

Book of Hebrews Part 49 (1 of 2): 11:32-35; Champions of the Faith, Finale (4/9/2020)

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/74xp228/book-of-hebrews-part-49-1-of-2>

***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.**

Sometimes the messages I am given to share are difficult and heavy. I don't want you to think this is going to be one of those messages that is purely doom and gloom. That's not what this is about. It's absolutely the opposite. There is hope.

Let's get into this. This is what we read in Hebrews 11:32-34—**And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: ³³who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, **out of weakness were made strong...**** (Emphasis added).

I can't help but think about the Apostle Paul and his interaction with Yeshua. Paul keeps begging Yeshua to stop the affliction which has come over him. Paul kept going back to Him in prayer, and Yeshua responds, **"My grace is sufficient for you for My strength is made perfect in weakness."** (2 Cor 12:9)

Are you kidding me? That goes against all the logic the world would possess. The logic the world would possess is that strength equals strength, and weakness equals weakness. However, when it comes to the Lord, that is not the case. When it comes to the Lord and for His strength to go forth, He needs brokenness. He needs humility. He needs vulnerability. He needs you hanging by a thread. He needs you not being able to trust in the strength of your own flesh, the wisdom of your own mind, or the riches in your bank account. What He needs is total brokenness. When you come to that point where you are all in, and you are 100% codependent upon Him, when you come to that place, and you begin to trust in Him, that's when God is going to move in your life. That's when you're going to see and experience the power of God, and that is what you want.

I love what Paul says at the end of the whole discourse in 2 Corinthians 12:9— **...Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.** He would rather have His power on him in dealing with the affliction. That's how meaningful it is. We need that mentality.

I'm going to tell you right now, if you want to make it in this generation, with power to be able to overcome and to have victory, this is the kind of heart you've got to possess. We have got to be broken,

humble, and faithful. We must be men and women of faith because out of weakness is where we get strength that will, and has, baffled the world. This is what I am going to show you today.

He continues in Hebrews 11:34-35—...became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.
³⁵Women received their dead raised to life again. You know exactly what the writer is alluding to here. Think about the woman of Zarephath and the Shunammite woman. Both of these women have their sons raised from the dead. Elijah raised the one; Elisha raised the other.

This is such an awesome thing. We see these victories and deliverance in Hebrews chapter 11, and they all get this through faith. Then the writer throws a curveball. It's like he juxtapositions a totally contrary statement up against this, and he goes on and says— ...Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. (Hebrews 11:35)

How peculiar is that? We have all these beautiful stories of victory and deliverance which are based upon faith. And then the writer throws this in here that there were some who actually suffered and were tortured. He tells us in a sense that they were killed. Yet both of these people groups require faith. That is so critical for you to understand: in the faith. I say this because I've seen a lot of people lose hope when they see one thing happen to one believer, and yet something else happened to another, or even to them. They are busy looking at what God did in their lives and are thinking, "Well, that's not happening to me." And they struggle.

I'm going to tell you something right now: both of these items require the utmost faith. To give your life for the Lord, to become a martyr, is going to require a faith that is supernatural. A faith where you must walk on water to see this through to the end.

There are so many examples in scripture we could refer to. We can find some men being delivered like these women receiving their sons back to life. You have Lazarus being raised from the dead. Yeshua raised us from the dead. But on the other hand, you have John the Baptist who testifies of Yeshua. He died when they cut his head off. Why did they do this? Because he was preaching the Gospel. Because he was telling people they needed to repent. Because he got involved in politics, and he rebuked the leader of the day, King Harod. That didn't go well with Harod, or more specifically his wife. She knew what she had done by leaving her husband and marrying another man, Harod. And what this King was doing was vile because she was his brother's wife.

Zechariah the prophet carried the same message John the Baptist carried. Did he get rewarded for it by the people? Did they thank him and bless him, "Thank you for bringing us salvation; for turning us from the gates of hell and pulling us from the fire"? No! They stoned him. There was no deliverance for him. This was the thanks he got for it. How did he do that? How did he endure that? I'm going to tell you right now; it was through faith. That's how he endured it.

