going to have to be like these men.

I think of students who go to law school, and they sacrifice a lot. They invest their time; they invest their financial resources. They don't sleep. They study like nobody's business all with the expectation that they are going to operate in this occupation. They believe, "I'm going to be a licensed attorney some time and I am going to represent somebody or even prosecute the evil; whatever the case may be." But here's the thing; if they don't pass the bar, they are nobody. Passing the bar is everything. They invested all that time, sacrifice, dedication, and devotion. If they don't pass the bar, they don't get to practice law.

Now compare that to Hebrews eleven. Hebrews eleven is the bar. I fear when we read things like we're going to read in Hebrews chapter eleven, we read the stories in the Torah of these great men who have lived before us, we tend to distance ourselves. We keep ourselves a safe distance, and we look at them as almost fictional superheroes. We might think, "You know, you don't really think God expects me to be like Moses, do you? You don't really expect God thinks I should be like Abraham, do you?"

I mean, that's one of the most terrifying revelations you can find in Scripture. Knowing these unbelievable men of character, of devotion, and men of faith are the bar. Unless we meet that bar, we're not going to get in through the narrow gate. You want to talk about some perspective as we go into Hebrews chapter eleven? That is absolutely terrifying. It will begin to peel back layers of delusion regarding how great you think you are when you actually read about the great ones; when you read about what it takes to inherit the kingdom of God. This is the bar.

With that said, let's break into Hebrews 11:1 **Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.** I think it's quite appropriate as we enter into this chapter of faith that we are given the simplistic definition. **Faith is the substance** or the *ὑπόστασις*. If you've been with us through this study, I don't need to go over this word again. You already know the writer already used it in the book of Hebrews. At times the word is translated as confidence. At other times, it is translated as assurance. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for.

So think about that. Hoped for means you don't have them. So Paul asks in Romans 8:24 **why does one hope for the things that he sees?** You don't. You hope for the things you do not see; for the things that have not come into your life yet. You hope for things that are not tangible in your life; that you have not realized. These promises have not been realized. So faith is the assurance of things hoped for.

Then he goes on to say in Hebrews 11:1 **the evidence of things not seen** (emphasis added). That word, evidence, is *ἔλεγχος* in the Greek. It's only used one other time in the New Testament, in 2 Timothy 3:16 **all Scripture is profitable for doctrine and for reproof.** The word in the Greek is *ἔλεγχος*; it means true conviction. So **faith is the ὑπόστασις, the assurance, of things hoped for, and the ἔλεγχος, the conviction of things not seen.**

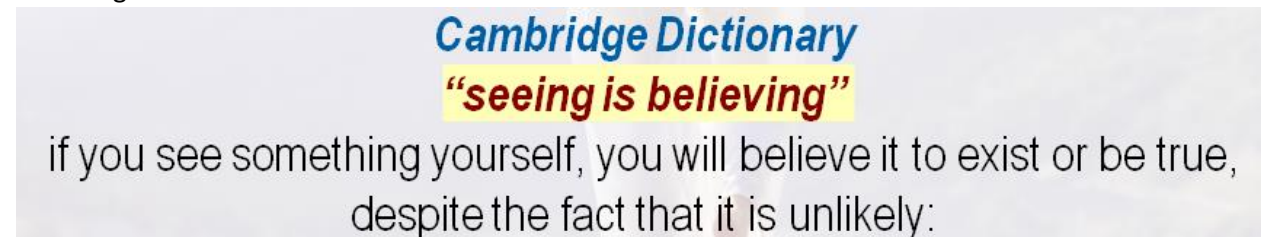
Now, let me try to put this in more tangible words; something you can grasp on to. One thing I've never seen, and praise be to the LORD for this, is somebody actually saw off their limb whether with a band

saw or a chainsaw. I've heard about it, but I've never seen it. If you start swinging a chainsaw around me, I'm going to back off. I'm not going to come near you. If you say to me, "Daniel, it's a good idea. Go ahead and put your arm in the band saw. I think that's going to work out really well for you." Here, however is what I know, I have ὑπόστας. I have assurance. That's a bad idea even though I've never seen it. I have ἔλεγχος. I have conviction. Though I have never seen it, I know that's a horrible idea.

So, do you understand what real faith is? It is that you know, that you know, that you know. You are convinced in your heart. I know judgment is coming and does that affect how I respond in this world? Yes! And those who truly have that ἔλεγχος, that conviction, they respond in a proper manner. They don't do foolish things. They don't walk away from the Commandments of God. They don't sear their conscience with the hot iron. They don't do this because they know, that they know; they have that conviction. It's a bad idea because judgment is coming. They know this.

