

Hebrews Lesson 11

Hebrews Chapter 11

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Memory verses for this week: *2 Pet 3:13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

Introduction: In Chapter 10, we found that the law made nothing perfect, but the blood shed at Calvary was the perfect sacrifice that God required for us to have total forgiveness of sin. We now come directly to God by Jesus Christ, our High Priest who ever lives to make intercession for us. The wall of partition between man and God was broken down when Jesus died for our sins.

This week we cover the topic of faith as we get into Chapter 11 which has been called the bible's chapter of faith. It has also been called "God's Hall of Fame" and "God's Honor Roll." Whatever we call it, a careful study will show that this is the strongest chapter in the Bible on faith. This chapter not only shows us that salvation is by faith, but it also reveals that sanctification, separation and service are also by faith.

I. Definition of Faith

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.

To understand faith, we need to understand its definition. Verse 1 makes it pretty clear. Faith is a belief in things we have not seen, heard, or felt. It means we take God at His word. Verse 6 of this text tells us that it is impossible to please God without faith. Faith is one of the key ingredients in salvation when we come to Jesus with faith and repentance to be saved. By faith we accept that God created the universe, and all that is in the universe. No man was present when God created the heaven and the earth, so we must accept God on this fact.

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Job 38:1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

Job 38:2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

Job 38:3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

Job 38:4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

Job 38:5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

Job 38:6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

Job 38:7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

In verse 2, we find the proof of verse 1. Who were the elders. We have so many examples in this chapter. Abel received a good report, that he was righteous; and Enoch, that he pleased God, and walked with him. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generation, and also walked with God; and Abraham was a believer, a friend of God, and one that feared and obeyed him. Job was a man that feared God and shunned evil. Moses was a meek man, and a faithful one. King David was a man after God's own heart, and fulfilled his will; and so did many others. They all received this report by faith. 1.

Heb 11:3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

We have the account of creation in Genesis, and further explanation of how Jesus was there in the beginning of the earth with God the Father and the Holy Spirit in the book of John.

Gen. 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Gen 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

John 1:1-5, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

Col. 1:16-17, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

Charles Darwin and all the rest of the evolutionists missed the right track by a million miles, because they did not have this faith.

Ps 53:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good."

Prov. 26:10, "The great God that formed all things both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors."

II. The Faith of Abel

Heb 11:4 By faith Abel offered unto 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 speaketh.

God was pleased with Abel's offering, but he was not with Cain.

In Albert Barnes's notes on the bible, he said that Cain's offering of the fruits of the land was perfectly ok. He stated: "It could not have been because an offering of the fruits of the ground was not pleasing to God, for such an offering was commanded under the Jewish Law, and was not in itself improper." I disagree with his assumption. Most likely, Adam had taught those young men what kind of offering God required, and it was a blood sacrifice. Cain brought the very best he could from the works of his own hands, but that was not good enough in God's sight. Those who come to God one day and stand in their own works will not enter into heaven. Only by the shed blood of Jesus will we stand in God's presence. I agree with what the Bible Believers' study guide said on this verse:

11:4 Abel's sacrifice of faith was more acceptable to God than Cain's due to both the nature of the sacrifice and the attitude in which it was offered. That the nature of the sacrifice (a substitutionary animal) was more acceptable than Cain's inferior offering of the fruit of the ground is attested in two places in this verse: Abel presented "a more excellent sacrifice," and God was "testifying of his gifts." Also see 12:24, in which still another reference is made to the nature of Abel's sacrifice. i

Heb 12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

iW.A. Criswell, *Believer's study Bible [computer file], electronic ed.*, Logos Library System, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1991 by the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies.

Gen 4:4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

Gen 4:5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wrath, and his countenance fell.

Abel's offering was an animal sacrifice, and it was a blood sacrifice. Cain's sacrifice came from the fruit of the ground, the same ground that God had cursed. Cain's offering was the works of his hands, and works can never take away one sin.

Hebrews 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

Brother Bynum in his notes on Hebrews Chapter 11 said that Abel's Faith Declares That God May Be Approached Only by Sacrifice.