I want to share with you two stories from the Apocrypha Book of Maccabees. And for those of you who are not familiar with the book of Maccabees, this book was originally included in the King James Bible. It is still included in some translations of the Bible. It is heavily read by scholars. Martin Luther himself, the father of Protestantism, made the following statement: "The Books of Maccabees have weight with the faithful, but they avail nothing amongst the obstinate, or rebellious." They are meaningless to the rebellious, but to those who are faithful, they mean so much.

These books are recordation of the fulfillment of prophecy. Specifically a prophecy that is mentioned in the Book of Daniel, where there would be this little horn that would rise up, and he would cause great harm. Well, the Book of Maccabees records it being fulfilled through a man by the name of Antiochus Epiphanes from the 2nd Century who is one of the greatest personifications of the evil one the world has ever known. If you want to know what to expect in the Antichrist, or you want a template of the coming Antichrist, Antiochus Epiphanes is the guy. He is the guy you want to watch for and study because this is what the Antichrist is going to do.

So I want to take you to the book of Maccabees and show you these back-to-back stories. I'm going to tell you personally, for me, they have been some of the most impactful stories in regard to this arena in my life that I've ever read. They're so heavy; they are so weighty. When you read them, it is like something happens. It is like this weight of heaviness comes upon you. It's the Spirit that comes upon you, and you can feel it. You can feel the faith, commitment, and strength to the LORD God they have. You can also feel the wicked evilness of the Antichrist. It's very heavy.

What I want to do is take you there and show you these things, and I think you're really going to glean something from this. Going to 2 Maccabees 6:1—[Not long after this, the king \[Antiochus Epiphanes\] sent an Athenian senator to compel the Jews to forsake the laws of their ancestors and no longer to live by the laws of God.](#)

So what this template of the Antichrist, Antiochus Epiphanes, wants to do is to destroy the Torah. He wants to destroy and rip down the Commandments of God. This is the Antichrist's heartbeat, if you will; this is what he is after.

2 Maccabees 6:2-3—[also to pollute the temple in Jerusalem and to call it the temple of Olympian Zeus, and to call the one in Gerizim the temple of Zeus-the-Friend-of-Strangers, as did the people who lived in that place.](#) ³ Harsh and utterly grievous was the onslaught of evil.

So here you have the spirit of Antichrist coming in, and he wants to take the temple of God, and he wants to flip it upside down. He wants to name it after a demon or false god. This typifies the heart of the Antichrist, because we know the devil tried to take the throne in heaven. He wanted to assume it, and he certainly wanted people, the angels of heaven, and all of creation to worship him. The devil wants the worship. That is a picture of what we see happening here in addition to the fact, now he wants to call good evil by taking the temple of God and applying the name Zeus. You are calling good evil and evil good. It's absolutely demonic.

2 Maccabees 6:5-6—[The altar was covered with abominable offerings that were forbidden by the laws \(Torah\).](#) What that means is they were offering unclean animals on the altar. And these things were being offered up by people who were not to present themselves before the LORD or come near the altar of God. That responsibility was reserved for the priests, (Kohanim) with the assistance of the Levites.

Continuing—⁶ [People could neither keep the sabbath, nor observe the festivals of their ancestors, nor so much as confess themselves to be Jews.](#)

You have heard me say this before, what scares me about this passage is it is what we are read about and these very things are happening to the church today. They have stripped out the Seventh-Day Sabbath. They want nothing to do with it; they call it Jewish. They say, "We are not Jews. We don't want anything to do with Jews." The problem with that is these very people serve a Jewish Messiah.

Jesus is Jewish! That is absolutely crazy! It's frightening to see what the spirit of Antichrist does. He wants to strip the Sabbath; he wants to take away the Torah. What has the church done? They have taken away the Torah? This is scary!