The Apostle Paul says this in 2 Corinthians 5:7 **For we walk by faith, not by sight.** Think about this; this is a law for every believer. We need to walk by faith, not by sight. This, however, is the exact opposite of what the world does. The law by which they walk is by sight. They walk by sight. That is how the world walks. They will tell you, "Seeing is believing." This is the law the world walks by. It is the exact opposite of all these men we're going to read about in Hebrews chapter eleven.

Cambridge defines this term as such:



In other words, it could be something totally unusual, obscure, out of the ordinary, or even unbelievable, but if someone comes and says, "Look, here it is," it is at that point you're convicted, you're convinced, because you have seen it. Therefore, it's a reality. The world's reality is governed explicitly by what they can see or by what they can touch. This is how they govern their reality.

This, however, is not the truth for a believer. For a believer, not that we don't take into consideration tangible reality, but for a believer, we live our lives by those things that are not seen. We walk by faith not by sight. We live our lives in the promises of God. We live our lives by the word of God, whether the parts of it have come to fruition or not. This is how we live our lives, and the world thinks this is insane.

I have experienced, when witnessing to atheists, at times they look at you as though you're a pathetic creature. They believe you have no intelligence whatsoever. You have this spiritual crutch you need to run to and create your own fantasy world you need to live in because you can't handle life. You can't handle the real world. They think it's unreasonable and illogical. There's nothing about it that makes sense. Where they stand is, "Hey, I'm a man of logic. I'm a man of reason. I'm responsible." This is how the world paints this law of seeing is believing.

Their attitude is, "You know, you want to preach to me Jesus Christ? You want to tell me how great He is and how much He loves me, even though I see all this sorrow in the world? You want to tell me how He's forgiven my sins, and how He rose from the dead? Fine. Show me. Show Him to me. You tell me He is alive; if you show Him to me, then I'll believe you. I've had these conversations. That is the law they live by.

Well, it's one thing to talk about the world; it's one thing to talk about atheists in regard to this law; and it's another thing to talk about this law of seeing is believing when it creeps into the church.

I want to take you to the Gospel of John. Most of you are familiar with the story of how after His death and resurrection Yeshua presents Himself to His disciples. He shows them His existence; except for one, Thomas. He wasn't there. So Yeshua spent time with His disciples, and then He leaves. This is where we pick up the story in John 20:25 **The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the LORD." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe** (emphasis added)."

Thomas is living by the law of the world. He has chosen the way of seeing is believing, "I will only believe what I see and if I don't see it, I will not believe it." This is amazing! If you understand the context of this, it gets even more frightening because the context is that Thomas just encountered the most trustworthy men on planet Earth. He can trust these men he's done ministry with. These are the same men who also followed Yeshua and cast out demons. He can trust these men more than anyone on the face of the planet, and they have told Thomas with unified testimony: He has risen. Yet Thomas didn't believe. That blows my mind!

So we continue in the story in John 20:26-27—²⁶ **And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"** ²⁷ **Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing** (emphasis added)."

I highlighted this statement, **Do not be unbelieving, but believing**, because I really want you to pay attention to this. **Do not be unbelieving, but believing**; this is a commandment. When Yeshua says, "Do not," your ears need to perk up. This is a real thing. It is a commandment, **do not be unbelieving**. He has commanded us as followers of Him that we are not to be unbelieving. The LORD hates unbelief. Nothing will close you out of the Throne Room of God faster than unbelief. Nothing will prevent your healing more than unbelief.

This is not something for the believer. This is what you call a cancer to the believer. It absolutely destroys every cell. It destroys all hope.

Moving on in John 20:28 **And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My LORD and my God!"** I want to stop here and point out something. That statement in the Greek is καὶ ἀπεκρίθη Ὁ Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου. Some people will state that Jesus is never called God in Scripture. Actually, He is literally called God. Thomas calls Him, my LORD, which is κύριός and my God, which is θεός. Thomas is blown away. He now sees the Savior, and Yeshua said to him as recorded in John 20:29 **Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed** (emphasis added)."

The way Yeshua uses this term, blessed, or in the Greek, μακάριοι (*makarios*). Its equivalent in the Hebrew is בָּרוּךְ (*Barukh*). The way He uses this term is not the way you generally use it today. In order for you to truly feel the weight of this, you need to understand this. If I were to talk to you and say, "how was your week," and you respond, "Well, you know Daniel, I was really blessed. I had a blessed week. God blessed me this week. It was just wonderful." That is not how Yeshua uses this term μακάριοι (*makarios*). He uses this term explicitly in the context of salvation; of being eternally saved.

