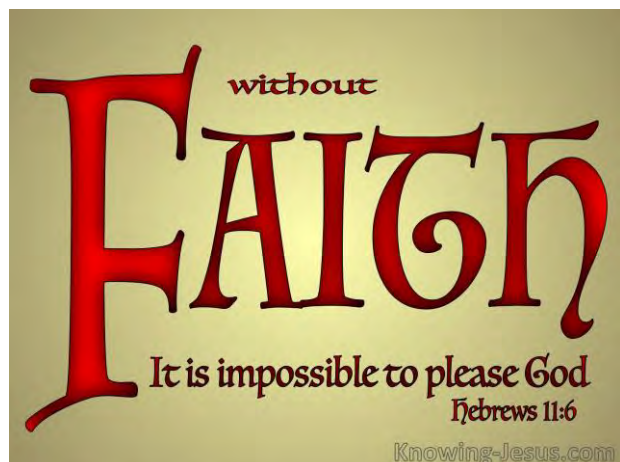


My Unificationist Memoirs Chapter 59

J. Scharfen
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(There is no Chapter 58)



If Homer's "Odyssey" is the classical work most befitting MFT, Hebrews Chapters 11 and 12 must be its biblical companions. These are among my favorite passages in scripture, or in any writing for that matter. The author, likely not Paul, recounts in a lengthy passage the history of providential figures and Israel, emphasizing that "by faith" they were able to endure suffering, trials, dispossession, displacement, and martyrdom because they envisioned the promise of God and His Kingdom. Their faith yielded hope and a belief in "things unseen." Exhorting readers to "strengthen" their "weak knees," the author reminds us that we are "surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses" and to receive the discipline of the Father who loves us as His sons and daughters.

I have not the slightest doubt that, while on MFT, I drew on this passage for morning service more than any other single reading. I cannot dissociate the words of Hebrews from sitting in the van early in the morning, with our simple breakfast and the day's product, praying as we prepared to begin our work.

Truly, we emerged in history as the sons and daughters of our Heavenly Parent, the ones who inherited the providential role, the promise and the indemnity, from the "great cloud of witnesses" who surrounded, inspired, cajoled, and cooperated with us moment to moment throughout our day. These saints joined us in our tear, sweat, and even blood soaked labors as we carried forward the will and intentions of Heaven. As we struggled to reverse the course of the Fall, and shed our corrupted natures, we grew in faith and began to envision a future marked by hope. The longer we persevered, the more true our hearts grew. And this transformation allowed us to see the world differently.

In this conversion of heart, everything is contained, for we see according to the state of our hearts. If we are angry and resentful, if we cannot bring ourselves to forgive our injuries, then we perceive without hope and proceed without love. To such a person, the world appears to be a great darkness. Injustice seems irresolvable, intractable, and the future holds no promise but unrelenting struggle. One's only recourse is to violence, and to seize power from the latest iteration of the historical "oppressor." The revolt, in fact, is against the nature of reality itself. The ultimate end of this state of being is nihilism and despair.

MFT and the words of Hebrews envision a different course. By accepting suffering, walking the path of restoration, enduring humiliation and persecution and holding to the promise, we could grow and apprehend a reality different from the one offered by the "world." By shedding our resentments and healing our wounds, embracing and loving our persecutors, our hearts opened to God and we became increasingly receptive to His Parental Love. Ours was and remains, the most revolutionary of movements. We will overturn the world, end injustice, and inaugurate a new age of hope. No human beings alive bear the future promise as we do. Not one.

Though our days may have seemed repetitive, our words repetitive, our actions repetitive, our mission an endless cycle of rising and working and collapsing in exhaustion, in fact, we always moved forward. Or possibly a better image, our lives were a spiral always moving upward. Certainly both images, forward and upward, accurately capture an aspect of our life on MFT. Either way, we escaped from the darkness that otherwise would have defined and swallowed our lives.

And we became able to see the intrinsic goodness of the world given to us as an expression of our Heavenly Parent's infinitely deep heart and endless love. And we are able to hear the birds sing.