So basically, what we have is the devil declaring total war on righteousness, against God's law, and against God's truth. It is interesting because when we go to the Book of Daniel, what you will see regarding the Antichrist is he will cast truth to the ground. When you see a move, a wave of evil, attacking the Bible, that is the spirit of Antichrist. It is the spirit of the devil going forth. And when you see this begin to happen, this is a precursor. It is telling you He is rising in power. He's going to get governmental authority. He's going to have great power, and so this is a precursor.

I want to take you to Isaiah 59:14-15 briefly—¹⁴Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. (Emphasis added). In other words, we are at a time where the spirit of the Antichrist has grown strong. Evil is prospering and truth has fallen. And then in verse 15 we read this—¹⁵So truth fails, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. Then the LORD saw it, and it displeased Him That there was no justice.

Listen to what I am saying here. This is inevitable. When the spirit of Antichrist rises, those who want to hold the line, those who will not compromise, they're going to keep the commandments. They're going to confess the name of Jesus before the world. They're going to make themselves pray. In that generation, they are going to become victims. This is a reality!

Think about Psalm 105:25—He [God] turned their heart to hate His people, To deal craftily with His servants.

This is just so bizarre! Think about the Egyptians. They hated the Hebrew people; the Hebrew represented abomination to them. And here we read this commentary, which we don't find specifically in Exodus, although there are certainly things that allude to this. But you find that Moses even gets frustrated. He tells the people, "The LORD is going to deliver you," but then what happens? The Egyptians double down on the beatings. They doubled down on the oppression. So instead of things getting better, they actually got worse. Then you come to Psalm 105 where you read it was the LORD who turned the hearts of the Egyptians to hate and to deal craftily with the Hebrew servants.

Now I'm painting a picture here biblically speaking. When you see the rise of the Antichrist, and you see his power ascend, and he is being given great authority, and oppression starts to go out in mass, you know there is going to be deliverance around the corner because the devil knows he has a short time. Things are going to get much worse before they get better. I've watched my wife go through this several times. From the beginning of contractions, things progress, and the contractions get worse and worse, and it gets more intense and painful until the delivery. Then there's joy.

This whole thing with the Antichrist is prophecy, and it shows you the reality of what to expect. When you're in those moments of indescribable, hellish, pain, and there is no epidural in sight, you must think about the delivery. You have to be focused on knowing there's going to be joy. You're going to laugh. At the end of the day, you're going to weep with tears of joy. This is where we have to keep the focus.

I want to get back to our story now, and this is where we're going to really get into it. Now, you have the backdrop. The spirit of Antichrist is moving about, and we are going to come to this man known as Eleazar. He is a priest, a Kohan. This is what we read in 2 Maccabees 6:18—Eleazar, one of the scribes

in high position, a man now advanced in age and of noble presence, was being forced to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh.

What we are seeing in this story regarding the rise of the Antichrist and him doing away with the Torah, and the Sabbath, is he wants to ensure you eat unclean food such as pork. And in this story, we see the Seleucid Empire with Antiochus Epiphanes' soldiers literally shoving swine into the mouths of believers attempting to get it down their throat. This is what they wanted to do. Why would the Antichrist want to do that? Because it defiles the temple of God; a temple, which we are. And when you read this in context, there is a double violation happening here. Not only are these Seleucid soldiers attempting to force pious, God-fearing Jews, to eat unclean meat, which they are forbidden to eat, but this meat had been offered to idols.

Again, even if it was hamburger, even if it was kosher clean, it is off-limits if it was offered to an idol. So there is a double violation going on here.

So again, I say to you the food laws are pretty important, and the Antichrist knows it. He knows what it does to the temple. He knows how it displeases the LORD, and that's what he wants.

You can go to Leviticus 19:2 or Leviticus 11, and you read **תְּהִי כִּי קָדוֹשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם**. This means, "Be holy because I the LORD your God am holy." Do you know that statement is made at the very end of the instructions for the food law regarding what we can and can't eat? These laws were given because He is holy; therefore, we are called to be holy because He has delivered us out of Egypt. That is why we should do this thing: we should be holy.