Gen. 4:3-10, "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wrath, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wrath? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

1. Salvation by faith would show the Jews that they to must be saved that way.
2. A blood sacrifice is a "more excellent sacrifice."
3. He obtained witness that he was righteous."

Rom.5:9, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

1. Abel died by the hand of his brother. In this he is a type of Christ.

Matt. 23:35, "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."

Prov. 21:27, "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?"

III. The Faith of Enoch

Heb 11:5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and 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 that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death. We find this in Genesis 5:24.

Genesis 5:24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

The only other man who was recorded to not die was Elijah. He was translated in the presence of Elisha.

2 Kings 2:1-11 And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. 2 And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel. 3 And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. 4 And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. 5 And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. 6 And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. 7 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. 8 And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. 9 And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. 10 And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. 11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there

appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Another interesting fact about Enoch is that he was one of two men who were recorded to have walked with God. (Noah being the other.) Perhaps the responsibility of being a father caused Enoch to walk with God. Until Methuselah was born, we have no record that he walked with God. Every parent should understand how serious a job we have and do our best to seek God's help and guidance every day of our lives. To walk with God means we have to agree with him. A walk with the Lord will draw us closer to Him. Enoch had a testimony that he pleased God, and as we have read in verse 6, it is impossible to please God unless we have faith. Anyone that ever comes to God has to believe He is God and trust Him in faith.

The believer must have faith and must believe that God is a rewarder of those who believe.

Heb. 4:2, "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

Ps. 78:22, "Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation."

IV. The Faith of Noah

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

During the days of Noah, the bible records that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually, but Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord. The bible is full of examples of how one man can make a gigantic difference when his heart is turned wholly to the Lord.

Gen 6:5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Gen 6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

Gen 6:7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

Gen 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

2 Pet 2:5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

1 Pet 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1 Pet 3:19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

1 Pet 3:20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

1 Pet 3:21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

Some take verse 20 to read that the water saved Noah and his family. It was not the water but the ark they were in that saved them. God has an ark for the child of God today. Those who know Jesus are secure and will not perish. But when the judgment comes on this old world, only those inside the ark will be saved. Baptism is a picture of what saves man today. It shows the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. In that image, we see our old man dying (to the things of the flesh) the new spiritual man rising up to walk in newness of life.

1 Cor 15:1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

1 Cor 15:2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

1 Cor 15:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

1 Cor 15:4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Rom 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Moses showed the work of faith as he prepared the ark. Works can never produce faith, but true faith produces works.

James 2:20, "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"

James 2:26, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

The result of his faith was that he saved his house.

Gen. 6:22, "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."

Moses' testimony of faith condemned the world.

Gen. 7:23, "And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark."

V. Faith of Abraham and Sarah

Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Heb 11:9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

Heb 11:10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

You and I are like Abraham in that we too look for a city whose builder and maker is God. And like Abraham (if we know Christ as Savior), we will see that city one day. Abraham was told to go to a place he did not even know, and by faith he trusted God and went. Some days, you and I face things that we do not know how we will manage to get through. In those times, we need to have the faith to know that God is with us every step of the way.

In studying Chapter 11, we need to remember that the Jews in early New Testament times were legalists. The keeping of the Law and works, counted for everything with them. Hebrews 11 shows that they were in error, because faith is superior to any form of legalism. In vs. 4-7, we studied examples of faith before the flood in Abel, Enoch and Noah. In all the examples of faith in Heb. 11, we find no mention of Law keeping of any kind. We do see works, but faith always preceded the works. Never forget that faith is not of human origin, but of divine origin.

Rom. 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." 1.

Heb 11:11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Heb 11:12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

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

Heb 11:14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

Heb 11:15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

Heb 11:16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

There are so many miracles recorded in the bible. From the physical human standpoint, perhaps none are greater than to see a 90 year old woman bearing a child, from a husband who was a 100 years of age. With man, this is impossible, but with God, all things are possible.

