

A Voice From the Dead

Hebrews 11

1. Greater context: character studies
2. Examples of people can encourage us
3. Heroes in Genesis et al. ...
 - Abraham ... Joseph
 - Joshua ... Caleb
 - Matthew - John
 - Acts

I. The Purpose of Hb.11

1. The force of faith, Hb.11:1

- Substance – actual being, reality, essence, assurance, confidence
 - Substance verifies (promises of God)
- Evidence – proof, verification. Demonstration...
 - *Things not seen.* V.3, 6.
 - We have convictions... Jn.20:...29
 - *Faith.* Sure of our hope, certain of things not seen

2. The favor of faith, Hb.11:2

- “For” . . . by it the elders (people of old, ESV) obtained a good testimony
 - They gained approval, NASB
 - They received their commendation, ESV
 - Verses 4, 5, 39
- Common denominator in each: faith
 - Hb.10:38-39

Faith is important; we need
to know more about it

3. The fact of faith, Hb.11:3

- Not *how* (method) but reality
 - First verse of Bible requires faith...
 - “By the word of God” –
 - He spoke ... it was done
 - Things seen not made by things visible (v.1). Job 38:4

4. The first faith, Hb.11:4

- Abel
 - Adam and Eve had sight: saw manifestations, heard, talked to God
 - Ex.33:20 . . . Jn.1:18
 - Cain and Abel were to live by faith [God did talk to them]
 - He spoke . . . it was done
 - Though dead, Adam speaks

4. **The first faith**, Hb.11:4

- Abel's obedience illustrates faith; God has...
 - all authority
 - right to command
 - right to specify what He wants
 - [Gn.41:55] Jn.2:5 ... Ac.3:22
- Abel's offering: by faith. Ro.10:17
 - God spoke; Abel listened. Ro.1:17
- Abel's accuracy shows that God commanded / clearly; he took God seriously

What does this mean?

- Abel's approved example illustrates faith: it's for our benefit
- Abel's offering rebukes Cain's: serves as warning to us
- Abel knew what was right; Cain could have known. Did he choose something else? [Presumption / disobedience]
- God's reaction shows that He means what He says. Cain learned the hard way

4. The first faith, Hb.11:4

- God speaks to us through examples of others – approved and unapproved
- God blesses and respects obedience
- God rejects and corrects disobedience
- Walking by sight, not faith, is serious – 2 Co.5:7
 - Thought Cain lived on, he assembled the wrong crowd... [cursed, Gn.4]. Hb.11:4
 - Though Abel died, he was blessed – the first to enter Paradise

I. The Purpose of Hb.11

II. The Persons of Hb.11:4

Abel offered by faith

Problem was NOT that Abel offered something and Cain offered nothing

- Ro.10:17, faith: based on word of God
- Lv.2 – another context: God accepted vegetables. Why? *Because He said so*
- Baptism is immersion – another context / subject: sprinkling – Hb.9:13f.; 10:22 (Lv.14)
 - Dare we confuse **blood of sprinkling** and water of baptism?
 - Context counts

Abel offered a better sacrifice than Cain

NOT that Abel's sacrifice was more costly

- Greater value because it was 'by faith'
[by His authority / according to His word]
- 2 Co.5:7
- Hb.10:38, *the just live 'by faith'* –18x in Hb.11

Abel is righteous because he obeyed God's word

Abel's example speaks to us: Gn.4; Hb.11

1. Did not merely believe in existence of God, but obeyed His instructions. True faith
2. Respected details of God's word.
 - Hb.11:4-19, promises
 - Seemed impossible . . . but God . . .
 - Cain, Gn.4:5, no respect...
3. Abel did not stray from His commands
4. Did not substitute own views. 1 Jn.3:12

I. The Purpose of Hb.11

II. The Persons of Hb.11:4

III. The Perversions of Raising Cain

Expression first occurred in St. Louis *Daily Pennant*, May, 1840

Some 'raise Cain' by adopting his attitude

- They prefer 'their way' or the way of 'other people' instead of God's way

Problem: pride and rebellion . . .

“My way is superior to the Bible”

- This would justify Cain . . . [Murder, too?]
- Was Cain’s way superior to God’s word?

Where is the stopping place?

Desire of some: fit in with
people of other faiths

“Can all these people be wrong?”

Surveys

- Most don't believe Bible at all: are they right?
- Most don't believe virgin birth, resurrection of Christ
- Many don't believe Bible teaches necessity of faith: God alone ... grace alone

Modern attitudes assume...

- We don't have to follow Scripture
- E.g.: sprinkling is as good as immersion
 - My question: "What about dictionaries authored by denominational writers who say baptism is immersion?"
 - Response: "A person will not go to hell just because he doesn't know Greek!"

English Bibles show the difference –

- Lv.14¹⁵ the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand. ¹⁶ Then the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD.

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- Must we know Hebrew??

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- Ro.6:4, Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

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- Must we know Greek??
- Could language be plainer??

Real Problem: he admires
denominational writer . . .

Therefore he must be right ...
though unimmersed ...

Therefore, sprinkling is right

Real conclusion: his own wisdom is a
respectable way to pursue the way of Cain

Abel's parents disobeyed God

- Abel's brother disobeyed God
- Abel lived by faith

Faith was more than a conviction
about God's existence

Abel lived by God's **Word**