

# Jesus Christ - The Author and Finisher of Our Faith in the Book of Hebrews (Part 3 - Chapters 11-13)

## Meeting 3

I hope everyone realizes how important this wonderful faith is. There is no way to describe what this faith itself is because it is a very part of the mighty and powerful nature of God. I want to impress you with this. Faith is not just our believing; otherwise, it would be very simple to describe. It is written, *"You believe there is one God...Even the demons [devils] believe..."* (Jam. 2:19) – Satan also believes in God, but that kind of "believing" does not change anything. The only definition of faith is written in Hebrews 11:1: *"Faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* You cannot just hope for things, you need to substantiate them. If you hope, then you need to know what your hope is, and you need to have a goal. If you want to be a software engineer and hope to graduate, you have to substantiate that hope by working hard and going to school. Otherwise, you will not attain the goal. The word of God has given us so many promises. One of God's greatest promises is that we will inherit the whole earth at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ps. 2:8; Matt. 5:5). We will inherit the kingdom and be co-kings with Christ and reign with Him (Rev. 5:10; 20:6). But you won't get it if you just sit and wait for it. God's promise must be substantiated through the faith that is in you. This is the precious faith we have all received. This is a special definition of how we can experience this faith.

I praise God that we can have *"the evidence of things not seen."* For example, the Lord has not returned yet, but we must know and already have the evidence of His coming and what will happen when He comes. Today, if we have the faith and the eyes to see what is happening, we will see the evidence of His coming in many situations and know the

signs of the times according to God’s word. So many things are written in the Bible that give us evidence that our Lord is coming in our time. Let us learn; let us experience this wonderful reality! The German word for “substantiation” is “Verwirklichung,” which means that our faith must be real. We must have the reality, otherwise we would be the most miserable people today because we are hoping for things that will not happen. But we are a people who have a wonderful God. The whole creation is evidence that God exists. He has created so many wonderful things for us, and we appreciate it.

### Abel, Enoch, and Noah

The period from Abel to Noah is described in just a few chapters in the Bible. The first example mentioned in the history of faith is Abel who offered to God a **more excellent sacrifice** (Heb. 11:4; Gen. 4:4). If you know God wants a sacrifice but you do not bring Him anything, it will not please God, and it will not save you. But Abel knew what God wanted and brought it to Him. God accepted it and was well-pleased with his offering. Don’t just bring God anything like a worm or a chicken. Bring to God what He wants to have – the best of your experience of Christ. Learn this. It is the first mention concerning the matter of faith.

Enoch walked with God (Gen. 5:22-24). Never forget that! It is just one sentence. He was raptured because he walked with God. What caused him to walk with God? He knew the judgment was coming, and He had a godly fear. Enoch didn’t wait for the last 30 years before the judgment to walk with God. He started right away as soon as he knew. In order to remind him of the coming judgment, he called his son, Methuselah. You need a reminder! Otherwise, you will forget and be distracted by so many things. What is a better way than naming your son: “it will come when he dies”? It was the Lord’s mercy that Enoch did not know when Methuselah would die or that Methuselah would live 969 years! Seeing Methuselah every day was a reminder to him. We all need a reminder: “Lord, remind me of Your coming.” His coming will be a day of judgment for the whole world, and a reward for all of us. By faith, Enoch believed what God told him. It was not in a myth that he believed; but it was God who told him what would happen – that is why he learned to walk with

God. It is not easy to walk with God for 300 years! Try to walk with God daily for one week. See if you can perfect walking with God one week. Many can testify that they have been Christians for many years. I am 80; but I have not yet perfected walking with God. My walk with God is better than it was 30 years ago, better than 50 years ago, but it still needs to be perfected! I always must be reminded in God's word concerning the Lord's coming, that there is a judgment, and that I might miss the reward if I'm not careful. How about you? Are you training yourself to walk with God? Although so little was written about Enoch in Genesis, it actually was a lot! Enoch walked with God which means that everything he did, he did with God and in fellowship with God. The apostle Paul did not walk with God as many years as Enoch did, but he trained himself to do everything through Christ: *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"* (Phil. 4:13). Is it possible for you to do that without practicing every day? Certainly not. It is so necessary to walk with God! *"By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, 'and was not found, because God had taken him'; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please God"* (Heb. 11:5-6a).