Gen 17:17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

Gen 17:18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

Gen 17:19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

J. Vernon McGee said this about Sarah.

When God told Sarah at ninety years of age that she was to have a child, she laughed because it was ridiculous—it seemed utterly preposterous. She couldn't accept it, but God gave her the strength and power to believe Him. Many of us need such strength. Do you remember the man who brought the demon-possessed boy to the Lord Jesus? The Lord Jesus told the man that He could help him if he would believe. The man said, "I believe. Help thou mine unbelief." The man recognized that he had a weak faith, but the Lord Jesus must have given him the faith because He healed the boy (see Mark 9:17–27). Sarah had a little boy named Isaac. Why? She "received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised." Sarah represents the power (or strength) of faith. **ii**

iiJ. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

Brother Bynum had some comments about Sarai

Gen. 16:1-3, "Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife."

Gen. 18:10-15, "And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh."

Here is the example of an unbeliever who was changed and is here shown as an example of faith. This was a triumph of faith.

Ex 32:13. *"Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever."*

Rom. 4:18, *"Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be."*

Heb 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.

Heb 11:18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

Heb 11:19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Abraham had tremendous faith. Even when God told him to go and sacrifice his only son Isaac on the mountain in Moriah, Abraham had such faith that he believed if he did have to put Isaac to death as a sacrifice, God would raise him from the dead. This was a test only, and we know as Abraham raised the knife to slay Isaac, an angel of the Lord stayed his hand and told Abraham that there was a ram in the bush to offer rather than Isaac's. We have that substitute lamb

today, and that is Jesus Christ. Oh to have the faith in God that Abraham and Sarah had. He believed that what God had promised, he was able to do.

Rom 4:20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

Rom 4:21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Isaac typified Jesus Christ when he and Abraham went up on the mountain there in Moriah. Isaac only died symbolically, but God's Son died in reality.

Gen. 22:1-2, "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

Gen. 22:10-12, "And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."

Rom. 8:32, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Isaac was raised symbolically, but God actually raised His Son from the dead. 1.

Acts 4:10, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole."

VI. The Faith of Isaac and Jacob

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

Heb 11:21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

As Abraham was blessed by his great faith, his son Isaac was a man of faith. God blessed Isaac with two sons, Jacob and Esau. And through Jacob, the nation of Israel was born. God blessed Jacob and Esau with prophetic blessings.

Gen 27:26 And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

Gen 27:27 And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed:

Gen 27:28 Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

Gen 27:29 Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

Jacob blessed Joseph's two sons.

Gen 48:13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him.

Gen 48:14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

Gen 48:15 And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

Gen 48:16 The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

Gen 48:17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

Gen 48:18 And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

Gen 48:19 And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

Gen 48:20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

VII. Faith of Joseph

Heb 11:22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

Joseph asked the nation of Israel to carry his bones out of Egypt when they left.

Gen 50:24 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Gen 50:25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

Joseph believed God's promise to Israel about them being delivered.

Gen 15:13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

Gen 15:14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

Gen 15:15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

Gen 15:16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

The book of Genesis gives a large amount of space to Joseph. He was one of God's choice servants, yet only one verse here is devoted to him.

1. Joseph remembered the promises of God.

Gen. 50:25, "And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence."

2. His commandment proves his faith in the promises.

Josh. 24:32, "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph."

It is interesting to note that the book of Genesis begins with a perfect creation and the first man is seen in the paradise of Eden. The book ends with a coffin in Egypt.

VIII. Faith of Moses

Heb 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

Heb 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, 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 season;

Heb 11:26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Moses was born during a very horrible time when the king had commanded that all male children be killed at birth. But Moses' parents feared God more than man, and came up with a plan to try and save the baby's life. We don't have time to go into the story, but you know how his mother made a small ark and placed it in the bulrushes in the river where the Hebrews were to drown the babies.

And in the perfect plan of God, Pharaoh's daughter came along and found the baby and raised it as her own, hiring Moses' mother to be the baby's keeper. That mother no doubt taught Moses the truth, and at an early age, he decided to serve God rather than the flesh. He chose to suffer with the people of God.

