

**Bible e-Study** on the book of Hebrews 11(c)

**Perfection**

*<sup>40</sup> ... God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.*

Hebrews 11:40

**NUGGET** – There is much about death in this 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of Hebrews. There's the death of Abel, Abraham being 'as good as dead' and him also intending to sacrifice Isaac. Then there's Jacob blessing Joseph's sons as he was dying, Joseph at his 'end' talking about the Exodus. And at the end of the chapter there's talk of flames, swords, people being sawn in two, and more swords.

It's a lot of death.

Because of the sin of Abel's father, Adam, death is in this world and it surrounds us all the time. Notice it isn't sin that the writer of Hebrews points out, but its result, death - and in such various forms and ways. Death is even a metaphor in the case of Abraham regarding his ability, or lack thereof, to father a child.

And staying, as an example, with the case of Abraham being 'as good as dead', we see how the author turns each of these cases of death around and from them comes life! And not just life, but life by the hand of God and given, by faith, to each of these that are talked about. In some cases it is life in the here and now, but in all cases it's about a hope, a future and resurrection again by God's gift.

It is striking that Abraham is spoken of as being 'as good as dead' and yet he fathers 'descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore'. People spoke of Jesus also as dead, and He was, having hung on the cross and died. And yet His brothers and sisters are as innumerable as Abraham's descendants. They are in fact the same.

And again in the case of Isaac we're told that Abraham obeyed the order to sacrifice him because he 'reasoned that God could raise the dead'. And so it is! Abraham had killed Isaac in his heart when he raised the knife and so by the actions of God through His angel and the ram, Isaac was resurrected back to Abraham. God indeed, through the resurrection of Jesus, grants new life from death to all who, by faith, trust in the name of Jesus.

**APPLICATION -**

1. We see death all around us in the news. There are shootings and stabbings, beheadings and bombings. It is easy to give in to the hopelessness seen in such things. And yet the writer of Hebrews points us to the hope that is ours in the resurrection of Jesus. When you hear of death around us, let that prompt you not to despair but to recognize that death, while with us now, has been defeated by Christ. Our hope has its basis on the firm foundation of the resurrection of Jesus and that is something we can share when the talk at the 'water cooler' turns to the tragedies that fill our news.

**PRAY** – Oh God the Giver of all life, grant to us a firm joy in the hope You give us in the death and resurrection of Your only Son Jesus Christ. Remind us and give us the words to speak of that which You have promised us in the name of Jesus, the defeat of death and the assurance of life with You in heaven. In Jesus name we pray, amen.