That puts some serious weight on this statement. When Yeshua says, **blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed**, that states their names are written in the Book of Life. You can read the Beatitudes; go back to Matthew 5 and read, blessed are the pure in heart; they will see God. Blessed are those who mourn...blessed are the meek, they'll inherit the earth. The list goes on. He is literally defining those who are in the Kingdom of God, this μακάριοι (*makarios*). This all bears great weight on this as we look at it.

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:18 **while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.**

Let's be honest. How many of us look at the things being seen? It is compelling. Your eyes are a direct conduit to your heart. The things you see are going to impact you unless they are checked. Our reality cannot consist of our daily mundane things we do, of which some are completely vain. This cannot be our reality. Our reality has to be the word of God. Our reality has to be the promises. Our reality has to be Yeshua is alive. He sits at the right hand of the Father, and the reality has to be He is coming very, very soon. Even though we don't see His coming right now, we have His promise. We believe even though we have not seen. This is how we are to operate in faith.

I want to take this a step further. I want to take you to the Torah and to the Book of Numbers. I want you to see this unfold as unbelief creeps into the assembly of the Most High God. We are talking about the assembly of Israel who is literally saved by the blood of the lamb. That great deliverance came when they walked out of Egypt. They walked across on dry ground with heaps of water on each side of them only to see their enemies fall before them. God destroyed their enemy, the Egyptian army, after they, the Israelites, got safely across the Red Sea.

When you see the context of what we're going to break into, it gets scary because this stuff comes into the church. It comes into believers.

I want to go to the book of Numbers. Moses sends out the twelve spies to go spy out the land to discover whether the land is good or not, whether the inhabitants are strong or weak, and whether there's good agriculture or not. So these twelve spies come back, and ten of them do not give a good report. They give a bad report of the land. You know, why? Because they live by the law, seeing is believing. What they saw with their eyes rattled them to the core, and they're terrified. At this point we read this in Numbers 13:30-31 **Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it." ³¹ But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we."**

So you have two spies versus ten. When you think about it, that's a minion. You have two spies that went and said, "Men of faith, let us go now for we are able to do it." Guess what? These two spies saw the same things the other ten spies saw. Everything they saw was the same, but how they respond is,

“Let us go; we can do it.” The other ten said, “We don't have a chance. Mission Impossible. We're looking at giants. They are in fortified cities. It's going to be a slaughter. Anybody with common sense can understand this.” This is their take on the situation.

Now go to Numbers 13:32-33 **And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. ³³ There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."**

So in their sight they are trying to clarify this reality with the people. They are saying, “Do you understand what we're talking about and what we saw? We're going to be killed”.

Continuing in Numbers 14:1-2 **So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. ² And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness!** (emphasis added).

Do you feel the weight of that? You've got the context here. This was so overwhelming for them. And keep in mind it is always easier for us because we are simply reading this as pages on the book, but you're not there. You didn't see what they saw. You didn't see how fortified these cities were and how precarious the situation really was, but the situation was so overwhelming for them that they can say, “We would have rather died being slaves to the Egyptians, being in total bondage and abused. It would have been better that we died there than it would have been with you bringing us across the Red Sea. It would have been better when we hungered and thirsted in the desert, and die at that moment, than to come to this hour.” This is where they're at. Mentally they are so overwhelmed.

Moving to Numbers 14:3 **Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims?** This is where things get really bad. They're concerned about their children. They love their children. You have men who are concerned about their wives. They love their families, and now they see the situation, “We figured it out. The LORD brought us here so they could kill us. The LORD is not for us; He's against us. The LORD hates us.” Then read Deuteronomy chapter one, you notice that's exactly the commentary Moses gives. The LORD overhears them chattering in their tents. It literally says, “The LORD hates us.” This is what the LORD heard.

This scares me. This scares me on so many levels because I'm going to tell you right now one of the most destructive lies you will ever be confronted with in your life will be this lie right here, “God doesn't love you. God is against you because of your circumstances.” You need to put yourself in a similar situation where your circumstances, where your life, is falling apart. Everything around you is crumbling. I wonder how many of you would do what Israel is doing here. Do you begin to get angry at God? Are you angry with Him? Are you blaming Him? You know, if you fall into the trap of being angry with God and blaming Him, you are cursing God. That's a terrifying situation because it is in those situations we are going to find out who you are and how much faith you have.

I think about the story of Job. For me, this is one of the most impactful moments in Scripture. There are so many impactful moments in Scripture, but for me, this showed me something I had never seen before in all of Scripture. It showed me a war. An unusual war. It also gave me context.

So Satan presents himself to the LORD, and the LORD asks, "Where have you come from?" Satan answers, "From going to and fro on the land." Then what the LORD says next blows my mind, "Have you considered My servant Job?"