Continuing to 2 Maccabees 6:19-20—**But he, welcoming death with honor rather than life with pollution, went up to the rack of his own accord, spitting out the flesh,** ²⁰ **as all ought to go who have the courage to refuse things that it is not right to taste, even for the natural love of life.** That should go on a bumper sticker, right? **Welcoming death with honor rather than life with pollution.** That speaks to me.

So, what the writer is saying is even to save his own life, he has no right to taste this forbidden meat. And he didn't. He spit it out because he was a man of conviction and honor. I wonder how many people would do this. It is so frightening to me because I've seen the spirit of Antichrist convince the Christian world that it's absolutely grace, freedom, and liberty to consume things that biblically are abominable to God. He willingly convinces them to do this.

I wonder what's going to happen to those who get put to the grill and are told, "If you don't eat this, I'm going to kill you right now"? That is when you find out how much faith you have in your heart. That's when we get to separate the men from the boys. It is at that moment!

Now we continue on to 2 Maccabees 6:21—**Those who were in charge of that unlawful sacrifice** (these are soldiers working on behalf of Antiochus) **took the man aside because of their long acquaintance with him, and privately urged him to bring meat of his own providing, proper for him to use** (something that was not swine and had not been sacrificed to idols), **and to pretend that he was eating the flesh of the sacrificial meal that had been commanded by the king, so that by doing this he might be saved from death, and be treated kindly on account of his old friendship with them.**

In other words, he was probably a very loving man who had made friends with the inhabitants and even the Seleucid soldiers who are under Antiochus Epiphanes. It is suggested he was around 90 years old at

this time, and he was a man of honor who was respected and had gained the respect of his peers. His peers were willing to tell him, “Fake it. Go get some lamb or hamburger and fake it. We won’t tell anyone, and you will probably spare your life.”

Listen to how this man responds in this situation. It is unbelievable! 2 Maccabees 6:23—[But making a high resolve, worthy of his years and the dignity of his old age and the gray hairs that he had reached with distinction and his excellent life even from childhood, and moreover according to the holy God-given law \(Torah\), he declared himself quickly, telling them to send him to Hades.](#) In other words, send me to my death because I'm not going to fake this, I'm not going to fake breaking the Commandment of God because it would still be viewed amongst all his own brothers that he ate swine. He would never allow that to happen.

And so, you think about this story and the resolve this man had in his heart. He was resolved that even when it came to a thing of food, which people belittle so much, it carried great weight. It doesn't matter how you feel about it. It doesn't matter what you think about it. All this guy cared about is what does God think? And he was willing to die for it.

Again, I tell you, this is what radical faith looks like. This is the kind of guy the writer of Hebrews is talking about in chapter eleven when he states that some did not accept deliverance, but they were tortured; they went to their death.

As we continue in Maccabees, we are going to get into a second part of this where it talks about seven brothers. 2 Maccabees 7:1—[It happened also that seven brothers and their mother were arrested and were being compelled by the king \(Antiochus Epiphanes\), under torture with whips and thongs, to partake of unlawful swine’s flesh.](#)

So here we go again. Antiochus wanted swine flesh that had been sacrificed to idols shoved down their throats. They were arrested because they wouldn’t eat it.

2 Maccabees 7:21—[One of them, acting as their spokesman, said, “What do you intend to ask and learn from us? For we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws \(the Torah\) of our ancestors.”](#)

Look at this resolved. Not a blink of an eye. These people are not messing around.

Now, I'm going to tell you something. As we are going to read, the spirit of the Antichrist is going to be very cordial, friendly, and willing to bless someone until you do not do things his way; until you do not compromise the Commandments of God. Once you refuse to do as he says, once you refuse to abandon the Torah, watch out. He absolutely becomes fit to be tied. He will go into a rage!

