

Hebrews 11

Day 1

“By Faith...” Read Hebrews 11:1-7

1. Write out the two ways that faith is described. 11:1

FYI: assurance/substance/certainty/confidence NT: 5287; *hupostasis*; a setting under (support), i.e. (figuratively) concretely, essence, or abstractly, assurance

Evidence/proof/conviction NT:1650 *elegchos*; proof, conviction

“The word assurance comes from the term meaning ‘to stand under.’ It often refers to a foundation that undergirds a building or to a title that documents ownership of property. Conviction means ‘proof,’ like courtroom exhibits of evidence’...Faith is not a blind leap in the dark; it’s more like the sure step of a trusting child toward the loving arms of its mother. Faith is confidence in God, that He is there, that He cares, that He is faithful, that He intervenes...and that He embraces us when we throw ourselves into His arms.

Hebrews 11 recounts biblical history through common men and women who demonstrated uncommon faith – faith that perplexed the people around them but that please the God above them.” - Charles Swindoll (5,6,9)

2. Underline the words that describe our hope in the following verses:

- 1 Peter 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, NIV
- Titus 2:13 Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ NKJV
- Colossians 1:27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. NIV
- 2 Thessalonians 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace,
- 1 Thessalonians 5:8b having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.
- Hebrews 6:19a We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.

3. Whom did the author credit with this kind of faith? 11:2

FYI: “Think of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (alluded to in 11:34)... [see Daniel 3:16-25] The faith of the trio consisted simply in taking God at His word and living their lives accordingly. Things yet future, as far as their experience went, were *present* to their faith. Things unseen were *visible* to their individual eyes of faith.” - R Kent Hughes (63,64)

4. What is one of the first things we need to comprehend? 11:3 (Cf. 1:2; See 1 Cor. 4:18; Psalm 33:6,9)

FYI: “All (space, time, matter) were framed by the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ (compare Hebrews 1:2; John 1:1-3,14; Psalm 33:6,9). Note also that the special creation of the universe is the very first object of this living, saving faith. Faith in redemption without faith in creation is impossible in any meaningful sense. Only the Creator can save.” - The Defender’s Study Bible

5. From 11:4:

- What did Abel bring? (What does this suggest about how Cain offered his sacrifice?)
- What did he receive?
- What legacy did he leave?

FYI: "Abel walked his talk. His authentic faith produced authentic worship which in turn produced authentic righteousness...[His] life testifies that true faith's worship and righteousness produce an eternal authentic witness."
- R. Kent Hughes (72)

Some think Abel's sacrifice was commendable because it was a blood sacrifice. Others think it was because Abel brought from the "firstborn" of his flock (see Gen. 4:4), while Cain's offering was not from the *firstfruits* of his crops.

6. What happened to Enoch and why? 11:5 Compare Genesis 5:24

7. What pleases God? 11:6 (See 2 Chronicles 16:9a)

- What do you need to believe about God to walk in faith? 11:6b
See Jer. 29:13 (Contrast James 2:19)

Digging Deeper

From Colossians 1:15-18,
what do we need to
understand about God?

8. What are some things God gives believers?

- Ephesians 2:4-6; 3:20
- 2 Timothy 1:7
- 2 Peter 1:3

9. What do each of the phrases in 11:7 indicate about Noah's faith, obedience, witness and inheritance?

- *By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen* (Cp. 11:1b)
- *in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household* (Cp. James 1:22)
- *by which he condemned the world* (See 2 Peter 2:5)
- *and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.* (Cp. 11:6b)

10. How is righteousness attained? Romans 1:16,17

11]. How did Noah's faith fit the description in 11:1?

- How was Noah's life like Enoch's? See Genesis 6:9

Applying the Word: *How would you describe your walk with God: steadfast, faltering, failing..?. How is what you believe about God's goodness and that He "rewards those who seek Him" affecting that?*

Day 2

Abraham's Faith. Read Hebrews 11:8-16

12]. When Abraham was called, what was he promised? 11:8 (See Genesis 12:1-3)

- How did he respond? What kind of risks do you see him taking in this move?

13]. How established did he become in the land? 11:9a (See Acts 7:5) How did his family benefit? 11:9b

- What perspective enabled him to persevere? 11:10 (See Revelation 21)

14]. What blessing did Abraham and Sarah receive? 11:11 In what was Sarah's faith grounded? 11:b (For God's promises see Genesis 13:16; 15:4; 17:19; 18:10)

- How did Abraham and Sarah react to this possibility at first? Genesis 17:17; 18:12

FYI: "Some people are under the impression that when a person has faith, he inwardly agrees to ignore the facts. They see faith and facts as mutually exclusive...In practice, there must be no reduction of faith to reason. And likewise, there must be no reduction of reason to faith. Biblical faith is a composite of the two. Abraham did not take an unreasonable leap of faith.