Heb 11:27 By faith he forsook 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 that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

Heb 11:29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

Moses was chosen by God at the tender age of 80 to lead the nation of Israel out of Egypt to the promised land. And there are so many instances of faith that we can not go into the details, but Moses was a man of faith. God called him "my servant." No greater words could be spoken of a man than to be a true servant of the Lord.

Josh 1:2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

There is a lot to be said about faith in regards to Moses and his parents.

1. The faith of Moses parents. It is hard to believe that his mother so trusted God that she would take him down to the very river where Pharaoh was drowning the babies to find a way of deliverance for her child.

Exo 2:2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

Exo 2:3 And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.

Exo 2:4 And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

Exo 2:5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.

Exo 2:6 And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children.

2. Verses 24 through 26 speak of the faith of Moses in Egypt.

(1) He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter it says in verse 24. This means he refused wealth, honor and perhaps the throne of Egypt.

(2) He refused the pleasures of sin. Why?

Rather he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God and suffer the reproach of Christ, considering it to be greater riches. He looked towards the future reward.

3. Verse 27 covers The faith of Moses in forsaking Egypt. while verse 28 speaks of his faith in the keeping of the passover.

4. With Moses' faith, Israel crosses the Red Sea by faith. What an example Moses is to the believer to show how we should always trust God.

IX. The Faith of Israel and Rahab

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

Heb 11:31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Joshua and the nation of Israel performed many great things by faith under the leadership of the Lord.

1. Sieges often lasted for years, but this one lasted only 7 days.
2. Marching and trumpets cannot bring walls down, but faith can do this and more.

Josh. 6:2-5, And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

Josh. 6:20, So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

Matt. 17:20, And Jesus said ... If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

3. We should do things according to God's plan, not the plan of the world.

II Cor. 10:4, (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.)

J. Vernon McGee said this about Joshua's faith.

We have in the life of Joshua the watch of faith. If you had not met Joshua about the fifth day they were marching around the city of Jericho, you might have said to him, "It doesn't look like you are getting very far. Why are you doing such a foolish thing? You are a general with a whole lot of intelligence, but you are not using your intelligence."

He would have said to you, "You have forgotten that I saw the captain of the hosts of the Lord, and He told me that headquarters is not in my tent, but in heaven. I found out that I am not the general. I happen to be a buck private in the rear ranks, and I am to take my orders from Him. He said to march around the city, and I am marching around. You just watch—these walls will come down. I'm following the strategy of Someone who knows."

In Joshua we see the watch of faith. Faith to believe God—General Joshua had learned that. iii

iiiJ. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

And Rahab, a harlot of the night, was saved and was used to help bring the walls of Jericho down. She and her family were spared when Israel overthrew Jericho. God can use anyone who truly wants to be used in the service of the Lord.

Josh 6:23 And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

Josh 6:24 And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

Josh 6:25 And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

X. Other Numerous Heroes of Faith

Heb 11:32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of 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, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

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, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

Heb 11:37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

Heb 11:38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

Heb 11:39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

Heb 11:40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

J. Vernon McGee said this about those ‘other’ men of faith.

The writer of this epistle has come to a point in the history of the Old Testament at which he says, “What more can I say now?” He could go in any direction and could list heroes of faith, if you want to call them that. He could demonstrate how faith has worked in the lives of many men and women. So he gives us a list and makes it clear that he is not able to discuss them in detail, but that all should be included in this marvelous chapter.

We see the war of faith in the lives of these men he mentions. Not one of them is dealt with in detail, but all have something in common: everyone mentioned here was a ruler. Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, and Samuel were all judges; David was a king. They were all rulers, and they were all engaged in a war for God. Each one of them won that battle by faith.

I will not be able to go into detail with each of these men, but I would like to take note of this man Gideon. Many people say that all they have in their church is a “little Gideon’s band.” What they mean is that they have a small number of people. But, my friend, it was not the small number that was significant about Gideon’s band—it was the faith these men had. Yet Gideon was a man who actually had very little faith at the time when the Lord called him.