This blows my mind. This is the LORD's response. The LORD wants to take delight in His servants. He wants to be glorified. He takes joy in the servants who are faithful to Him. He's proud of Job; as a proud Father. This is an incredible statement, "Have you considered My servant job? There's none like him." What was Satan's response? "Really? Does Job fear God for nothing look at his life!" Job was wealthy beyond description. He was blessed on every side. So the devil said, "You have put a hedge around him! Take all that he has, and he will curse You to Your face."

Do you understand what the devil knows about us? He knows about your weak nature and how pathetic we can act in the faith in the sense that if God takes everything from you, and your world starts to crumble, his expectation is you are going to curse God. Satan is going to win. This is what he wants. He wants us to curse God.

Do you remember, from the story, that it gets worse. Not only is everything taken from him, but then Satan goes against his own body, and he is in indescribable pain. It was at this point his wife, the closest confidant he has, the one who is supposed to be one, echad, with him, his helpmate, turns to him and says, "Why do you hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die." Satan was speaking through her. He uses her as a tool, "Curse God and die. Blame Him."

For all of this, his response is so amazing, "Shall we not accept the good as well as the evil?" That's a man of Faith. That's a man that holds the line.

Israel is not holding the line. They are allowing their situation to define who they are. They're not walking by faith. They're walking by sight.

I want to tell you this: you want to live your life like this. You will never overcome; you will never succeed; you will be brought to your death if you live like Israel was doing. We cannot do this. We need to have the integrity. We need to have the faith that no matter what, we trust in God. That's a powerful notion. This is a notion that will lead to salvation.

Stop listening to the lies that God doesn't love you. Stop listening to the lies that He doesn't care about you. Do you know what it says in Scripture? Let's look at what the word says, **For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope** (Jeremiah 29:11).

This is the mind and heart of the LORD, and the enemy wants to come in and say, "No, He hates you. Curse God and die." He will tell you, "Every problem you have in your life is because of Him. He has abandoned you because He doesn't love you." It's unbelievable. It's demonic. This is what's going on. However, Jeremiah 29:11 is the mind of the LORD.

I love what Yeshua says in Matthew chapter nine. He is sitting with tax collectors and sinners, and the Pharisees are offended. They're offended that He would do this. So the Pharisees go to the disciples and ask them, "Why is your teacher sitting with these tax collectors and sinners?" Yeshua heard them and said, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. I have come to call sinners to repentance." (Ref. Matthew 9:12-13)

Then, do you know what he says in that passage? He says, **“But go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’”** (Matthew 9:13) The LORD desires mercy in His heart. He wants to give us Grace. This is who He is. God so loved the world that He even gave His only begotten Son. The devil wants to erase from your mind all of these things so that you can fall into the curse, and you can curse God. Satan wants to bring you to your death.

Continuing on in Numbers 14 we are going to see what happens when Israel gives into this lie, Numbers 14: 3-4 **³...Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" ⁴So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt"**(emphasis added). What they were saying is, “We're done with God. We're done.”

So you buy into this lie that God doesn't love you; that it's His fault. You're in this predicament that all He wants to do is kill your family. You will select a new leader, and it won't be Him.

I'm going to tell you when faith is not involved you will make choices that cultivate death. Start analyzing the decisions you're making on a daily basis. Are they rooted in faith? Start analyzing the words that come out of your mouth. Are they words of life, or they words of death not rooted and grounded in the faith?

Numbers 14:6-8 **⁶ But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; ⁷ and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. ⁸ If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.'**

Joshua and Caleb came on the scene, and they spoke life into them. They said, “Walk by faith not by sight. We are well able to go and take this land.”

Numbers 14:9 **Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them"** (emphasis added).

It's interesting because if you know the words of Israel prior to this, you can even go back as far as Exodus 17, Israel is like, “Where's the LORD? Is He among us or not? Where is He?” They tempted the LORD; they tested Him, and yet Joshua and Caleb say, **the LORD is with us**. This sounds just like the Apostle Paul, “If God is for us, no one can be against us.”

When you make a statement like that, you have to have faith when you're in the midst of trial and tribulation. Look at Paul's life. Look at all the persecution and being in prison. He was being beaten, and you know what? He said, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” No, man can talk like that apart from faith. This is complete Faith. This is who we're called to be.

How does Israel respond to these words from Joshua and Caleb that would have given them life? We read in Numbers 14:10 **And all the congregation said to stone them with stones**. They didn't want to hear what Joshua and Caleb had to say. They had a law, seeing is believing, and what they saw was more compelling than what God said.

That's when you know, you're on your deathbed. You're getting ready to be rolled right out of your house. When what you see is more compelling than the word of God, it is absolutely terrifying!