Noah's story is a little longer than that of Enoch because Noah had more to do – he built the ark. Building work takes longer to describe. Judgment day was approaching during Noah's time. You can see that God's work is always progressing. The faith in God must also grow. To build a house is not easy, imagine having to build the ark! God gave Noah the design with instructions on how to build it. If I were Noah, I would have asked God: "We are only 8 people, why do we need to build such a big ark? Why is there only one window?" There are so many questions we could ask. But Noah believed; and he did it because he feared God. Building the ark was for his salvation from the judgment. By building the ark, he condemned the world and became heir of the new world. This is a picture of the Lord's coming bringing in the kingdom of righteousness and peace. Do you have any hope in this world? Especially in the last 3.5 years of this age, you will have no hope because there will not be anything to hope for. But for us, we have a glorious hope for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ! Do you believe that? Yes! If you want to inherit the coming world full of righteousness and peace, you must begin working on it now – don't wait until later.

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## Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph

The next section of history spans the rest of Genesis, beginning with Abraham, then Isaac, Jacob, and his twelve children. The experience and description of Abraham is much more complicated because God is now building a nation! Noah's story was relatively simple because he built an ark to save just eight people and the animals. A family of 1 million people is more complicated. Now with Abraham, more of God's purpose is revealed. *"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going"* (Heb. 11:8). What an amazing calling! Abraham believed in God and that God would bring him to the place that God promised him – to Canaan, the promised land – although he didn't know where it was. Would you get on a plane without knowing where it will take you? *"By faith Abraham obeyed..."* (Heb. 11:8a). Faith also means to obey. You cannot say, "I believe God's word," but don't obey it. The God of glory appeared to Abraham and spoke to him when he was still in Mesopotamia, in Ur of Chaldea. So, Abraham came out of that land and dwelt in Haran (Acts 7:2-3; Gen. 11:31). You better believe God's speaking because God will never lie to you! And when God speaks, obey Him! Then God appeared to him a second time in Haran (Gen. 12:1). Although we cannot not see God, He is a very real, living God who appears and speaks to us. What a wonderful God!

*"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was **called by God to go out.**"* Don't just go out without being called by God. Many people have done a lot of things for God without being called. But God is a God who calls: He called each one of us. It is not easy to go out of your own country, your own background, tradition, and family. As the people of Israel came out of Egypt in Exodus, we must come out of the terrible situation today. If you want to follow God, you will be often called to "go out" like Abraham. Abraham went out of his own place, to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out not knowing where he was going, because he trusted in God's leading. Abraham did not have a GPS, but he had the most wonderful guide, the living God. What about having the living God as your guide for your future? When you

are a teenager, your parents are there to guide you; but we have a higher, more glorious guide – the living God! When I look back, I can testify that in every section of my life, I can see God’s guidance. I do trust that He will guide me all the way to the goal! Many times, we think things happened by chance; but actually, it was by His divine guidance. God is a sovereign God. He is the best guide. You will never go wrong if you follow Him by faith. But this faith is based upon God’s speaking. Learn this: if God doesn’t speak, don’t move!

***“By faith, he dwelt in the land of promise, as in a foreign country”***

(Heb. 11:9a). It is natural for us to think that if God promised Abraham the land, then it should be Abraham’s country. But Abraham dwelt in it *“as in a foreign country, **dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob**”* (Heb. 11:9b). The writer of Hebrews was inspired by God. When we read this sentence our natural concept is that since it was a long time ago, of course, all people dwelt in tents. But no, there is a very special meaning to the fact that Abraham dwelt in tents. If you are in your country, you will build something solid. When the Israelites built the tabernacle in the wilderness, it was not solid but a tent because they kept on moving. Why did Abraham dwell in tents all those years with Isaac and Jacob? Do you think he did not know how to build a house? Remember God is an architect. He taught Noah how to build an ark. He could have taught Abraham how to build a big house. He showed David the pattern to build His house. But Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelt in tents. When you go camping, you stay in tents because it is just for a few days. Today, God’s people may have houses; but when it comes to the Feast of Tabernacles, they have to dwell in booths as if they were dwelling in the wilderness coming out of Egypt. What should we be doing today in keeping the Feast of Tabernacles? I’m not encouraging you to live in tents. Today, although you may have a house, spiritually, if you have faith in God, then you must live as if you were living in a tent. But most of us don’t feel like doing that because we are so used to having a comfortable life on this earth. Although Canaan was the land that was promised to Abraham, to him it was only temporary because he saw something else. He realized that God was building something better, something more, something heavenly and eternal – the city of God, a city with foundations. He should have thought, “Canaan is my inheritance,” but he realized something more! Why? *“For he waited for*

