

Why Christians suffer religious persecution by lcl

Is there any doubt that Christ told us to expect persecution from the world? The followers of Satan dislike anyone chosen of God.

Joh 15:18 If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you.

Joh 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Joh 15:20 Remember the word that I said to you, The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they have kept My saying, they will also keep yours.

God offers new testament believers a promise that the Old Testament saints did not have.

Heb 10:35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great recompense of reward.

Heb 10:36 For you have need of patience, so that after you have done the will of God you might receive **the promise**.

Heb 10:37 For "yet a little while, and **He who shall come will come** and will not delay."

Heb 10:38 Now, "the Just shall live by faith. But if he draws back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him."

Jesus will return to claim His own. The old Testament leaders did not know Christ, but they did live in the faith of God given through Abraham and Moses. Jews thought of Abraham as their physical father and Moses was their spiritual leader. We are told that God the Father is our real father. But, all had faith that God would provide a better life for them after earthly death. Therefore, they endured chastening trials. Their faith made them acceptable to God and they gained paradise, the temporary spiritual heaven. When Christ returns to earth, redeemed bodies are reunited with saved spirits on the new earth. But, let us not digress. Faith is the common link between the old and new Testament saved peoples. The examples of old Testament faith are given below.

Heb 11:1 Now faith is *the* substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Heb 11:2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

Heb 11:3 By faith we understand *that* the ages *were* framed by a word of God, so that the things being seen not to have come into being out of the things that appear.

Heb 11:4 By faith Abel offered to 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 speaks.

Heb 11:5 By faith Enoch was translated *so as* not to see death, and he was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Heb 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently

seek Him.

Heb 11:7 By faith Noah, having been warned by God of things not yet seen, moved with fear, prepared an ark to *the* saving of his house, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness *which is* according to faith.

Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out into a place which he was afterward going to receive for an inheritance. And *he* went out, not knowing where he went.

Heb 11:11 By faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him who had promised *to be* faithful.

Heb 11:13 These all died by way of faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off. And they were persuaded of *them* and embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Heb 11:16 But now they stretch forth to a better *fatherland*, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Heb 11:17 By faith Abraham, being tested, offered up Isaac. And he who had received the promises offered up his only-begotten *son*,

Heb 11:18 of whom it was said that in Isaac your Seed shall be called,

Heb 11:19 concluding that God *was* able to raise him up, even from *the* dead, from where he even received him, in a figure.

Heb 11:20 *By faith* Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

Heb 11:21 By faith Jacob, *when he was* dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph and worshiped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff.

Heb 11:22 By faith, Joseph dying remembered concerning the Exodus of the sons of Israel and gave orders concerning his bones.

Heb 11:23 By faith Moses, having been born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw *he was* a beautiful child. And they were not afraid of the king's commandments.

Heb 11:24 Having become great, Moses by faith refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

Heb 11:25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time,

Heb 11:26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

Heb 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

Heb 11:28 Through faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest He who destroyed the first-born should touch them.

Heb 11:29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land*, which the Egyptians attempting to do were drowned.

Heb 11:30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed seven days.

Heb 11:31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

Heb 11:32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon

and Barak and Samson and Jephthah; also David, and Samuel and the prophets, [Heb 11:33](#) who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped *the* mouths of lions,

[Heb 11:34](#) quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the strangers.

[Heb 11:35](#) Women received their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

[Heb 11:36](#) And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings; yes, more, of bonds and imprisonments.

[Heb 11:37](#) They were stoned, they were sawed in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.

[Heb 11:38](#) The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains and dens and caves of the earth.

[Heb 11:39](#) And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, did not receive the promise,

They did not know that Christ would return for them, but they still trusted God to gain heaven.

[Heb 11:40](#) for **God had provided some better thing for us**, that they should not be made perfect without us.

[Heb 12:1](#) Therefore since we also are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily besets *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

As a slight aside, know that those in Heaven's paradise are watching and praying for us to make right choices. They are the witnesses.

[Heb 12:2](#) looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured *the* cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right of the throne of God.

[Heb 12:3](#) For consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest you be weary and faint in your minds.

[Heb 12:4](#) You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

[Heb 12:5](#) And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons, "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked by Him;

Heb 12:6 for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and He scourges every son whom He receives."

[Heb 12:7](#) If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons, for what son is he whom the father does not chasten?

[Heb 12:9](#) Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh who corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

[Heb 12:10](#) For truly they chastened *us* for a few days according to their own pleasure, but **He for our profit, that *we* might be partakers of His holiness.**

[Heb 12:11](#) Now chastening for the present does not seem to be joyous, but

grievous. Nevertheless afterward **it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness** to those who are exercised by it.

*In addition to gaining heaven, those who endure chastening hard times for the sake of Christ will share in His glory. (This is like sharing a prophet's reward. **Mat 10:41** He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a just one in the name of a just one will receive a just one's reward.)*

When covered by Christ's blood shed for atonement, the saved become holy before the Father. They are called sons and daughters of The Father and brothers & sisters to Christ. Their holyness even allows that they should judge angels.

Note about Hebrews 12:5-7

I accept that there will be times that God allows rebukes to happen when we make wrong decisions against God's will. If we commit crimes, we should expect to be punished. If we live in sin outside of marriage expect emotional pain. If we eat too much of bad foods do not be surprised if we become sick. All things have consequences as pleasant or unpleasant. God gives good gifts, but if we are outside God's will, God does not protect us against Satan's destructive nature. I believe that God loves us as our parent. Chastening is a protection against bad choices that defy God's will. We can still repent and change and ask God for forgiveness and help, then God can change circumstances for the better.

1Co 6:2 Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

1Co 6:3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels, not to mention *the things of this life?*

The Old Testament leaders were not promised holyness or being sons and daughters of the Father. Still not convinced?

1Pe 2:9 But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for possession, so that you might speak of the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

The saved in Christ are royal because they are sons and daughters of the Father. They are priests because they are holy, covered by Christ's blood. These promises were not made to those who died before Jesus.

Christ did preach to them in hell before he rose to the Father. They could accept Him then.

1Pe 3:18 For Christ also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, indeed being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit;

1Pe 3:19 in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,

1Pe 3:20 to disobeying ones, when once the long-suffering of God waited in *the* days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared (in which a few, that is, eight souls were saved through water);

1Pe 4:6 For to this *end* the gospel was preached also to the dead, that they might

be judged according to men in *the* flesh, but live according to God in *the* Spirit.

*They could accept him and be saved, but they were not promised holyness as brothers and sisters to him. They had suffered for faith, but **they were not promised something "better"** in Hebrews 11:40. They had not suffered for Jesus.*

There is one other possible interpretation of Heb.11:40. It is that Jesus was saying that He provided something better for all who accept Him, no matter when they had died. Therefore, when He preached in hell, all those who accepted Him then could also have been made perfect in Him and received the additional benefit of being holy in addition to being saved for heaven. The only difficulty with this thought would be that they had not suffered specifically for him during their lives.