Gideon was a judge at the time the Midianites had taken the land of Israel. The Hebrews couldn’t even harvest their crops—the Midianites would take it from them. This young man Gideon was down by the winepress harvesting grain. That is not where he should have been. The grain was usually taken up to the top of the hill, pitched up in the air where the wind could drive the chaff away. In that land the wind blows in the afternoon. But Gideon was a coward. He took the grain down there by the winepress—way down in the valley, where no one could see him. Talk about an operation of frustration! You can just see Gideon down there pitching up the grain.

When there is no wind to blow the chaff away, do you know what is happening? The straw comes falling down around his neck. I can’t think of anything more uncomfortable and discouraging than to pitch up the grain and have all the straw down your back!

Well, that was Gideon, and it was at that time the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said, “... thou mighty man of valour” (Jud. 6:12).

That really wasn’t the proper address for Gideon, and he didn’t think the angel was talking to him. I think he looked up and said, “Who me?” He was the biggest coward of all, and he was willing to admit it. “Why,” he said, “I belong to the smallest tribe. My family is the small family in the tribe. And I’m the smallest potato in the family. You picked the smallest pebble on the beach—I’m a nobody.”

And God said to him, “That’s the reason I picked you—because you are a nobody. I want you to believe Me.” We will find that God began to strengthen the

faith of that man until the day came when with only three hundred men he was able to get a victory over the Midianites. Faith operated in the life of this man Gideon.

How many Christians today feel like there must be some great big show, some big demonstration, some big meeting if the ministry is going to be of the Lord? May I say to you, God doesn't move quite like that. I'm of the opinion that the greatest work for God is being done by individuals and by little groups throughout this country and around the world. I was amazed to meet a man in Lebanon who, by the way, is a member of the Gideons International. He is an active Christian layman and a real witness for Christ. You don't hear about him—he's not one who is getting publicity. And then, in the land of Israel, there is a very wonderful Hebrew Christian who has been persecuted a great deal, but he is a real witness to God. There are a great many "Gideons" around today, and they move by faith. God will use a nobody if he will trust Him. God is moving in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.

The writer to the Hebrews mentions Gideon, Barak, and Samson. I don't know whether I would have put Samson in the list or not. Samson was a real failure as far as his service was concerned, but He did believe God. There was a time when the Spirit of God came upon him and he began to deliver Israel; he never completed the job, however. The writer goes on to mention Jephthah and David (oh, we could stop and talk a long time about David!) and Samuel and the prophets. But the writer makes it clear that time would fail him to mention them all.

Now notice what all these men did—theirs was the war of faith: iv

Mighty deeds of faith were accomplished by all those mentioned. Just think of the armies God overthrew with the 300 men that Gideon led. Faithfulness produces a good report of faith. There are many who are not named in the bible who have died with faith that you and I might have the opportunity to come to know Christ as our Lord and Savior. It says in verse 39 that all of these who died had not received the promise, because Christ had not yet come and died. We will all rise together one day when Christ returns and receive the promise with all of those who died in faith.

1. Gideon and his 300 men.

Jud. 7:16, *And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.*

- a. The trumpets speak of the word of God.

Isa. 58:1, *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.*

ivJ. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

b. The empty pitchers, speaks of our bodies being empty of sin, and ready to be broken for God.

Psa. 51:17, The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

c. The lamps within the pitchers speak of our profession and witness of salvation.

Matt. 5:16, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

2. Barak. We might doubt his faith if we went only by Judges 4, where God has to use a woman. He is one of those who "...out of weakness were made strong...." v. 34

3. Samson, his story is in Judges 13-16. By faith he did tremendous feats for God. After his great failure, we see him triumphing in the end by faith.

Judg 16:28 And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

4. Jephthah is one whose faith *seems* dim. He was "the son of an harlot."

Judg 11:11 Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the LORD in Mizpeh.

He covenanted with the Lord and was endued with power. v. 29.

Judg 11:29 Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon.

The Lord gave him victory. v. 32

Judg 11:32 So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.

1. Some of basic outline and some notes from Tabernacle Baptist Church by permission of Danny Taylor.
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