


Notes on Faith



Hebrews 11:1-4
By Ruth Dickson



A Free Publication
Published and Distributed by Gihon Publishing

Designed by Rachael Saint-Clair



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About the Author

Ruth Dickson is a Christian Writer, Blogger, Missionary and Author of Christian books and literature. She is also the founder of Gihon Publishing and Heavenly Treasures Ministries UK. As a Missionary, she firmly believes in - Mark 16:15. Her daily Devotional, "Oil for the Journey," is distributed freely internationally.

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Ruth's publications are in many languages: Mandarin, English, French, German, Russian, Filipino, Dutch, Setswana, Filipino, Hausa, Kinyarwanda and Swahili.

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Eternal Hope

Introduction

Your first point of reference when you talk about FAITH should be Hebrews Chapter Eleven. The book of Hebrews holds the famous, "Faith Hall of Fame," (Hebrews 11:1-40). Here you have - Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David and Samuel – both men and women, mentioned in remembrance of their Faith extraordinaire!

Faith, in the spiritual sense, is based upon the promises of God. It is not based upon what you can see with your physical eyes, or obtain with your own hands. "The substance of things hoped for..." is received by Faith.

You don't need faith to see what is seen. If you can see it, you don't need faith, because it is right before you. It takes discernment to see the unseen. The invisible cannot be perceived with the natural senses. Faith helps you see the invisible. The work of the Spirit is to reveal the heart of God.

Today, I want you to rejoice in the great expectation of what is to come. Continue without wavering in your Faith, it is the foundation of your hope. All that God has promised you in Christ is Yes and Amen.



The Elders Obtained a Good Report

Hebrews 11: 1, 2

“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.”

When we read of the Faith of the Patriarchs; the Saints of Old, we read about their “good report” and become encouraged.

God has commended and preserved the Faith of these elders into this present age by recording it in the Bible for us all to follow suit. These men and women of God went through the most horrendous circumstances. They endured ridicule, shame, suffering and hardship on account of their Faith. The point of the matter is that they knew whom they believed.

What does Faith do?

It brings into reality the things that are hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Believer in Christ, you have a covenant of grace today, it existed even before time began. It is an honour to put your Faith in God, to endure the race and be steadfast to the very end.



The Uncreated God

Hebrews 11:3

"By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."

This world was put together by an uncreated deity. God existed all by Himself and this world was formed by Him. It was "framed by the word of God." God created, all celestial, terrestrial, sub-terrestrial, angels and men, both the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that it is within this world.

God is all-powerful. His words have the power to declare things into being.

"He spoke and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast." Psalm 33:9

God is the creator of all things, Himself being uncreated. Created powers cannot create things from nothing. They need items and materials to create things from. This is not so with God, He created this world from absolutely nothing. He spoke, it was done, it stood fast.

These unseen origins are revealed in the Bible and we must believe it by faith. The natural mind cannot comprehend it. Faith rises above the power of natural reason to behold invisible truth.



Exemplary Faith

Hebrews 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.”

The number of years that you have been in Christ makes no difference when it comes to the Grace of God.


From the story of Cain and Abel, we can see the example of two kinds of worshippers. One of them, Cain, a Farmer, approached God with the fruits of the ground, while Abel, a Shepherd, brought the firstlings of a his flock, which the Bible describes as, “a more excellent sacrifice.”

One could argue, that if Cain understood why Abel's offering was more acceptable, he would have also done likewise... This is where grace steps in...

Even though Cain was the older sibling, it made no difference in the sight of God. And so it happens in this natural world, where those who have just come to know the Lord sometimes have a greater and closer relationship with God, than those who have been saved for centuries. It is simply grace that makes the difference.

Why did God consider Abel's sacrifice well pleasing, but reject Cain's sacrifice?

Abel offered the best of his livestock to God. He offered a blood sacrifice for the atonement of his sins. Abel, offered by faith, a well pleasing sacrifice to God. His offerings pointed to the greater sacrifice of Christ's Atonement: Christ's death on the Cross; The Lamb of God, “who takes away the sin of the world.” There is no way Abel could have known this in the natural sense, except by the Spirit of God. Abel presented a sweet smelling offering to God, by Faith. Cain's approach to God was completely different. Cain came to God legalistically.



Being a farmer, he offered the produce of the of the ground. However, he did not bring his offering by Faith. Cain's anger at Abel, and Cain's conversation with God, reveal the condition of Cain's heart. Even when God pointed it out to him, he refused to change (Genesis 4:1-12, Hebrews 4:6). He did not understand the meaning of the blood, he did not see himself as a sinner in need of atonement for his sins.

Those who cease from self-justifying works of the flesh possess divine rest that comes from trusting in Christ alone. Only Christ can do what no amount of human works can do. No one can be justified by the works of human hands.

Abel's Faith is listed among the greatest giants of Faith in the Bible (Hebrews 11). Though Cain tried to permanently silence Abel, he failed, as Abel's faith still speaks resoundingly loud and clear to us today (Hebrews 11:4).

"We are saved by grace and not by works, lest anyone should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9). We are called by grace, through Faith in Christ. Salvation is by grace alone. This should comfort you if you believe in Christ today. It is by Grace you have been saved. It is by Faith you receive both the earthly and eternal promises of God. While Abel's blood cried out for vengeance, the blood of Jesus cries out mercy and grace. You have a new covenant in Christ, He is the fulfilment of God's promise to you! Amen.

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