

God's dealings with the children of men, so far as the Jewish record is concerned, is epitomized therein. The Apostle, in the plainest possible language, describes the leading events that had transpired up to his day among the fathers of his nation, setting forth with unmistakable clearness the power that they wielded through faith in God, in accomplishing the work that was assigned unto them; and he tells the Hebrews, in writing to them upon this subject, that it is impossible to please God without faith, for those who come unto him must believe that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

I expect that the Apostle Paul had a generation to deal with that were not dissimilar to the generation in which we live—a generation who had in their midst the Scriptures, the predictions of the holy Prophets, ministers who professed to have received the authority which they exercised in ministering to the people from a high source, and who were, in their own opinion at least, called of God, an elect people, a chosen generation, who rejoiced in the power that had been made manifest to and in behalf of their fathers, and which, to a certain extent, they had received. The Apostle, in this chapter, pointed out the power which their fathers exercised through faith, and to the mighty works that had been wrought thereby, and he endeavored to stir up within them a desire to exercise the same faith.

At the time that Paul wrote this epistle to the Hebrews, the Jews did not believe in living revelation; they did not believe that God spoke to his people by any manifestations such as their fathers had received. We are told that they garnished the sepulchres of the dead Prophets, that they revered the places of their

birth, honored their memories, and declared that if they had lived in the days of their fathers they would not have been guilty of putting the Prophets to death. But the Son of God and his Apostles were treated by them precisely as their fathers had treated the Prophets of old.

It is a good thing for us who live in this generation that we have this record in our midst. It is an encouraging thing to read the history of the past, and to learn about the treatment that men of God received in ancient days. It is encouraging for those who contend for the same faith to know that slander, persecution, ignominy and shame, and even death itself are not evidences of the falsity of a system, or of the falsity of the doctrines taught by any individual, because we have the history of the Apostles—some of the best men that have ever trod the earth, and of Jesus, the holiest and best man that ever trod the earth, or that ever will, and we find that he and they were persecuted, hated and despised, and their names were cast out as evil, and they were slain by a generation who professed to honor God and be very righteous, and who claimed to be the descendants of the Patriarchs of old, who were called the friends of God. If this story were told to us without our knowing anything of the circumstances, we should be reluctant to believe it. It would be a difficult thing to persuade us that human beings could have been so base and degraded, and so lost to every feeling of humanity as to persecute and crucify a pure being like Jesus, who had come from the Father for the express purpose of laying down his life as an expiation for their sins. But the record is before us. We have been familiar with it from our infancy, and in the minds of those who profess to have