*the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10). You must have faith for that! As early as the time of Abraham, he was already waiting for that city!*

What about us – where are we today? Hebrews does not say: You have arrived at your inheritance in Canaan or in Fountain Valley; go shop for a house. No, we have not arrived at our inheritance. We are looking for something better. Everything we are enjoying in our daily lives is temporary. Don't be rooted and grounded in temporary things. You may have so many things, and your heart is caught in them. The Lord warned us once: *“Remember Lot's wife”* (Luke 17:32). All of these things will be destroyed (2 Pet. 3:10-12). When judgment comes, there will be nothing to hold on to – including your job, your house and whatever you have. Your heart should be looking for what is coming, and you need faith for that! But this faith must begin now, so that your heart will not be captured by all these things. It is very practical. It does not mean that you shouldn't have any things. Yes, you may enjoy things, but in your heart you must realize that they are only temporary. You should live like Abraham, in principle, dwelling in tents. We are looking for that coming city, which we are building now. This is what Hebrews 12:22 says, *“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God.”* This is the city which Abraham was looking forward to about 4,000 years ago. Today we are so near, but we are not looking for it! But Abraham did, *“For he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God”* (Heb. 11:10). This is why Hebrews says that the Lord Jesus is the Minister of the heavenly tabernacle, not made with hands, not made by man, and not of this creation (Heb. 8:2; 9:11). We are building something very special! Now you can understand why Paul wrote later in Hebrews 13:14, *“For here we have no continuing city.”*

*“By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised”* (Heb. 11:11). Abraham believed in a God who calls things not being into being (Rom. 4:17). That is why God waited until it was humanly impossible for Abraham and Sarah to do anything. Then God came in and called things not being into being. Isaac was born. He was born of the Spirit, through the power of God. Praise the Lord for Sarah!

*“Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude – innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore”* (Heb. 11:12). Can you imagine that? It was all by faith. They had the substantiation of it; and history proves it. There is so much evidence. When she first heard it, Sarah was even laughing, not at God’s word, but at herself: “Me? It’s impossible!” But what is impossible with man is possible with God (Matt. 19:26)! Praise the Lord! God only does what you cannot do. If you can do it yourself, God will say, “Okay, you do it.” It is good to realize that there are so many things that we cannot do, but we must believe in this wonderful God!

*“These all died in faith, not having received the promises...”* (Heb. 11:13a). Abraham saw Isaac, but he did not see the nation of Israel. They did not yet see the ultimate promises. *“...but having seen them afar off were assured of them”* (Heb. 11:13b). You need to see not only what is before your eyes, but to see what is a far off! What do you see in your daily life? How far can a man see with his physical eyes? Not too far! The Scripture shows us as far as the new heaven and the new earth, the glorious city having the glory of God (Rev. 21:1, 10-11). It is finished! It is wonderful and eternal. How far do you see? Ask God to show you! 2,000 years ago, the saints believed that the Lord was going to come. Now it is 2,000 years later. It is hard to say when He will come, but it is around the corner. The Lord said, *“Behold, I am coming quickly”* (Rev. 22:7, 12, 20). That *quickly* is for us today! *“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland”* (Heb. 11:13-14). They were strangers and pilgrims because they were looking for that wonderful city. Everything today is temporary. They are telling us something and are waiting for us!

Another aspect of Abraham’s faith is that his faith was tested. If Abraham passed this test, God was assured that Abraham believed that there would be a homeland for him. *“By faith Abraham, **when he was tested...**”* (Heb. 11:17a) – do you like the word “tested”? Peter also said

that our faith would be tested through various trials to make it even more precious than silver and gold (1 Pet. 1:6-7)

We have gone through many tests in our lifetime. There have been many situations where our faith was tested. *“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your seed should be called’”* (Heb. 11:17-18). Though it was not written in Genesis, the writer of Hebrews received the wonderful revelation of the true meaning of why the Lord tested Abraham! Testing is necessary because sometimes you think you believe, but when trouble comes and you are tested, you start to doubt and ask, “Is it true? Am I right? Is this what God really wanted me to do? If this is really so, why are there so many problems and obstacles in the way?” This was an amazing test: to offer up Isaac. Would you do such a thing? I have no confidence in myself that I would do it. Abraham was really ready to offer up Isaac without any questioning! That shows that Abraham’s faith had grown and matured to such an extent. Paul wrote that Abraham believed that God was able to raise the dead (referring to Isaac) because God promised Abraham that through Isaac, a multitude of people, a nation, would be brought forth (Rom. 4:17-18). If that was God’s promise, and He now tells me to offer up Isaac on the altar to God, that wouldn’t make sense to me. At least I would ask God, “Why? Please explain it to me because I am a reasonable person.” Abraham never doubted once. He rose up early in the morning and took Isaac, bound him, and was ready to offer him up. This is truly a wonderful test. If you can pass such a test, you could probably pass any test.

