

## A STUDY OF HEBREWS

### *By Faith (Part 2) - Chapter 11:17-40*

#### I. Review of Chapters 1-11

##### A. Jesus Christ is the greatest and final Prophet and enthroned Son of God.

1. Therefore we must pay closest attention to His Gospel... (1:1-2:18)

##### B. Jesus Christ is infinitely greater than Moses and gives eternal, not just temporal, rest.

1. Therefore we must persevere in faith lest we fall like those in the wilderness... (3:1-4:13)

##### C. Jesus Christ is superior to Aaron and is our Great High Priest who sympathizes with us perfectly.

1. Therefore we who have profound needs must fly to God's throne of grace... (4:14-5:10)

##### D. [A short detour due to the dullness of hearers (5:11-6-20)]

1. Warning against apostasy (6:1-12)
2. Assurance of God's promise (6:13-20)

##### E. The mysterious Melchizedek, the OT priest-king, is a foreshadow, or 'type', of the coming Christ.

1. Therefore flee to the eternal, oath-sealed, Melchizedekian sinless human sacrifice for sin (7:1-28)

##### F. Jesus Christ's heavenly priestly ministry mediates a more glorious new covenant (8:1-13).

##### G. A clear conscience, access to God, and true forgiveness comes only through Christ's blood (9:9-28)

##### H. Christ's sacrifice once-for-all has secured the eternal new covenant; nor more sacrifices needed (10:1-18)

1. Therefore let us draw near to Christ with assurance, hold onto our confession, and meet together (10:19-39)

##### I. If you really want to honor your Jewish heritage, emulate the faith of your forefathers (11:1-16)

*"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."* (Heb 11:1)

*"In Old Testament times, [the author] points out, there were many men and women who had nothing but the promises of God to rest upon, without any visible evidence that these promises would ever be fulfilled... The promises related to a state of affairs belonging to the future; but these people acted as if that state of affairs were already present, so convinced were they that God could and would fulfill what he had promised." - F.F. Bruce*

#### II. Text: Hebrews 11:17-28 – The Hall of Faith (continued)

*By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son,<sup>18</sup> of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."<sup>19</sup> He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.<sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.<sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff.<sup>22</sup> By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.*

*<sup>23</sup> By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.<sup>24</sup> By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,<sup>25</sup> choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.<sup>26</sup> He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.<sup>27</sup> By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.<sup>28</sup> By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them.*

1. Why is Isaac called Abraham's "only son" in v. 17, since Abe also had Ishmael and other children (Gen 25:1-2)? What do you make of Abe's words in Gen 22:5? How does the author of Hebrews interpret Gen 22:5?

*"He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.'" (Gen 22:2)*

*"Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you.'" (Gen 22:5)*

2. How do we sometimes experience a similar conflict between God's promise(s) and our circumstances ordered by God? How is this conflict resolved?

*"He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" (Rom 8:32)*

3. How did Abraham (with Ishmael and Isaac), Isaac (with Jacob and Esau), and Jacob (with Ephraim and Manasseh) live by faith when they blessed each of those pairs of boys?

*"For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, <sup>7</sup> and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." <sup>8</sup> This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring." (Rom 9:6-8)*

4. Was wrong for Moses to enjoy "all the wisdom of the Egyptians" and be "mighty in his words and deeds" for a time? In other words, it is wrong for Christians to be "well thought of by outsiders" (1 Tim 3:7)? What made Moses forsake his status in Pharaoh's household? When does that point come for us? For you?

*The church must say "No" to the world; the church must refuse to be at peace with the world in order to love the world... You can't say, "I love you truly," until you have been willing to say, "I will not tell you that what will destroy you is good for you." So you are not loving a person when you say, "Oh yes, I love you and you just go right on in that behavior which will land you in hell," anymore that you could tell a friend who is an alcoholic, "I love you so much that I am going to buy booze for you." That is not loving. So the church must say "no" to the world in order that it can say, "yes" to the world. There must be that divine enmity in order that we can preach the Gospel of peace. – Ligon Duncan*

*"Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God..." (2 Tim 1:8)*

## II. Text: Hebrews 11:29-40 – The Hall of Faith (continued)

<sup>29</sup> By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. <sup>30</sup> By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. <sup>31</sup> By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

<sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets-- <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. <sup>35</sup> Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. <sup>36</sup> Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup> They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated-- <sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy--wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

<sup>39</sup> And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, <sup>40</sup> since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. (Heb 11:17-16)

1. What transition takes place in v. 35? What binds the two sections (vv. 32-35a and vv. 35b-38) together?
2. What is the glorious privilege the author ascribes to his NT readers in v. 40? What is his application to them?

*"If those on whom the great light of grace had not yet shone showed such surpassing constancy in bearing their ills, what effect ought the full glory of the gospel have on us?...A tiny spark of light led them to heaven, but now that the Sun of righteousness shines on us what excuse shall we offer if we still cling to the earth?" (Calvin)*