

SOMETHING BETTER WHICH LASTS FOREVER

By Justin Morton

Christians do many things which can only be explained because we believe in heaven. I believe this is why the writer of Hebrews 11 stopped in the middle of his “By faith” statements and wrote, “These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city” (Heb. 11:13-16).

The writer interrupts his “By Faith” statements because he wants us to consider why certain people do what they do for their faith. Why is it the people mentioned in Hebrews 11 decided to live drastically different from the rest of the world? The answer to this somewhat puzzling question, for those who cannot wrap their mind around this kind of audacious behavior, is the people listed in the Hall of Faith (Heb. 11) understood something better was waiting for them. They were willing to give up what they had here on earth because they knew they couldn’t keep it anyway. Paul wrote, “For we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of it” (I Tim. 6:7). The faithful heroes mentioned in Hebrews 11 gave up what they could lose in order to gain what they could not lose. These people of faith realized it’s all about heaven!

Strangers and Exiles (v. 13)

We sing a song called, *This World Is Not My Home*. The first stanza says,

*This world is not my home,
I’m just a passing through.
My treasures are laid up,
Somewhere beyond the blue.*

The patriarchs lived on this earth with the idea that they were nothing more than strangers and exiles. They understood their true citizenship was in heaven (Phil. 3:20). Why is it some Christians today live their lives as if they are going to stay here forever? Friends, we are nothing more than strangers and exiles here on earth. This world is not our home!

Longing (14-16a)

The patriarchs were “seeking” a homeland. However, this homeland was not the earthly place they had left, for if it was, “They would have had opportunity to return.” Instead, they were longing for their true homeland, heaven... which is far better than this world we currently call home. These patriarchs did what they did out of faith, because they were homesick for heaven.

When was the last time you were homesick? When was the last time you were homesick for heaven? Was there ever a time you were homesick for heaven? Friends, you and I need to start longing for our true homeland, heaven.

Reward (v. 16b)

The writer of Hebrews points out that God was not ashamed to be called their God. He looked down on those patriarchs and was proud of them because of their faith. In fact, God was so proud of these heroes of faith, He prepared for them a city. Did you catch that? God Himself is the one who prepared this city for people of faith. How awesome is that? Guess what, friends? In the end, God will feel the same for Christians who live lives of faith. He is preparing for you a city, a place to call your home, a place where you have citizenship, a place where you are not a stranger or exile; God is preparing Heaven just for you!

Everything we do as Christians points back to our faith in heaven. You see, what you believe or don't believe about heaven and hell will affect the way you live your life. When you truly come to terms with this world not being your home, and you begin to understand you belong at home with the Father in heaven, you will do things that can only be explained because of your faith in *Something Better that Lasts Forever!*