

Great Cloud of Witnesses

Heb 11:1-40

- 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 report.
- 3 Through faith we understand that the worlds (ages) were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

By fiat of God (a command issued by legal authority) we have been marked off so that things as they appear historically did not evolve from each other.

Ps 33:8-9(KJV)

- 8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.
- 9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

This was established before the atomic principal...

Romans 1:19-23 (KJV)

- 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.
- 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:
- 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
- 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
- 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

Hebrews

- 4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.
- 5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.
- 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Prov 8:17 (KJV)

- 17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

Hebrews

- 7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

It took 120 years for Noah and his family to build the ark... No one at his time had seen one drop of rain. Don't you know he suffered ridicule during this time with only God's promise as his motivation?

Gen 6:3 (KJV)

- 3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

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Hebrews

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Gen 15:1-6 (KJV)

- 1 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.
- 2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?
- 3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.
- 4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.
- 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.
- 6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Hebrews

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

This is the first time a Heavenly City is mentioned. Isn't it profound that the Lord chose an earthly occupation of a carpenter, rather than a shepherd? He is the great Architect, Designer and Fabricator of "all things visible", including "the city which hath the foundations". He, the Preparer, Arranger, and Constitutor of the ages or dispensations condescended to follow during the "days of his flesh" a trade involving he planning, calculation, and manual skill of a craftsman!

Hebrews

- 11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.
- 12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.
- 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth

Remember v. 1 (things unseen)

- 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.
- 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.
- 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.
- 17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,
- 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:
- 19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Abraham knew that God could raise him from the dead if he had to in order to keep his promise; instead God introduced a "scape goat". This was a picture of Christ, in that His shed blood was in place of our own for the forgiveness of sins.

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Gen 22:12-13 (KJV)

- 12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.
- 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

Hebrews

- 20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.
- 21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.
- 22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

Joseph had faith that God would bring Israel out of Egypt...

Genesis 50:25 (KJV)

And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

Hebrews

- 23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.
- 24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;
- 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;
- 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.
- 27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.
- 28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.
- 29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

Moses followed God instead of Earthly riches... We are told to do the same thing!

Phil 1:29 (KJV)

For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

2 Tim 2:11-13 (KJV)

- 11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:
- 12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:
- 13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

Phil 3:17-20(KJV)

- 17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.
- 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:
- 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)
- 20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

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Hebrews

- 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.
31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.
32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:
33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,
34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.
35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:
36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:
37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;
38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.
39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:
40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.
(KJV)

Heb 12:1-11

- 1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,
2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.
4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.
5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:
6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.
7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?
8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.
9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?
10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.
11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.
(KJV)