

Sunday May 12th 2019
The Word of God
A Survey of the Bible – Lesson 16G
'Let Us Go On'

1). Heb 10:26 *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

We had seen last time that the willful sin is the sin of apostasy. A sin that can only be committed by the eternally saved and then only by those who have come into a mature understanding of the coming Kingdom of Christ and the 'so great salvation' that accompanies it.

a). It is the sin of despising, and therefore rejecting, the coming Day of Christ's glory. The Day that God has sanctified and blessed from the beginning of His revelation to us – Gen 2:2 *And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*

Heb 1:1 *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; [lit. ages]*

From beginning God, through His Son, has set in place the 'ages' – periods of time in relation to His rulership of the universe – and these ages have been Divinely ordered and structured by and for God in the person of Son.

b). And within the organization of these ages God has focused His revelation to us upon one province in the universe, the world in which we live, and the rulership of this province with respect to the present age and the age which is to come.

c). The present ruler, Satan, has been disqualified through rebellion, but still holds the scepter of rulership awaiting the Day of his overthrow. The Day when this will be fulfilled is the 7th Day, the Sabbath Rest of God, the age to come, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ.

d). And this 'age to come' is one of the ages that has been Divinely set in place through the Son with a view to His rulership in that Day.

e). And it is this same Day, as we have seen, that God has sanctified and blessed – it is the 'Age of the ages' – the very pinnacle of God's Divine purpose with respect to the earth. Because in that Day Christ and His co-heirs [His Wife] will from the Heavens along with Israel as the Wife of Jehovah on the earth, accomplish the restoration of all things through ruling the nations with a rod of iron – Rev 2:26 *And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—27 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'—as I also have received from My Father;*

Not only will the material creation be fully restored during this time, but more significantly sin will also be completely and irrevocably dealt with, restoring the earth to complete harmony with the rest of God's universe –

1 Cor 15:24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

And beyond this point, when Christ's Kingdom is delivered to the Father, there will be new heavens and a new earth, upon which God will reside with His people – Rev 22:3 *And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. 5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.*

And from the throne of God and of the Lamb the universe will be ruled, with God's creation, Man, now completely apart from sin, having a role in this rulership.

f). But all of this must first be preceded by the fulfillment of the 7th Day. And because of God's Divine design, the Christ cannot rule in that Day apart from having a Wife – Gen 1:27 *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

Gen 2:18 *And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*

And in order for Christ's Wife [His helper] to be comparable to Him She must be in God's image and likeness as in the beginning which, because of the introduction of sin, requires complete redemption, redemption of all 3 parts of our being – spirit, soul and body.

g). The fulfillment of God's purpose for His Son and the earth provides the context in which Christ's Kingdom and the salvation of the soul that accompanies it are being offered to us, as the Holy Spirit searches for a Bride for the Son among the eternally saved in the antitype of Genesis Chapter 24.

h). And all of this is to demonstrate why God takes the coming 7th Day so seriously, and why He does not provide a sacrifice for the sin of turning our back on and walking away from this Day having come into a mature knowledge of it.

i). We will understand, I think, why the person who would commit this willful sin of apostasy can expect nothing other than the vengeance of God; why it will be 'a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God'.

2). Now, we had also seen last time how the 5th and final warning in the Book of Hebrews drew from the type of Esau who despised his birthright. A warning for us that provides the apex to the previous warnings and speaks plainly to why God takes so seriously all that we have been looking at.

a). However, this 5th warning really needs to be placed within its proper context to appreciate it fully, which will take us back to the Chapter from Hebrews that precedes it. So, that's what we will do.