Numbers 14:11 **Then the LORD said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me** (which is what faith looks like) **with all the signs which I have performed among them?** (Emphasis added).

You know, one of the things the devil does so well is he buries the work of the LORD in your life. He buries the things that the LORD has done whether it was five, ten, or thirty years ago. He buries them as if the LORD was never with you. He has you believe it is as if the LORD never helped you; that He's never blessed you. It's completely delusional what he does to us. It's demonic, and how he gets away with it is crazy. Yet he took almost an entire nation out this way sowing these lies and fear into their hearts.

Again, if you live your life by this manner, you will never prosper. You will never overcome. You will never be healed. You will never be saved. You want to talk about a profound lesson for us today? This is it.

You know, it's not impressive that you can walk around and profess Jesus as LORD and have all this joy when you're sitting in abundance and everything's going well in your life. That's not impressive. What's impressive is what Job displayed when he was literally experiencing hell on Earth. That is a man of faith. It is not until you go through these times of trials and testing that we know who we are. This is just a biblical fact. This is how the LORD does things.

Go back to Deuteronomy eight where we find God specifically brings Israel into the desert and allowed them to hunger, thirst, and to experience tribulation so He might know what was in their heart. God wanted to know whether they would keep His Commandments or not. We're going to experience this at times. Are we going to walk by faith, or are we going to walk by sight?

The writer of Hebrews comments on this very event in Hebrews 3:18-19 **And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? ¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief** (emphasis added).

Now again; you need to pay attention. It was because of unbelief or disobedience. This was the symptom. It's a symptom of whether you have faith or you don't.

I know biblically speaking, when you are walking in the commandments, it is not of your own power. However, it shows, it displays, from you that you have real faith. Therefore, the product of the faith leads you into these commandments. It leads you into righteousness. It leads you to Yeshua. That is what it does.

Going back to Hebrews 11:1-2 **Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ² For by it the elders obtained a good testimony** (emphasis added).

Do you want to possess a good testimony first and foremost in the eyes of God? Do you want to bear a good testimony in the eyes of everyone around you? Then you have to have faith. Period. And the elders the writer speaks of specifically are the very men he's going to be mentioning in Hebrews eleven. This is what he's referring to, and this is made clearer as you continue.

Hebrews 11:3 **By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.** I don't want to spend a bunch of time on this, but the term, world's, in Greek is αἰών (*aiōn*). We've already covered this term because the writer used it in the first chapter. The Father made all things through His Son. He made the worlds, the ages or αἰών (but in the plural), and now the writer kind of reverberates off of that **By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.**

Continuing in Hebrews 11:3 **so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.** There's no other way, we could understand this. When the writer says, **by faith**, we understand that everything that exists today was created. Well, of course it's by faith because here's the deal: none of you were there. Were you there at creation? Did you see God create? There's only one way to understand this. They say it is truly **by faith**.

Now, we're going to turn the page here if you will. As the writer goes on, we're going to get into the hall of faith. We're going to get into these titans of the faith, and the writer is going to go through this list. He's going to talk about Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. He'll also go on to mention some others. This amazing hall of faith containing a list of decorated men from generations.

What I want to point out here first is the writer is actually following a particular structure. He is following, if you will, a literary pattern that existed long before he ever existed, and this is significant because the structure that he lays out in Hebrews eleven would have been familiar to his Jewish audience. It would have resonated with them, and as you're going to see, on multiple levels.

So what I want to do is talk about this a little bit especially before we go any further. You need to feel the weight. You need to understand what the writer is really doing, because it starts to unpack so much for you. This is where you start getting into the concept where it's going to transform your life. It's that powerful.

The way I want to do this is I want to take you back in history to a book known as the book of Sirach. This book is also called The Book of Ecclesiasticus and is also called Ben Sira. It carries three different names. Why? Because each one of these names hails from a different language. Sirach comes to us from the Greek. Ecclesiasticus comes to us from the Latin, and Ben Sira from the Hebrew.