How did Abraham come to such a massive exercise of faith! He weighed the human impossibility of becoming a father against the divine impossibility of God being able to break His word and decided that since God is God, nothing is impossible. In other words, he believed that '[God] is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him' (11:6, KJV)."
- R. Kent Hughes (99,100)

15]. How impossible were the circumstances? 11:12a

- How abundantly was the promise fulfilled? 11:12b *Why do you think God worked in this way to bring about the nation of Israel?*

16. List the phrases that describe Abraham's faith in Romans 4:18-21?

"Against all hope Abraham believed"

- What example did he become for us? Romans 4:22-24

17. What made the faith of these people even more remarkable? 11:13

- When Abraham buried Sarah in the promised land, what did he say? Genesis 23:3,4
What was the only land Abraham owned? Gen. 23:20

18. How did they view earthly life? 11:14,16a (See Philippians 3:20; 1 Peter 1:4)

- If they hadn't had that view, what would have happened? 11:15
What would have happened with God's promises? How would their view of earthly life have helped the readers of Hebrews with their circumstances?

Digging Deeper

What heavenly view are we encouraged to have? Colossians 3:1-4

19. What was God's view of them? 11:16b (See also 11:4 and 11:5.)

Food for Thought: Just after the turn of the century, pioneer missionary Henry C. Morrison was returning to New York after forty years in Africa. That same boat also bore home the wildly popular President Theodor Roosevelt. As they entered New York harbor, the President was greeted with a huge fanfare. Morrison felt rather dejected. After all, he had spent four decades in the Lord's service. But then a small voice came to Morrison, saying, 'Henry...you're not home yet.'" - R. Kent Hughes (102)

Applying the Word: How does the desire of these people for a "better country" encourage you? What focus or thoughts about God help you persevere in your faith?

Day 3

The Faith of the Patriarchs. Read Hebrews 11:17-31

20. What test did Abraham endure? 11:17a (See Genesis 15:4-6; 17:19-20)

- Why would this seem opposed to God's ways and the promise? 11:17b,18

11:17 only son. Isaac was not really Abraham's only begotten son, for there was Ishmael, but he was counted by God as such, since Ishmael was begotten outside the promises of God, due to a lapse of faith for a time by Sarah and Abraham."
- The Defender's Study Bible

21]. How did Abraham reconcile God's request with His promise? 11:19

- What did Abraham receive? 11:19b

FYI: "This divine command was contrary to everything in Abraham- this common sense, his natural affections, his lifelong dream...The only thing natural was his utter revulsion! But Abraham knew God had spoken...Abraham's faith rested upon *the greatness of God*. (vs.6) Abraham's faith also was grounded on *the creative power of God*. By faith he understood *'that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible'* (v. 3). He knew that God could bring forth the living out of nothing....Abraham's faith was characterized with the *dynamic certitude* of v:1: *'Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.'* So certain was he of God's promise through Isaac that he saw it as present!"
- R. Kent Hughes (109)

"**Considered** means 'to calculate, to reason, to take into account.' And the idea is that, mentally, Abraham brought God into his reasoning. As he chose his response to this terrible test, he took into account all he knew about God."
- Charles Swindoll (27)

22. From Genesis 22:

- Where did this occur? 22:2
- What faith did Abraham display in 22:3-5?
- How far did Abraham's faith take him? 22:9-12
- What did God provide? 22:13
- What did Abram name the place? 22:14 How was this a picture of Christ? Romans 8:32

FYI: Mount Moriah "The elevation on which Solomon built the temple, where God appeared to David 'in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite'... A tradition which first appears...in Josephus...asserts that the 'Mount Moriah' is identical with the 'mountain' in 'the land of Moriah' of Genesis, and that the spot on which Jehovah appeared to David, and on which the temple was built, was the very spot of the sacrifice of Isaac."
- Smith's Bible Dictionary

23]. What did Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph's actions and words show about their belief in God's promises and their future hope? 11:20-22 (See accounts of their lives in Genesis 27-28; 48:16; 50:24-25)

FYI: "One person in one family in one village in one county in one nation can, even *alone*, be the one to start the beginning of a new line of believers, as that one begins to really pray for specific individuals, to talk when the moment opens up and to lead a few others one by one to know true truth... (Edith Schaeffer)"
- Charles Swindoll (33)

"What an encouragement there is here for any who are attempting to try to raise a godly family in today's secular desert. Moses was preserved by his parents' faith. Their faith, their prayers, their bravery, and their creativity saved him. And more, he became a great man of faith through their faith. His experience was exactly that of the preacher who gave his mother the tribute, 'My mother practices what I preach!'"
- R. Kent Hughes (118)

24. How did Moses' parents show their faith? 11:23 For what were they trusting God?

25. List the different choices Moses faced. 11:24-28

Things Moses didn't choose/	Things Moses chose/endured

FYI: Treasures of Egypt “The priceless treasures of King Tutankhamun’s tomb alone included several thousand pounds of pure gold.”
- The NIV Study Bible (1873)

26. What was Moses’ focus/perspective that motivated and strengthened him? 11:26b,27b
(Compare Paul’s perspective: Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

- How did Moses, in effect, endure the reproach/disgrace of Christ?