That Abraham’s faith had grown to such an extent shows us that our faith should continue to grow. How do we grow? By knowing God and trusting in Him. If God had not appeared to Abraham again and again, and Abraham had not experienced God in so many different situations, then Abraham would not have been able to react when God told him to offer Isaac to him. It would have been impossible. But because he had experiences with God, God appeared and spoke to him, and promised and fulfilled His promises, he had so much evidence that God was real and faithful. God kept His word from the very beginning when God called him to go out of his homeland until the day when God told him to offer up Isaac. What a wonderful growth in faith! This growth did not



happen overnight. That would be impossible. That is why we need to experience faith in our wonderful, living God in so many different ways in our daily living. If not, when the time comes, then we will not be able to pass the test.

*“...concluding that God would raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense”* (Heb. 11:19). What faith Abraham had! God stopped Abraham from killing Isaac because God had already prepared a sacrifice. God did not tell Abraham that He would raise Isaac up from the dead. That was Abraham’s conclusion because he believed in God: God is a reasonable God, so if He takes Isaac from me, He will bring him back – there is no other way! What a wonderful knowledge of God! **Faith is based upon how much you know God, how much you trust Him, and how much you have experienced Him.** So even when terrible situations come, you can rest assured that God has taken care of it. He must have planned something better. Abraham knew God to such an extent. He had never seen anyone raised from the dead. From where did he get that thought? From His wonderful knowledge of God – he knew God in such a way. Remember this: your knowledge of God is related to faith in God. Your faith cannot grow if you do not experience and know God in such a way. You trust a person, only if you know him. If you don’t know a person well, you cannot trust him. You trust whatever your earthly father tells you because you know him so well. If you know your God that well, you will trust Him in everything!

*“By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come”* (Heb. 11:20). If you read Genesis 27, you would say, “Isaac, you were cheated. You were blinded. Jacob fooled you!” Obviously, there is a different way to read the Bible because the writer of Hebrews said, *“By faith Isaac blessed Jacob...”* Isaac was not a doubter. We are all so clever. A clever man cannot have faith in God. If Isaac were a clever man, he would have asked more questions, “Who are you?” Don’t be that clever with God. Isaac believed in God. He didn’t ask too many questions. When Jacob came with that trick, he did not doubt. He did not say, “Maybe he’s not Esau.” But he had faith in God and blessed Jacob with all the blessings of the firstborn son because that was God’s will.

Many times, if you walk by faith, don't be afraid that you might make a mistake. If we are one with God and are walking with Him, there are things we do not know because it is not possible for us to know everything. But we walk by faith and not by sight. Don't analyze too much because you know that God has been leading you all this time. And if it is not God's will, God will tell you. We have gone through so many experiences in the past. Don't think, "Oh, this was wrong. It could have ended up better if I had decided this or done that." No, God will bless you because you belong to Him. God is very sovereign. We make mistakes, but not God. We have to trust God. Throughout history, we have gone through so many situations. Did we make mistakes? No, it is God's way to lead us on. I don't want to look back. But when I do, every time I see that what I thought was a mistake was not. This is really true.

*"By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff"* (Heb. 11:21). Joseph especially is mentioned because he was very special among the twelve. When Joseph brought his two sons to Jacob, Jacob knew that the older son was at his right side and the younger on left. So Jacob crossed his hands when he gave the blessing. Jacob was blind yet not blind. He was very spiritually active because he knew God even better than his father Isaac. Jacob had so many past experiences that he really knew God. Jacob knew that he himself had not been the firstborn, but he got the blessing. He knew what he was doing when he blessed Joseph's sons. It was really amazing. Praise the Lord! He blessed each one of them, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff because he was already passing away.

*"By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones"* (Heb. 11:22). This is another very special situation. The writer of Hebrews really had foresight and spiritual insight. Joseph said, *"God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here"* (Gen. 50:25). We would conclude that Joseph just didn't want to be buried in Egypt but don't see anything beyond that. But the writer of Hebrews saw that by faith Joseph was prophesying that they would leave Egypt and go back to the good land! This is amazing!

