

Sunday April 15th 2012
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Forty

1). Heb 11:6 *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.*

a). We will remember that the first 4 individuals that are presented to us at the beginning of Hebrews Chapter 11 provide us with a dispensational picture for ourselves that begins with the sacrifice of Christ, pictured through Abel, followed by the rapture of the church, pictured through Enoch, the time of Jacob's trouble pictured through Noah and the flood and the coming Kingdom of Christ pictured through Abraham going to the land which he would receive as an inheritance.

b). And these 4 individuals are divided into two sets of two by the verse that opened our scripture reading this morning – Hebrews 11:6 *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.*

c). This verse not only provides commentary on the actions of Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham, but also states a universal truth that has remained unchanged from the beginning.

d). 'But without faith it is impossible to please Him' – the verb 'to please' here is written in the aorist tense in the infinity – which in language that makes sense means that without faith, to the saving of the soul, it has been, it is now and it remains, impossible to please Him at all, under any circumstances. The Greek language really makes it that plain and that forceful.

e). Then we see that having faith to the saving of the soul relates to two specific things – believing that He is and believing that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

f). Believing that He is, is written in a way in the original language that speaks of existence. It is necessary to believe that God is God – now this may seem to be pretty obvious, but it implies an absolute certainty that He is the One, true, living God. Not one of a number of different deities or a generic term for anybody's god; not a god who is called by different names by different 'faiths' – He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Great 'I Am' – the blessed trinity - Mr 12:29 *Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. 30 'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.*

g). Then we have, believing that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him – And the idea here is not that God merely exists as a rewarder, but that He will prove Himself to be a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. In other words, our diligently seeking Him must be with the full assurance that in doing so we WILL be rewarded – we are then to look to the reward and expect the reward in response to our diligent seeking - Col 3:23 *And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.*

Re 22:12 *"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.*

There is of course a confidence in this, but it is not confidence in our worthiness but rather in His faithfulness. We may be confident then because – Nu 23:19 *"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?*

h). And we won't fail to note that the key in the process is to seek Him diligently.

i). Then as we consider the reward that will be ours we will realize that it relates to a time that is still yet future, exactly as it was for our 4 individuals.

j). Given the nature of the truth expressed in 11:6 we would know that Abel brought his offering to God, by faith, in the expectation that God would reward him as he diligently sought Him through his faithful obedience. And what we see in the account of Abel in Genesis Chapter 4 is that his brother kills him. This of course is not the reward Abel was looking for, nor would his death preclude the receiving of his reward. What we do see is that living in a fallen world his diligent seeking after God, by faith, did not make him immune

from murder, but nor did his murder annul God's promise of reward. Abel would have died at the hands of his brother in the full assurance that God is faithful and that his unnatural death would in no way impede that which God would provide.

k). In fact as Abel is a type of Christ we could assume that he knew his death was coming at the hands of his brother and that he embraced it willingly, just as Christ did His own death, knowing that his living or dying was not the issue, but God's faithfulness instead - 1Th 5:24 *He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.*

l). In the experience of Abel then we might see for ourselves, in this present dispensation, an encouragement with respect to any of us who may die through sickness, accident or even murder realizing that it is not whether we live to old age or not that is the issue, but our diligently seeking God in full assurance of our reward in the years we do have and the absolute surety of God's faithfulness with respect to His promises that the grave cannot cancel or prevent. This would be the very thing that Paul speaks of in - 2Co 5:4 *For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. 9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

m). And then of course in the experience of Enoch we see the same attitude of mind from the standpoint of those Christians who will be alive at the time of the rapture.

n). Having made known to Enoch His plans and purposes around the time of Methuselah's birth, Enoch then walked with God, he diligently sought Him, for 300 years in full expectation that God would reward him for his faithful diligence - Enoch's reward wasn't that he was translated - his reward still remains yet future as a result of events pictured through his son and his great grandson.

o). The issue for Enoch then wasn't whether or not he would be translated, but his diligently seeking after God until the time of his translation came.

p). And so for those Christians alive today who will experience that pictured through Enoch – the issue isn't whether there will be a rapture of the church or not, scripture clearly says there will be, rather the issue is our diligent seeking of the Lord through our faithful obedience as we wait for the event to take place – which we may or may not experience.

q). And of course, because of what we read in Hebrews 11:6, the same must be true for Noah and Abraham as well.