As we continue, we are going to find out Antiochus is not playing around either. 2 Maccabees 7:3-4—[The king fell into a rage, and gave orders to have pans and caldrons heated. ⁴ These were heated immediately, and he commanded that the tongue of their spokesman be cut out....](#)

Talk about violent and horrific! We live in America, and we are not typically exposed to this kind of behavior. This, however, is going to change in the future.

It continues 2 Maccabees 7:3—[and that they scalp him and cut off his hands and feet, while the rest of the brothers and the mother looked on.](#)

Think about what is actually happening right now. This guy is literally being butchered, and his own brothers have to look on and watch this. But it gets worse. His mother has to see the torture of her own son by the most wicked, repulsive, and abominable human beings you can imagine. The spirit of Antichrist is all over this thing. The Antichrist loves every second of it. He loves to cause this mother pain and suffering. He loves nothing more. Can you begin to imagine the context of what was actually happening? It is beyond description. This is beyond horrific!

I'm moving to 2 Maccabees 7:5-6—[When he was utterly helpless, the king ordered them to take him to the fire, still breathing, and to fry him in a pan. The smoke from the pan spread widely, but the brothers and their mother encouraged one another to die nobly, saying, ⁶“The Lord God is watching over us and in truth has compassion on us, as Moses declared in his song that bore witness against the people to their faces, when he said, ‘And he will have compassion on his servants.’](#)

Think about that for a second. Think about the response they gave while in this worst-case scenario that anyone could imagine. What do they do? They strengthen themselves in the Living God. How do they do that? They go to the word of God; they rest upon it. The word is giving them life at the most vulnerable and volatile time they've ever experienced. It is giving them life and strength in their weakness; they're being made strong. This is unbelievable!

Isn't it ironic the passage that they quoted here? They are quoting from Moses in Deuteronomy 32:43. It says— [He will provide atonement for His land and His people.](#) Do you know what it says right before this? It says— [For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And render vengeance to His adversaries.](#)

These people are confessing the word of God and strengthening one another. Do you see the power of the word and the strength it will give when you take the time to speak the word of God into people's lives?

I am going to share something personal with you. Being in ministry, there are a few things that stand out above the rest. Number one is being a part of baptisms, Mikvah. Another one is being able to speak life and the word into people. I love being able to speak life and speak the word into people and to keep reminding them of the word because it is where the strength is. That is what I am called to do. That is what we are all called to do. And you are seeing the effects and power of that right here in this worst-case scenario.

Moving on to 2 Maccabees 7:7—[After the first brother had died in this way, they brought forward the second for their sport. They tore off the skin of his head with the hair, and asked him, “Will you eat \(swine\) rather than have your body punished limb by limb?”](#)

The spirit of Antichrist knows what he's doing; the devil understands what he's doing, “I'm going to make you watch how painful and horrific this all is so that when I come to you, I'm going to ask you the same question, and perhaps you will reconsider your position; Perhaps you'll reconsider your allegiance to God. Abandoned that and you can escape this.”

Well, how does this go? 2 Maccabees 7:8—[He replied in the language of his ancestors and said to them, “No.” Therefore he in turn underwent tortures as the first brother had done.](#)

So despite this scene that would result in most people being in therapy for the rest of their life, something that would drive people to the bottle or drugs, this man doesn't bat an eyelash. He's so strengthened in his faith. His faith in God is giving him this strength. He trusts God knowing it is going to be okay at the end. He goes through with it. Unbelievable!

2 Maccabees 7:9—*And when he was at his last breath, he said, “You accursed wretch, you dismiss us from this pre-sent life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for his laws... (Torah).”*

He is talking about the resurrection. If you didn't know better, you would think this came right out of the Gospel of John, chapter four, in the New Testament. That is where we read about Yeshua talking to the Samaritan woman at the well, and telling her, “If you'd asked me, I'll give you a drink, and then you will have received everlasting life.”

This guy knows his brother drank that drink. He also drank it. He confessed his God, and he went to his death in obedience to His Commandments. That is an awesome thing. That is an awesome thought!