## Moses and His Parents

The next milestone in the history of the twelve tribes of Israel begins with Moses. *“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king’s command”* (Heb. 11:23). Are you afraid of the king’s mandate? His parents were not afraid of the king’s mandate because they believed in God and stood on God’s side. We have to see this. If they had been afraid of the king’s command, Moses would have been killed as a child. But praise the Lord, they believed in God by faith.

*“By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter”* (Heb. 11:24). To be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter means you could have anything you like: all the pleasures and riches, even power and authority. You would lack nothing and have the best of everything in Egypt. If I didn’t know God, that would be the best position to be in. But Moses did not just know God, he realized that this living God is much better than anything else. He is God; He created everything. So Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, *“choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin”* (Heb. 11:25).

How did Moses know so much about this wonderful God? Recall Miriam took care of her little brother. She didn’t just take care of him by feeding him; she shared with him concerning God’s promise, God’s word, and the God of the Hebrews. What you learn as a child is much better than what you learn when you are 20 or 40 years old. So teach your children. When Paul wrote Timothy, he did not say “From childhood you have learned to play, learned about computers...” No, he wrote, *“that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures...”* (2 Tim. 3:15). That is not to say it’s the only thing you should learn. You should learn things to be a proper human being. But learn to know God – this will influence your whole life in the right direction. This is very important. Our young people are very precious.

*“...esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the [heavenly] reward”* (Heb. 11:26). You are going to rule and possess the whole earth, the whole universe. Isn't that great? So he forsook Egypt – just like Abraham, who forsook Ur of Chaldea, the cultural center of those days, the fatherland and his father's house, his family, and went to a place he didn't know. Moses looked to the reward. This is wonderful. You need to look further than what is before your eyes.

*“By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible”* (Heb. 11:27). Many because of lack of courage forsook their faith. But on the other hand, many because of their faith were martyrs, willing to lay down their life, willing to be thrown into the lion's den like Daniel, or in the fiery furnace like his three friends: Meschach, Shadrach, and Abednego – remember their faith not just their names! They knew God so well and were not afraid of Nebuchadnezzar's command.

*“By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them”* (Heb. 11:28). He did this because God told him to do it. Whatever God tells you to do must be very important and meaningful. If God tells you to slay a lamb, eat it and put its blood on your doorpost to save you from the Angel of death – would you do it? If someone else were to tell me to do that I wouldn't do it and would think it was superstitious. But if God says that it will work, then I will do it. This was so meaningful because that lamb was Christ, who is our Passover lamb; His precious blood was shed for the remission of our sins, to save us from the judgment of Egypt. You'd better believe that because it really happened! It takes faith to do that, just like it took faith to offer up Isaac.

The Children of Israel Led Out of Egypt by Moses, the Walls of Jericho,  
and Rahab

*“By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned”* (Heb. 11:29). That was an amazing experience. So when someone is baptized, help that person

to have faith to see what happens in baptism and what is the true meaning of baptism. They must see the word and believe and mingle it with faith and then do it! Otherwise, your baptism means nothing. The Egyptians tried to do the same thing. God did not tell them to do it. But they tried and were drowned.

*“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days”* (Heb. 11:30). Imagine you were there and had to walk around the wall (which was not a small wall) once a day. On the first day nothing happens. On the second day, not one stone falls down. On the third and fourth day, still nothing happens – would you continue? On the seventh day when still nothing happens after the first time encircling the wall, wouldn't you think somebody was pulling your leg? After the 5th time on the seventh day somebody might whisper “It's not going to happen.” That whisper might cause everybody to quit! This was a test of faith for the children of Israel! “God, You are so powerful, why do You need us to go around the wall 1 time for 6 days, and even 7 times on the last day?” But they did it by faith because they had experienced what God had spoken to them in so many things since the days of the exodus from Egypt. They saw the opening of the Red Sea. Their faith did not come from nothing. The more you know God, the more you will have faith in the living God.

*“By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace”* (Heb. 11:31). Even a sinful woman like Rahab believed and acted because she heard the reports that the God of the Hebrews had done so many things (Josh. 2:9-12). She didn't even see it herself, but she believed it and was saved. Isn't that amazing? She was not only saved, but also became part of the genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is too wonderful! Faith really does wonders! She showed her faith by receiving the spies – so it is true that faith without works is dead.

