

PART II – PRACTICAL EXHORTATIONS (10:19-13:17)

1. Exhortation to Use the new access to God (10:19-25)
2. **FOURTH WARNING PASSAGE** (10:26-39)
Heb. 10:39 gives two contrasting categories of people: **(1)** those who *shrink back* and are destroyed [addressed in vers. 26-31]; and **(2)** those who *stand firm* and are saved [addressed in verses 32-38].
3. Common Men of Uncommon Faith (11:1-40)
The linking word that ties this section to what precedes is "faith", which the Habak. 2:4 quotation introduced (10:38–39). The word "faith" appears 28x in 23 verses, and the phrase "by faith" 22x in 19 verses (each example of faith in vers. 3-31 is formally introduced with this specific phrase). True faith works in obedience to God (cp. Jam. 2:14-16). Hebrews 11 recounts biblical history thru common men & women who demonstrated uncommon faith — faith that perplexed the people around them, but that pleased the God above them.
 - A. An Analysis of Faith (vv. 1-3, 6)
"Now faith is being SURE of what we hope for & CERTAIN of what we do not see" (11:1). True faith is confident obedience to God's Word despite circumstances or consequences. The best way to grow in faith is to walk with the faithful (i.e., Hebrews 11).
 - B. Faith in the Antediluvian Era (vv. 4-7)
The people mentioned (Abel, Enoch, and Noah) in the first seven verses are from the pre-flood period of earth history (ante-diluvians; see Gen. 1-9). Each of them illustrates some aspect of the life of faith (2 Cor. 5:7). Abel teaches us to worship by faith; Enoch to walk by faith; Noah to work by faith.
 - C. Faith in the Patriarchal Era (vv. 8-22; cp. Genesis 12-50)
 - 1) Abraham (8-12, 17-19)
 - a) obeyed God when he did not know **WHERE** he was going (vv. 8-10)
 - b) obeyed God when he did not know **HOW** God's will would be accomplished (vv. 11, 12)
 - c) obeyed God when he did not know **WHY** God was so working (vv. 17-19)
 - 2) Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (vv. 20-22)
Isaac (Gen. 27:1-28:5); Jacob (Gen. 47:28-49:33); Joseph (Gen. 37:1-50:26)
 - D. Faith in the Mosaic Era (vv. 23-31)
 - 1) By faith Moses' parents . . . (v. 23)
 - 2) By faith Moses . . . (vv. 24-28)
Three risky decisions that showed Moses' faith in action but alienated him from his peers.
 - Moses **refused** the **sinful** (vv. 24-26)
 - Moses **left** the **familiar** (v. 27)
 - Moses **chose** the **unusual** (v. 28)
 - 3) By faith the people (of Israel) . . . (v. 29)
 - E. Faith in the Conquest Era (vv. 30, 31)

F. Faith in subsequent eras: Judges Era to the end of the Old Testament (vv. 32-40)

1) What more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about . . . (v. 32)

- Six persons are mentioned; not listed in chronological order
- First 4 names from “Judges Era” (**Gideon** - Judg. 6-9; **Barak** - Judg. 4, 5; **Samson** - Judg. 13-16; **Jephthah** – Judges 11, 12)
- The last 2 names are an illustrious king (David), and then “Samuel and the prophets”

2) Faith's AMAZING TRIUMPHS (vv. 33-35a)

- conquered kingdoms
- administered justice
- gained what was promised
- shut the mouths of lions
- quenched the fury of the flames
- escaped the edge of the sword
- became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies

3) Faith's APPARENT DEFEATS (vv. 35b-38)

- others were tortured and refused to be released
- some faced jeers and flogging
- still other were chained and put in prison
- they were stoned
- they were saw in two
- they were put to death by the sword
- they went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated
- wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground

God's analysis: “—the world was not worthy of them.” Two groups illustrated by Acts 12.

4) Faith's ANTICIPATED FULFILLMENT (11:39, 40)

“what had been promised” (cp. 10:36)

In one sense the promise has been fulfilled inasmuch as Christ has come and has made the once-for-all sacrifice. But there are future realities that still await consummation.

“made perfect”

Both groups (“us” = NT, & “they” = OT) will find their salvation fully consummated when Christ returns and physical resurrection as well as the other provisions of the Abrahamic promise and of the new covenant will be brought to pass. And ultimately, the New Heaven and New Earth. Take a look at the description of “the Holy City, the new Jerusalem” ... especially verses 10-14.

4. Staying the Course: Finish Strong! (12:1-3)

The recipients of this letter had started out strong (10:32ff.). But a strong finish was in jeopardy (on the part of some). They (some) were wavering, due to “strange teachings” (13:9), as well as a new wave of persecution on the horizon. And remember, in the Christian life, it's not how you start that matters, it's how you finish. It was getting dangerous to be a Christ-follower. In addition, they were being dragged down by ‘strange teachings’ (13:9). As a result, some confessors were wavering & in danger of apostasy. In the N. Testament, the Christian life is often compared to a race (not a 50 yard dash, but a marathon). Each year we run another leg of the journey. Each year brings us closer to the goal. All runners long to finish strong, but not everyone does.

What does it take to finish strong?

A. It takes INSPIRATION (1a): "Surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses" **μάρτυς *mártus*** – 31x "witness or witnesses"; 2x "testify"; 1x "testimony"; 1x "martyr" (Acts 22:20). Such a person (a martyr) is one who testifies or can testify to what he has seen or heard or knows. In chapt. 11 we have heard from "a great cloud of witness" that surround us, encourage us, push us, inspire us, etc. to finish strong.

B. It takes DETERMINATION (1b)

A winner prepares to win! A finisher prepares to finish. Finishing strong is no accident. If you want to finish strong, there are certain measures you must take.

1) Dump the BAGGAGE: "throw off everything that hinders"

What is slowing you down in the Christian life? Weights aren't worth the risk of finishing poorly!

2) Deal with SIN: "and the sin that so easily entangles"

3) Stay the COURSE: "run with perseverance the race marked out for us"

Perseverance is endurance; it's determination which refuses to be stopped, detoured, or deflected. The Greek word translated "perseverance" is **ὑπομονή *hupomoné*** - it means "to remain under."

C. It takes FOCUS (2-3). "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus"

1) To Jesus, the victorious PIONEER

ἀρχηγός *archēgós* – "the first leader; chief leader" (pioneer; trailblazer); cp. Hebrews 2:10

2) To Jesus, the triumphant PERFECTER (see Phil. 1:6)

He brings the faith of the former saints (11:40) and ours to triumphant completion (Phil. 1:6)

3) To Jesus, the devoted SERVANT

Lit. "Who instead of (in the place of; in exchange for) the joy lying before him endured the cross." In exchange for, instead of retaining his pre-incarnate glory He accepted the Cross & its shame. The heroic character of His faith appears in His renouncing a joy already in His possession in exchange for shame and death (see Phil. 2:6-8).

4) To Jesus, the effective PRIEST

"We have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven" (8:1)

5) To Jesus, the enthroned LORD

His redemptive work complete, He waits for the consummation of the ages and for the great moment when every tongue shall confess His lordship. Their frail lives were in the strong hands of Jesus, the enthroned Lord.

6) To Jesus, the patient SUFFERER

They must consider Him lest they become exhausted. They might be mocked, assaulted, scourged, forsaken, handed over by informers, imprisoned, falsely accused and even killed—but so was Jesus. Now look at verse 4 – "In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood." Don't give up too soon, don't relax before the tape, don't collapse until the finish line is past, stay on your feet until you get to the end.