2). *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.*

a). God gave His revelation to Noah concerning 'things not yet seen', concerning the flood that was about to come upon the whole earth as God would intervene in the affairs of men in order to bring a halt to the deviant wickedness that had consumed the human race - Ge 6:1 ¶ *Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. 3 ¶ And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." 4 ¶ There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown. 5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 ¶ And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 ¶ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. 9 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.*

b). In order to prevent the promised Seed of the Woman, fallen angels from Satan's kingdom cohabited with the daughters of men thereby corrupting the human race through the procreation of those which the scriptures call 'Nephilim' – a breed of individuals who were neither wholly human nor wholly angel.

c). Such a union is completely outside the established laws of God, reason enough of itself for God to act to bring such a perversion to an end – what we may assume though is that the human race, except for one lineage,

embraced this perversion with some alacrity. And I think we may assume this from the homosexual account of this perversion seen in the city of Sodom during Lot's day - Ge 19:4 ¶ *Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. 5 And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally."*

d). So all pervasive were the actions of the fallen angels that Noah alone was 'perfect in his generations'. The bloodline from Seth coming down through the firstborn of each generation was not touched by this angelic attack and therefore an uncontaminated bloodline through which the Seed of the Woman could come still existed.

e). God's destruction of the human race apart from Noah and his family really does not have to do with God preventing the corruption from touching Noah's family, but rather with events reaching a point when the righteousness of God demanded intervention and judgment. Such was the case with Satan's original rebellion, the flood during Noah's day as we see, and the destruction of the cities of the plain. And such will be the case with respect to Christ's second coming - Lu 17:26 *"And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 "They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 "Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 "but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 "Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.*

f). And it is of course in the denying of the Lord's second coming that the 'scoffers' of these last days willingly choose to forget God's previous interventions into the affairs of Man - 2Pe 3:1 ¶ *Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3 ¶ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens*

and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

g). There is no doubt that in these last days fallen angels are once again cohabiting with the daughters of men. Antichrist's 10 nation confederacy will most likely be ruled over by the offspring of this cohabitation, and of course Antichrist himself will be the literal seed of Satan.

h). The filling of Israel's cup of iniquity, the Gentile nations persecution and merciless killing of God's chosen people and the perversion of fallen angels with women from the human race all combine together in the perfect storm so to speak resulting in a time of trouble such as the world has never seen as God pours out His sevenfold judgment – the very event of course that is pictured in the account of Noah's flood, the event that the Lord Himself draws attention to with respect to His return.

i). This is the event prophesied in Daniel's 70th week - Da 9:24 *"Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. 25 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. 26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."*

j). The same event referred to in - Jer 30:7 *Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it.*

k). And just as Jeremiah prophesies Israel's deliverance, again pictured through Noah and his family, so the end of the whole matter is also recorded by Daniel - Da 2:37 *"You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; 38 "and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all-you are this head of gold. 39 "But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. 40 "And*

the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others. 41 "Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. 42 "And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. 43 "As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. 44 "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. 45 "Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold-the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

l). We might note particularly here v 43 which speaks of the cohabitation that we previously referenced; with v 44 showing the events of Christ's return using the same imagery that we find in - Isa 2:2 *Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it.*

A verse repeated in Micah.

m). Now to take all this back to Noah's faith we will realize that God revealed to him the coming destruction upon the earth and had promised to save him and his family from that destruction. God had also promised that through the loins of Noah the earth would be re-populated; and therefore through the loins of Noah the promised Seed of the Woman would have to come.

n). Remarkable as these promises are they are not of themselves Noah's reward. Noah built the ark and ultimately began the re-population of the earth by believing that which God had said, by diligently seeking Him. And Noah would have done this, according to Hebrews 11:6 because he believed; he had faith, that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

o). Noah would not have been ignorant of the importance of the 7th Day and God's stated purpose for it, but he would have also known that this was still for a time yet future. Look at what we find in - Ge 9:1 ¶ *So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2 "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth,*

on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand.

p). Noah and his sons are told to 'be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth', just as Adam and the Woman were told to do – but there is no mention here in Chapter 9 of dominion – rather than rulership we see the animal world to be in fear. Dominion without fear would still await a future day.

q). Noah then organized his life in anticipation of the reward he would receive in that Day through his faith – and if we remember Hebrews 11 says of Noah - Heb 11:7 *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[faith] he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.*

r). Noah's faith then 'condemned the world' in the sense that the kind of faith he exhibited, equated with faith to the saving of the soul, was in stark contrast to the absence of that faith in the rest of humanity. Noah's was the faith that God would reward making him the 'heir of the righteousness which is according to faith' – the absence of that faith God condemned, God judged.

s). And this would have to be no different today within that portion of humanity that we know as Christians. God will reward those Christians who will have faith to the saving of the soul, but those Christians who have an absence of this faith He will condemn. This is the clear evidence of scripture over and over again and brings us right back to where we began this morning, Hebrews 11:6 *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.*

t). And the righteousness that is according to faith to the saving of the soul is precisely what we see with respect to the Bride as a precursor to rulership in - Re 19:7 *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

u). As we close for today let us consider are we diligently seeking the Lord with the expectation of reward or are we still lost in the hypocrisy of false humility?