### The Time of the Judges, Kings, and Prophets

*“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*” (Heb. 11:32). Now we come to another category – after they enter the good land, the time of the judges and kings and prophets. They all experienced Christ, experienced the living God and this wonderful, living faith. Everything is by faith, and faith comes from Him because God said so. God spoke to them. Which of those judges didn’t know God and did not experience God? They all experienced God in such a wonderful way. There are so many amazing stories. Read about all of these wonderful people to whom God revealed Himself. All of them experienced faith in the living God. He was with them and did many wonderful works. No wonder these people had such faith in the living God.

*“who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked 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, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens”* (Heb. 11:33-34). Wonderful! Today, we have a battle to fight also. Don’t give up! Don’t be afraid! It’s a once in a lifetime experience for us to rule, to fight with this wonderful God against the enemy, to subdue the enemy, not with guns but with faith in the living God, by standing with God. It is a spiritual warfare! Don’t think you have nothing to do with it. People say, “I don’t want to touch politics.” You may not want to touch politics, but it is touching you! You think it has nothing to do with you. Of course, it has something to do with you: you could lose your job; it could even affect your family and spoil your children. Are you going to give up or give in? We fight, but not according to the flesh. If we engage in spiritual warfare, we have to care about what is going on today. You cannot just let things go on as they are, and think it has nothing to do with you. No, you will inherit this earth; this is your property! How would you feel if I went on to your property and spoiled everything and cast you out? You wouldn’t let me do that. We all need to live by faith in the living God because our God is the ruler of the kings of the earth, and we are one with Him. Do you have faith in that or not? It is written that men of faith *“out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again”* (Heb. 11:34b-35a). These are all different, wonderful categories of faith that we need to experience.

## The Martyrs

Finally, we come to the category of the martyrs at the very end. *"...Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection"* (Heb. 11:35b). Are you willing to be tortured for Christ's sake? The Lord didn't just say, "Blessed are the persecuted," but He said, *"Blessed are those who are persecuted **for righteousness' sake**"* and for *"**My sake**"* (Matt. 5:10-11). They wanted to obtain a better resurrection. This is really wonderful. It is as Paul said, *"that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to **the [best] resurrection from the dead**"* (Phil. 3:10-11). The best resurrection is the resurrection with a reward! Everyone will be resurrected, but the question is what will you receive after you are resurrected – a reward or a punishment? Will you lose your reward and suffer loss? Paul wanted the best resurrection – to inherit the kingdom!

Through faith they were tortured and went through sufferings. You can only go through sufferings by faith. They were rejected and cast away. Are you willing to do that or to be called a rebellious one? It is part of the history of faith. You cannot say, "I opt out of this category." *"They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented"* (Heb. 11:37). Today we may not be going through exactly what they went through, but there are other ways of suffering. The writer of Hebrews wrote concerning them: *"of whom the world was not worthy"* (Heb. 11:38a). None of the people in the world are worthy of any of them. But they were loved, respected and accepted by God. God was well pleased with them. *"They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth"* (Heb. 11:38b). Read the references in the outline about these people who sacrificed their life. Today we are not willing to sacrifice anything. If a little hardship or trial comes along, we are ready to give up. If a small matter is mentioned, we are offended and explode like a volcano. We shouldn't

be like that. We should walk by faith in the living God and learn to gain Christ.

*“And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise”* (Heb. 11:39), which is the coming kingdom when we will be ruling over this whole universe. This is the promise they have not obtained yet. They are waiting for us! Do you realize all of these people are waiting for you? Even the whole creation is waiting for you and is groaning (Rom. 8:19-22).

*“God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us”* (Heb 11:40). It is really better today because now we know this wonderful Christ is living in us. We are born again and are real sons of God, one with Him. The Holy Spirit is filling us day by day and transforming us. We are experiencing heavenly things. So, they are waiting for us with patience. They are like our cheering squad. If you miss it, they will say “ooh”, and if you make it, they will say “Hallelujah, praise the Lord!” They are cheering for us to go on. Praise the Lord! We have such a great cloud of witnesses. It’s a full house; the whole arena is full watching. Praise the Lord!

We must realize how important faith is. We walk by faith every step all the way to the goal. As we walk this way of faith, our faith will grow by our knowledge and experience of God. You will be surprised how real God becomes in your life. The only way is by this wonderful faith – the faith of God.

*Note: The above content has not been reviewed by the speaker.*