Heb 10:35 *Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. 11:1 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.*

As we have seen many times in the past, the chapter breaks in scripture are not always helpful for us, and this would be true as we move from Hebrews Chapter 10 into Chapter 11.

b). At the close of Chapter 10 we are admonished not to cast away our confidence, seen in the confession of our hope without wavering from earlier, as this has 'great reward' – the reward of the inheritance, the so great salvation.

c). And we need to have patient endurance as we wait to receive this inheritance knowing that He who promised is faithful. Understanding that, 'For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry'. And during our time of patient endurance until He comes, we are to 'live by faith' and not draw back from it.

d). And the idea contained in the phrase 'if anyone draws back' is to shrink away from through fear or timidity with respect to others. In Peter we are told – 1 Pet 3:14 *But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; 16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.*

In v15 we are told that we must 'always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you'. And this we are to do 'with meekness and fear' – Meekness in not exalting ourselves and the fear of the Lord. But we can, and should speak with boldness and rejoicing.

e). But to do this is likely to bring an adverse response from those we share it with, which is why v15 is sandwiched between v14 and 16, both of which offer us encouragement with regards to the persecution we are likely to face by doing what v15 says.

f). To draw back from presenting the reason for the hope that is in us because we are fearful of what people will think of us or say about us is really what Hebrews 10:38 is all about. And in the person doing this God has no pleasure.

g). And interestingly, we see this in Revelation Chapter 21 in relation to the Millennial Kingdom – Rev 21:7 *He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 But the **cowardly**, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

Then Hebrews Chapter 10 ends with the declaration that ‘we are not of those who draw back’, of those who are cowardly, but ‘of those who believe to the saving of the soul’.

3). Now, as we move into Chapter 11 let’s keep three things in mind. Firstly, the word ‘believe’, ‘those who believe to the saving of the soul’, is the same word in the Greek language as faith – they are just different parts of speech. ‘Faith’ is the noun and ‘believe’ is the verb. So, to believe to the saving of the soul is to have faith to the saving of the soul.

a). And secondly, faith is simply believing that which God has said and then acting upon it. It is impossible to have faith apart from that which God has placed in His Word as it is only the Word of God which is believed that produces faith.

b). And this might also cause us to consider that we cannot believe what the Word of God says if we don’t know what it says. Faith requires knowledge of the Word of God, and knowledge of that contained in the Spirit of the Word not the letter. That’s why – Rom 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

And thirdly, faith is never seen apart from the object of that faith. Faith is always specific. With regards to our eternal salvation we ‘believe [have faith] on the Lord Jesus Christ’. Eternal salvation, the salvation of the spirit, is the object of this faith.

c). In the same way the Book of Hebrews is a book about the salvation of the soul, and this is the object of faith seen in this Book.

d). It is then the specific, faith to the saving of the soul, that must be carried over into Chapter 11, 'Now faith [believing God to the saving of the soul] is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'

e). And this first verse from Hebrews Chapter 11 does not give us a definition of faith to the saving of the soul, but rather the outcome this faith. The word translated 'substance' is a compound word that means to 'stand under' giving us the idea of a foundation. It is then having faith to the saving of the soul that provides the foundation for our hope, the foundation upon which our hope is secured – In other words, believing that which God has said about the present and future aspects of salvation and their relationship to the age to come and Christ's Kingdom is the foundation upon which realizing our hope must rest.

f). Not only this, but faith to the saving of the soul is also 'the evidence of things not seen.' The word translated 'evidence' means a 'bringing to light'. So then, faith to the saving of the soul brings to light the things not seen with the natural eye, things connected with our hope. And according to Hebrews 11:2, the elders, faithful OT saints, because they had faith to the saving of the soul, the foundation and the things brought to light by it, 'obtained a good testimony'. God has given His approval to the example they have set of living by faith to the saving of the soul.

4). Heb 11:3 *By faith we understand that the worlds [lit ages] were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.*

We had seen as we began today that the ages have been Divinely ordered and structured by and for the Son, specifically with respect to rulership in the age to come. And seeing this and understanding the way these ages have been Divinely organized can only come through having faith to the saving of the soul. Only through believing what God has said about this, beginning with the opening verses in Genesis.

a). And according to our verse, that which is seen through the eyes of faith cannot be seen in the world that surrounds us. That which we see with the natural eye is a world in total chaos, a world under the sway of the wicked one. A chaos that is not a part of God's ordered design but present through sin.

b). Firstly, through the introduction of sin by the incumbent ruler in his rebellion and then by his hand through the deception of the Woman, again bringing sin into play, leaving both mankind and the material creation in a

ruined condition. For fallen Man though, something is seen which was not seen at Satan's fall. The earth, although ruined, still remained habitable and able to sustain life and the ruined Man who continued to live upon it experienced the grace of God through redemption – Gen 3:21 *Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*

Redemption available to all of those procreated in Adam's likeness from that point forward.