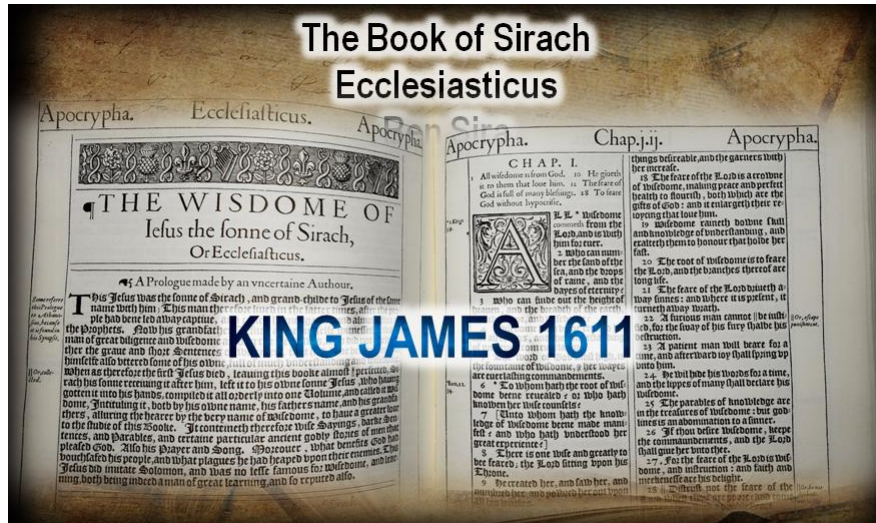
As a side note: there is something I find interesting, and it is just a coincidence, but remember that when the LORD was crucified they put a sign over His head that read—Yeshua of Nazareth, the king of the Jews. What languages was it written in? In Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. That is just interesting, but it has no bearing on this message.

So here you have this book that was well-known in the writer's day. I can tell you this book was read. It was studied. It was revered in the day the writer existed and amongst the Jewish people. We know this is a historical fact because the book of Sirach was found in the caves of Qumran. In fact, it was found in multiple caves at Qumran. In one instance, as bizarre as it sounds, it was actually attached to the Psalms. It is an amazing situation.

So here you have the books that exist in the caves of Qumran. We know it was read amongst the Jewish people in that day. We also know it was included in the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint. So all the Hebrews in the Diaspora were reading this book in Greek.

Then, of course, we can fast forward a little bit. I can talk to you about early Protestantism. When we typically say the word Protestants, who you think of? Martin Luther, but there were earlier Protestants than him such as Wycliffe. In the 4th century, Wycliffe translated the Bible out of the Latin into English. That act was considered heresy, which was punishable by death. Wycliffe's Bible included Ben Sira.

Let me take it a step further than that by going to the King James 1611 Bible. This is actually a photo of my personal copy of the King James 1611:



It is titled: The Wisdom of Jesus, the son of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus, which is the Latin name. So the first, prominent, Protestant Bible we would reckon today, the original King James 1611, contained the book of Sirach. The book of Sirach is still included in the Apocrypha today.

So this book, historically speaking even amongst Christians, is still deutero-canonical in the Roman Catholic Church. This book historically has been well known among Christians, but one thing I can tell you for certain is it was absolutely read and revered in the days that the book of Hebrews was written to Jewish people. That is significant because what I'm about to show you is kind of mind-blowing in the sense of Ben Sira lays out the same structure the writer of Hebrews does. So there's a reason I'm taking you here, and this will become clear as we continue.

So with that little introduction I want to take you to Ben Sira 2:1, where it says, **My child, when you come to serve the LORD, prepare yourself for testing** (emphasis added). Now keep in mind that Ben Sira reads like Proverbs, but Proverbs kind of on steroids. It is a proverb book of wisdom. At the front end of this book, this is one of the things the writer establishes, and it's so important. When you come to serve the LORD, get ready for war. Get ready. It's coming. This reality has to be part of the Gospel. This concept is woven throughout the Old and New Testament.

He goes on to say in Ben Sira 2:2 **Set your heart right and be steadfast**. In other words, getting resolute in your heart; get it together.

Continuing—and **do not be impetuous in time of calamity**. So when calamity falls upon you, trials and tribulation fall upon you, you have the strength to endure it.

Ben Sira 2:3-4—Cling to Him and do not depart, so that your last days may be prosperous. ⁴ Accept whatever befalls you, and in times of humiliation be patient. What do you think he is drawing from? He is drawing from Job who is patient in his humiliation. He accepted the evil as well as the good.

Ben Sira 2:4-6—Accept whatever befalls you, and in times of humiliation be patient. ⁵ For gold is tested in the fire, and those found acceptable, in the furnace of humiliation. ⁶ Trust in him, and he will help you; make your ways straight, and hope in him (emphasis added).

This introduction is the setup for what I want to show you. Now, we're going to jump ahead to chapter forty-four. Listen to this, [A hymn in honor of our ancestors](#). This is his introduction to where he's going to start listing the titans of the faith, which is exactly how the writer of Hebrews does. But he opens it up and gives us an interesting perspective. He opens by saying it is [A Hymn in Honor of Our Ancestors](#). Now, this is going to mean even more by the time we get to end of today, but I can tell you this: What does Colossians 3:16 say? It says we are to be **...teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs...**

When we think about hymns, or say the word hymn, you kind of get a knee-jerk reaction because these are wonderful, worship songs, and you think: I love the old hymns. That, however, is not the context. Do you know what the hymns are for? They are for war. Hymns are for war. Jehoshaphat put the singers first. There is immense power in singing these hymns; you're preparing for war. That's what this is.

