

## Hebrews, Part 8

The book of Hebrews could be roughly divided into three sections:

1. JESUS IS A BETTER PERSON
  - Better than prophets
  - Better than angels
  - Better than Moses
  - Better than Aaron
2. JESUS HAS A BETTER PRIESTHOOD
  - A better order (Melchizedek vs. Aaron)
  - A better covenant (eternal vs. temporary)
  - A better sanctuary (heavenly vs. earthly)
  - A better sacrifice (once vs. continual)
3. JESUS' KINGDOM OPERATES ON A BETTER PRINCIPLE
  - Faith!

We are about to enter the third and final section of the book, but first the author gives his strongest exhortation yet to these Jewish Christians who were being tempted to go back to the “safety” of the Jewish religion ...

**Hebrews 10:26-31** For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

**The verb tense in v. 26 indicates not just one ACT of sin, but a callous, careless ATTITUDE leading to repeated sinful actions.**

Under OT law there were no sacrifices for deliberate, willful sins ...

**Numbers 15:27** And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering.

**Numbers 15:30-31** But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he

hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him. That is why King David knew that no amount of sacrifices could save him – all he could offer was the sacrifice of a broken heart and ask for mercy!

**Psalms 51:16-17** For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

**We should thank God every day that we live in the New Testament!**

If the penalties under OT law were so severe for sinning presumptuously, how much more severe is the penalty for a “believer” who develops such arrogance against the grace and love of God that they would willfully sin?

The image is severe – trampling Jesus and His blood underfoot!  
The penalty is severe – “judgment and fiery indignation” (v. 27).

Only a small percentage of those saved out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb ever entered into the Promised Land! Nearly all of them died in the wilderness because of their rebellion. God is not obligated to us if we choose not to obey His Word – especially in the New Testament!

Hebrews 10:30 quotes Deuteronomy 32:35 which amplifies the meaning:

**Deuteronomy 32:35** To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

**I am not afraid of the devil, I am not afraid of the world or of people ... but I have a healthy fear of God! (v. 31)**

**Hebrews 10:32-39** But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

If we “draw back” we will be LOST (“perdition” = “eternal damnation”)!

**Galatians 5:7** Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

The Jewish religion is “SEEN” and our relationship with Jesus is “UNSEEN” – but it is still BETTER because faith is a higher principle!

**Hebrews 11:1-3** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

**This is not so much a DEFINITION of faith (what it IS), but a DESCRIPTION of faith (how it WORKS).**

Noah Webster: “Faith is firm belief in something for which there is no proof.”

Warren Wiersbe: “True Bible faith is confident obedience to God’s Word in spite of circumstances and consequences.”

Tim Rutledge: “Faith is the willingness to look foolish!”

**F.A.I.T.H. = “Forsaking All I Trust Him”**

Faith is the SUBSTANCE (“support”) of things hoped for.  
Faith is the EVIDENCE (“proof”) of things not seen.

v.3 – creation teaches us that everything that can be seen was made from things that can’t be seen – and God’s kingdom still works that way!

**THE REST OF CHAPTER 11 IS THE DEMONSTRATION OF FAITH:**

**ABEL – FAITH WORSHIPPING**

**Hebrews 11:4** By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

**ENOCH – FAITH WALKING**

**Hebrews 11:5** By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

**Hebrews 11:6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

**We must believe that God EXISTS (answer to atheism)**

**We must believe that God REWARDS (answer to agnosticism)  
NOAH – FAITH WORKING**

**Hebrews 11:7** By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

**ABRAHAM & THE PATRIARCHS – FAITH WAITING**

**Hebrews 11:8-22** By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

**MOSES & JOSHUA – FAITH WARRING**

**Hebrews 11:23-31** By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

**The rest of chapter 11 lists some lesser-known heroes of the faith:**

**Hebrews 11:32-35a** And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again:

**Today, we enjoy what all these faithful people could only anticipate!**

### **THE TRANSITION IN VERSE 35 IS VERY IMPORTANT!**

- Not all men and women of faith experienced miraculous deliverance.
- These “others” had faith but God chose to deal differently with them.
- It takes more faith to ENDURE than it does to ESCAPE.

**Hebrews 11:35b-38** ... and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

**Daniel 3:16-18** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

It was when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were willing to enter the fire – without any assurance of deliverance – that the miracle happened! The men who threw them into the furnace were slain – but the fire didn't touch them! **In Heaven**, God said, "Those are brave boys; I think I'll go down and stand by their side." **On earth**, Nebuchadnezzar said, "I see four men ... and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." And they came out of the fire without their bonds! The only thing they lost when they stood up for God was their bonds! **There is freedom even in the furnace when God is there with you!** They were loosed in the flames!

**God did not save them FROM the fire – He saved them IN the fire!**

**Hebrews 11:39-40** And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.