Heb 2:16 *For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.*

God made tunics of skin to provide a covering for Adam and the Woman in the place of the glory which they had lost. And in the death and shed blood of the animals to provide the tunics, eternal salvation was wrought giving spiritual life to those who through sin had been separated from God's purpose. All with a view to their complete redemption, spirit, soul and body so that Adam and the Woman together, along with their descendants, would one day be able to hold the scepter of rulership as God had always intended.

c). Now, having faith to the saving of the soul brings to light not only the perfection that God had established in the beginning through the Divinely ordered ages but also the perfection He will bring to pass through the completion of His redemptive process for both the material creation and Mankind – 1 Cor 2:9 *But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

Gen 24:53 *Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah.*

In His foreknowledge of all things God is working within this time of chaos and spiritual darkness to implement that which He has set in place from the beginning. If we think about it, it is during this time of chaos that Jehovah took a wife and Israel was adopted as a firstborn son. And it is during this time of chaos that the Holy Spirit continues His search for the Bride for the Son and it is during this time of chaos that Christ died and rose from the dead that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin to one day ascend the throne with Him. And again, according to the Scripture it is only having faith to the saving of the soul that allows the Scriptures to be opened to our understanding in this way. Without believing what God has had to say about this keeps us in a place where we can only see the realm of the god of this age, only seeing the chaos which surrounds us rather than the perfection that is to come; only seeing with the natural eye and not the eyes of faith – 2 Cor 4:3 *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe [who do not have faith to the saving of the soul], lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

And so, there are 2 realms within the sphere of our comprehension. There is the realm of Satan and his kingdom which we can witness with our natural eyes all around us. And then there is the realm of the Christ and His coming Kingdom within God's ordered design for the ages, that can only be seen with the eyes of faith. And as we have seen, only with the eyes of faith to the saving of the soul.

d). If we don't ever see that there is so much more to God's redemptive purpose than the free gift of eternal life, then the fulness of what the Scriptures teach will remain hidden from us and in the Day when that fulness is realized we will find ourselves separated from it. Eternally saved, yes, but woefully short of the inheritance that could have been ours.

5). The Book of Hebrews then continues by listing 5 OT saints who had faith to the saving of the soul – Heb 11:4 *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. 5 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. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently*

seek Him. 7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. 8 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. 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. 11 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. 12 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.

In fact, there is a selection of OT saints itemized in this Chapter who all had faith to the saving of the soul. What we will realize though is that those contained in this catalogue of the faithful are not the only ones who would have conducted their lives after this fashion, but God has Divinely chosen these particular examples in order to teach us great spiritual truth.

a). The first five saints itemized form a unit in themselves which teach us great spiritual truth, truth that is then repeated and expanded upon through the account of the individuals that follow.

b). But before we look at that, we will note one thing in particular from the verses we have just read - *6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.* – As we read this verse again let’s remember the specific faith presented in it. ‘Without faith to the saving of the soul it is impossible to please Him’.

c). So, from the evidence of Scripture, what is the only way we can please God? By having faith to the saving of the soul and conducting our lives accordingly. There is no other way.

d). And this truth is something we have already witnessed today at the end of Hebrews Chapter 10 - *38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him* – Now the just, those who have been justified, eternally saved, shall live by having faith to the saving of the soul; but if anyone draws back from having faith to the saving of the soul, ‘My soul has no pleasure in him’.

e). But we will also take the next verse for ourselves – 10:39 *But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe [who have faith] to the saving of the soul.*

We will pick this up again next time – if the Lord is willing.