Returning to Sirach 44:1-4—[\[A\] Hymn in Honor of Our Ancestors - Let us now sing the praises of famous men, our ancestors in their generations](#). Again, this is what Jehoshaphat did, and the enemies fell before him. ² The LORD apportioned to them great glory, his majesty from the beginning. ³ There were those who ruled in their kingdoms, and made a name for themselves by their valor; those who gave counsel because they were intelligent; those who spoke in prophetic oracles; ⁴ those who led the people by their counsels and by their knowledge of the people's lore; they were wise in their words of instruction. Jumping to verse 14—¹⁴ Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name lives on generation after generation.

The writer has not started to list their names, but one of the things so amazing about this hall of faith the writer talks about is that the writer is reminding us they go from generation to generation. This is important because when we go back to Hebrews 11:4, we find this **By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks** (emphasis added). Abel's name goes on from generation to generation. The writer of Hebrews is saying the exact same thing that Ben Sira has said. Now with that, let's go back to Sirach 44:15-17 ¹⁵The assembly declares their wisdom. I have to stop there because if you are the true ekklesia, the true assembly of God, this is something that will be inherent in your behavior. **And the congregation proclaims their praise.** ¹⁶ Enoch pleased the LORD and was taken up, an example of repentance to all generations. ¹⁷ Noah was found perfect and righteous; in the time of wrath he kept the race alive; therefore a remnant was left on the earth when the flood came (emphasis added).

Jumping to Sirach 44:19 **Abraham was the great father of a multitude of nations, and no one has been found like him in glory** (emphasis added).

Verses 22-23 To **Isaac** also he gave the same assurance for the sake of his father Abraham. The blessing of all people and the covenant ²³ he made to rest on the head of Jacob; he acknowledged him with his blessings, and gave him his inheritance; he divided his portions, and distributed them among twelve tribes. From his descendants the LORD brought forth a godly man, who found favor in the sight of all (45:1-2) and was beloved by God and people, **Moses**, whose memory is blessed. ² He made him equal in glory to the holy ones, and made him great, to the terror of his enemies (emphasis added).

Now we could go on because he continues to list these people of faith. However, what I want to show you is the list the writer of Hebrews has and compare it to Ben Sira. It's virtually identical and in the same order.



The only difference between the writer of Hebrews list is he begins with Abel whereas Ben Sira begins with Enoch, but then both go to Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then we see in Hebrews he includes Joseph in between Moses and Jacob. I want to let you know that even through Ben Sira does not mention Joseph here, Joseph is mentioned later.

So you can see how the writer of Hebrews is borrowing this from his own culture and what he grew up in. This is what meant something to him, and this is not just about literary patterns. If you think literary patterns are the reason I brought you to this that is not it. There is a greater reason you need to understand. What is going on here? Why did Ben Sira do this? Why is the writer of Hebrews doing this?

The answer to that is it's a call for war. I'm going to show you this. It is literally a call for war. Now, imagine this: the writer of Ben Sira, and the writer of Hebrews, are like great generals pacing back and forth before their army that is about ready to go into battle. As they begin to speak, proclaim, and build their courage, they are telling them, "Take your place at these men's side; at the side of Abraham, at the side of Isaac, and at the side of Jacob. Follow these men. Stay with me. Follow these men. Follow these men historically because the LORD will be your God."

This is what these two writers are doing, and with every word that comes out of these generals mouth, do you know what happens? The soldiers begin to grip their swords tighter and begin to grab their shields. Any fear that would have existed starts to get purged out of their heart, and they start to feel invincible. It is literally a call to war to gain strength and gain honor, “Men, go into battle. Do not love your lives to the death.” That's what this is. That's what's going on here.

Let me take it a step further to prove what I'm saying. I want to take you to Maccabees, and this is all going to tie in to what we are talking about. We just came off of celebrating Hanukkah. The backdrop of the book of Maccabees is very important. The spirit of Antichrist has gone out. Antiochus Epiphanes is literally a manifestation of the Antichrist. His name meant, God manifest. He's literally an embodiment of the Antichrist, and he goes out to begin war against God's people in order to cast truth to the ground. This is exactly how Daniel prophesied. If you were a Jew in those days, Antiochus would not allow you to keep the Sabbath. He won't allow you to keep Passover. He won't allow you to read or study the Torah. In fact, anyone found with the copy the Torah was to be put to death. This is the move of the Antichrist.