2 Maccabees 7:10-11—*After him, the third was the victim of their sport. When it was demanded, he quickly put out his tongue and courageously stretched forth his hands, ¹¹and said nobly, “I got these from Heaven, and because of his laws I disdain them, and from him I hope to get them back again.”*

In other words, what he's saying is, “If what you're telling me is I must break the Commandments of God, then I will disdain my hands. I will disdain my feet, I will disdain my tongue, I will disdain my scalp, and I will disdain all of it so I can hold fast to the Commandments of God. Reading this, you can't help but think about Yeshua's words in Mark 9:43 and the fact the Holy Spirit is all over this story— *If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched....*

It's better to do that than the other because you're going to lose everything, and this guy knows it. This is a guy that speaks from a place of faith; from a place of Holy Spirit. I mean, this is pure, beautiful Holy Spirit power!

2 Maccabees 7:12—*As a result the king himself and those with him were astonished at the young man's spirit, for he regarded his sufferings as nothing.*

You want to talk about a man who doesn't live here on Earth but is living in the Kingdom of God? All he cares about is the resurrection of the dead. He's already there. He doesn't care. He has caused these people to be in awe at his allegiance to God, because the sufferings are as nothing.

When I think about this, I think of Paul's letter to the Philippians, where he actually tells the Philippians in 1:28, *“and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.”* In other words, when we have the kind of radical faith Paul is talking about, the radical faith we see here in 2 Maccabees, it's going to leave an impression on the world. They will be stupefied. None of it will make sense. It is completely illogical how anyone could count these sufferings as nothing.

I also think of Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 4:16-17—**Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.**

In other words, we are going to have a better resurrection. And Paul wasn't just talk. Do you know that? He was not just talk. Paul was killed for the faith, and we have plenty of recordation of this. I'll quickly take you there; then we will get back to our story. Tertullian records this in *Scorpiace 15*—**We read the lives of the Cæsars: At Rome Nero** (Nero, was an Antichrist figure. The first century Messianic Jews believed he was the Antichrist. And yes, he held the spirit of Antichrist. You just look at his fruit.) **was the first who stained with blood the rising faith. Then is Peter girt by another, when he is made fast to the cross.** (In other words, Tertullian is talking about Peter being crucified.) **Then does Paul obtain a birth suited to Roman citizenship, when in Rome he springs to life again ennobled by martyrdom.**

So here Tertullian is talking about Paul. He was a martyr; he died for the faith.

Then we can read in Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica* where he gets more specific in regard to all of this. **Thus publicly announcing himself as the first among God's chief enemies, Nero was led on to the slaughter of the apostles.**

Talk about coming against God. He comes against the ones who we are told will sit on 12 thrones in heaven judging the 12 tribes of Israel. None of them were delivered. We can read in Hebrews 11 there were men who died in peace at a good old age. However, Paul, Peter, and others fall into the latter camp of what the writer of Hebrews brings out. They were slaughtered.

It goes on and says— **It is, therefore, recorded that Paul was beheaded in Rome itself, and that Peter likewise was crucified under Nero.**

Tertullian says this—**How happy is its church, on which apostles poured forth all their doctrine along with their blood! Where Peter endures a passion like his Lord's (and) where Paul wins his crown in a death like John's.**

Oh, I how I agree with that! How appreciative we should be today over the fact that the apostles did pour out their doctrine. They did route out confusion and the attacks of the wolves. They were willing to give their own blood for it. They were awesome shepherds of the faith. If it had not been for their diligence and their work, and especially the work of Paul in his ministry to the Gentiles, what a mess things would have been. There would have been none left, but he was willing to give his life and to build up radical disciples. It is such an awesome thing: Jews dying for Gentiles.

You know, prior to Yeshua coming, that's unheard of. That would never have happened. Without a question, that's one of the most profound aspects that gets overlooked in regard to showing Jesus is the Jewish Messiah. What Jew, in their right mind, was going to go out and shed their own blood to bring the Gospel to a bunch of pagan heathens unless the King of the Jews was living in their heart? This just wouldn't happen.