FYI: reproach/disgrace of Christ (11:26) “What does Christ have to do with Moses’s rejection of Egypt?...The covenant promises, in which these Old Testament saints believed, all find fulfillment in Jesus...Moses, therefore, was looking for the One who would redeem Israel, and the reproach he endured because he identified with the Israelites bore witness to the reproach Christ would bear for His people.”
- R. Albert Mohler, Jr. (188)

“When Moses suffered, he suffered with Christ--the same Christ whom the writer is encouraging his readers to identify with. It no doubt carried great weight with them to realize that they were being called to participate in the same kind of experiences and attitudes the great Moses had. Moses looked forward to the ‘reward.’ He bore in mind the just consequences of his actions and was not deceived by the glitter of the Egyptian court.” - Expositor’s Commentary

“The mental picture in verse 25 is of a fork in the road...The Greek word for *considering* (*regarded/esteeming*) in verse 26 means ‘to lead, to go before, to think.’ Moses thought ahead. He looked down the road to where his decision would take him. And what did he discover? That in eternity’s balance, the reward for enduring the reproach of Christ outweighed the experience of enjoying anything Egypt had to offer.”
- Charles Swindoll (38,39)

"Seeing Him who is invisible - the essence of theism (we do not look to an idol)...Their trust in promises was intimately connected to their trust in God. As they trusted in the unseen God, so they trusted in the unseen fulfillment of His promises.”
- R. Albert Mohler, Jr. (189)

Applying the Word: What “passing pleasures of sin” tempt you? What do those look like in when you “consider” God’s loving care and eternal rewards?

Day 4

“By Faith...” Read Hebrews 11:29-40

27. What actions did the people of Israel take by faith? 11:29,30 (*What so you see as some of the fears they would have had and the trust they showed. See Exodus 14 and Joshua 6 for these events.*)

28. How did Rahab show her faith and what was the consequence? 11:31 What was she risking? (See her statement of faith in Joshua 2:9-11)

29. Why do you think faith in the Lord so often involves a sacrifice or a risk? What tremendous consequences did they reap?

- What does God’s remembrance of these people indicate? What does it say about the example of just one person’s faith and obedience?

30. *For the accomplishments of the people mentioned in 11:32 see: Gideon (Judges 6,7); Barak (Judges 4:4-16); Samson (Judges 15:11-20;16:25-30); Jephthah (Judges 11); David (1 Samuel 17); Samuel (1 Samuel 15).*

- How were the accomplishments of these people summarized? 11:33a
- What 3 personal deliverances are mentioned? 11:33b, 34a
- What 4 amazing powers were they given? 11:34b, 35a

FYI: Shut the mouths of lions – See Daniel 6:16-22; ***Quenched the power of fire*** – See Daniel 3:23-28; ***Received back their dead*** – See 1 Kings 17:17-22; 2 Kings 4:34-5

31. What persecutions and deprivations did people endure? 11:35b-38

- What reason is given for their perseverance? 11:35b
- What commendation did God make of their lives? 11:38a

32. What did they all receive? 11:39a

- What didn't any of them receive? 11:39b

33. Why didn't they receive the promises during their lifetime on earth? 11:40 (Compare 5:9)

Food for Thought: "Not all the heroes of faith experienced immediate triumph over their circumstances, but all were blessed by God...The fulfillment of God's promises to them has now come in Jesus Christ, and their redemption too is now complete in Him."
- The NIV Study Bible (1874)

"A real Christian is an odd number anyway. He feels supreme love for One whom he has never seen, talks familiarly every day to Someone he cannot see, expects to go to heaven on the virtue of Another, empties himself in order to be full, admits he is wrong so he can be declared right, goes down in order to get up, is strongest when he is weakest, richest when he is poorest, and happiest when he feels worst. He dies so he can live, forsakes in order to have, gives away so he can keep, sees the invisible, hears the inaudible, and knows that which passeth knowledge."
(A. W. Tozer)"
- Charles Swindoll (9)

34. List the things that are described as "better" in Hebrews

- 7:19
- 7:22
- 8:6
- 9:23
- 10:34
- 11:35
- 11:40

FYI: "This chapter was composed by the preacher/writer with the hope of steeling the tiny, expatriate Hebrew church against the persecution that was mounting against them and was soon to fall in the genocidal waves of horror orchestrated by the mad emperor Nero. And, indeed, those who did persevere did so because of their profound faith in the promises of God's Word. So we must understand that Hebrews 11 was not just an entertaining and inspiring aside, but was essential life-and-death for the Hebrew church. It may well be the same for us and our children."
- R. Kent Hughes (147)

Applying the Word: *What do these examples tell you about the importance of a future, heaven-oriented faith? How does it encourage you in facing your fears? Christians have been accused of being "so heavenly minded they are of no earthly use." Why is it just the opposite?*

*Now faith is the certainty of things hoped for,
a proof of things not seen.*

Hebrews 11:1 NAS