So, let me take you to the book of Maccabees and show you what is said there. 1 Maccabees 2:49 **Now the days drew near for Mattathias to die, and he said to his sons: “Arrogance and scorn have now become strong; it is a time of ruin and furious anger”** (emphasis added).

Now for us living in this day and age, we want to listen to those words, when evil becomes prominent, when you live in a nation that doesn't know how to blush because of her sins; a nation that is hell bent on sacrificing their children to the gods, when you see that immorality is running amok, it's being proportioned on every level and being infiltrated in our education system, homosexuality, transgenderism, non-binary, and all this other stuff being pushed on her children, I'm going to tell you arrogance and scorn have become strong. You now want to listen to this warning.

This is very more germane today. The book of Hebrews, specifically chapter eleven, is more applicable today. When I read it, I was just blown away because it speaks of what we are going through now.

Before we continue on, I want to seam some stuff together. Do you know when the book of Ben Sira was written? It was written in 175 BC. What do we know about that date? It is very interesting. The date this was written in was the very year Antiochus Epiphanes took the throne.

Now we are going to go to the book of Maccabees, which contains history about the very same time period. As we continue, this is going to make more sense. 1 Maccabees 2:50 **Now, my children, show zeal for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of our ancestors.** This is a military general, and he's speaking to his children, one of which is Judah Maccabee. He's on his deathbed, and this righteous general, who was a priest, is going forth and giving the orders of war to his children.

Continuing in 1 Maccabees 2:51 **Remember the deeds of the ancestor** (This is interesting. This righteous general of war is telling them what? He is telling them to remember the deeds of the ancestors.) **which they did in their generations; and you will receive great honor and an everlasting name.** He does the same thing that Ben Sira and the writer of Hebrews does.

Continuing in 1 Maccabees 2:52-64 **Was not Abraham found faithful when tested, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness?** ⁵³ **Joseph in the time of his distress kept the commandment, and became LORD of Egypt.** ⁵⁴ **Phinehas our ancestor, because he was deeply zealous, received the covenant of everlasting**

priesthood. ⁵⁵ **Joshua**, because he fulfilled the command, became a judge in Israel. ⁵⁶ **Caleb**, because he testified in the assembly, received an inheritance in the land. ⁵⁷ **David**, because he was merciful, inherited the throne of the kingdom forever. ⁵⁸ **Elijah**, because of great zeal for the law, was taken up into heaven. ⁵⁹ **Hananiah**, **Azariah**, and **Misael** believed and were saved from the flame. ⁶⁰ **Daniel**, because of his innocence, was delivered from the mouth of the lions. ⁶¹ “And so observe, from generation to generation, that none of those who put their trust in him will lack strength. ⁶² Do not fear the words of sinners, for their splendor will turn into dung and worms. ⁶³ Today they will be exalted, but tomorrow they will not be found, because they will have returned to the dust, and their plans will have perished. ⁶⁴ My children, be courageous and grow strong in the law, for by it you will gain honor (emphasis added).

In other words, arm yourselves for war; you are going to battle. The spirit of Antichrist is moving like never before. That is what this is all about. This is a hymn of our ancestors. This is why Jehoshaphat put the singers first; they sang, and the enemies fell. This is exactly what the writer of Hebrews is doing.

Let’s recall something. We see this literary pattern showing up when this spirit of Antichrist is released; when evil and scorn become strong. What do we know about the historical aspect in regard to the book of Hebrews regarding when this was written? I can tell you this for certain; the spirit of Antichrist was released in the writer’s days. The fact he is going through this pattern of listing this out, these men would have called their Jewish brethren to war.

Now I want you to think about something. This book was written somewhere between 60 AD and 68 AD. What happened in that time period? 64 AD was when Nero reigned. That was the first, formal governmental move against Jewish Christians. Nero started blaming them for the fires that burned Rome. You can read about it from the historians Tacitus and Suetonius.

We went through this stuff in a previous teaching. Then in 66 AD they started desecrating Jerusalem with images of Nero. The Caesars were worshipped as Gods. It was absolutely abominable. The Antichrist was pushing the envelope every day, and the Jews finally said, “That’s enough,” and they revolted. There was a hellish war, and people were put to death.

Keep in mind that during this time in the first century the Apostles were being killed for their faith. The spirit of antichrist went out. This is the backdrop to Hebrews chapter 11. This is what we’re getting into. There couldn’t be a better time to study this because I’m telling you right now, in this country, the spirit of antichrist is everywhere. It’s infiltrated in the churches, and the government. We have purged out prayer; we have purged out the Commandments of God, so we can’t even see anything, any residue, left of a holy God. This is total Antichrist. Truth is being cast to the ground yet again and more than ever.

We need this chapter. We need to let it resonate. These are the men that we need to be.