

# Lesson 10

## The Assurance of Our Hope

Hebrews 11:1-40

If you've been around the church or Bible study long, you've probably heard Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." As we come to the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, we find snapshots of many faithful people from the Old Testament. Even if we've heard it before, let's ask the Lord to give us fresh eyes and willing hearts to see what He would show us.

*"And 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 seek Him."*

### The Reason for Our Faith

In Hebrews 11, the author is continuing his thoughts from chapter 10.

*Hebrews 11:6*

Read Hebrews 10:39-11:7.

1. What is the result of our faith according to Hebrews 10:39?
  
2. Looking back to Hebrews 10:23, why should we "hold fast to the confession of our hope"?

God does not call us to blind faith or to faith in something He does not reveal. He does not offer placating clichés like *just have faith; it was meant to be; or it will all work out*. Instead, He declares His trustworthiness in the lives of those who have gone before us. He is the Great I AM, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is the One who led the Israelites out of Egypt. He has spoken through the prophets; He has spoken through the angels; He has spoken through His Son – the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). Now, He offers us glimpses into the lives of those who've dared to trust Him, inviting us to do the same.

3. How did the "men of old" gain approval according to Hebrews 11:1-2?

4. In Romans 4:1-5, how was Abraham declared righteous?
  
5. In Hebrews 11:3, how powerful is the word of God? How was the world made (Genesis 1 and Psalm 33:6-9)? How does God's power influence your faith?
  
6. In Hebrews 11:4, by what did Abel offer his sacrifice to God?
  - ❖ Read 1 John 3:11-12 for more insight into the story of Cain and Abel (which is found in Genesis 4). How did God view Abel's deeds?
  
  - ❖ According to Hebrews 11:4 and Romans 4:5, what made Abel's actions righteous?
  
7. We won't find a lot of information about Enoch from the Bible, but from Genesis 5:21-24, how did Enoch walk? From Hebrews 11:5, how did God feel about Enoch?
  
8. Looking to Genesis 6:5-9, why did God choose to save Noah? From Genesis 6:9, how did Noah walk?
  
9. What similarities do you see between Noah and Enoch?
  - ❖ According to Hebrews 11:6, why would God have been pleased with them?
  
  - ❖ Applying this principle to your life, how can you please God?

### **Waiting for the Promise**

In Hebrews 11:8, the author begins the discussion of Abraham, which will continue through verse 19. The story of Abraham (called Abram until God changed his name in Genesis 17) is found in Genesis 12-25.

These promises that God made to Abraham are part of the covenant that He established with him—the Abrahamic Covenant. It is an everlasting covenant (Genesis 17:7) and is still in effect.

The Old Covenant that was established through Moses is the one that the New Covenant replaces. The Old Covenant and the Abrahamic Covenant *are not* the same thing.

Read Hebrews 11:8-22.

10. From Genesis 12:1-4, what did God call Abraham to leave? Where was Abraham going (Genesis 12:1) – did he know where he was going according to Hebrews 11:8?
  
11. What did God promise Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3? What does God add to that promise in Genesis 15:18-19?
  
12. In what did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob live according to Hebrews 11:9?
  
13. How is our situation similar to theirs according to 2 Corinthians 5:1-5? How are our bodies described?

The land of Israel was promised to Abraham. While he and his sons did dwell in the land, they lived as “strangers and exiles” among other peoples (Hebrews 11:13). Not until many generations later, after 430 years of slavery in Egypt and forty years in the Wilderness, were the Hebrew people able to take the land of Israel as their own under the leadership of Joshua. The author summarizes the faith of the people who knew these promises but lived without seeing the fulfillment in Hebrews 11:13-16.

14. Read Hebrews 11:13-16. How did those people view God’s promises?
  
15. What did they desire? Where could they have returned (Hebrews 11:15)?
  
16. What has God delivered you from, and where does He promise to take you in 2 Timothy 4:18?

17. The heavenly city God has prepared for them and for us will ultimately be established after Christ's second coming as part of the new heaven and new earth. From Revelation 21:1-7, what are some promises we can look forward to?

In Hebrews 11:17-19, the author resumes speaking specifically about Abraham.

18. From Hebrews 11:11-12 and Genesis 17:21, who was Abraham's heir through whom God would continue his covenant (promises)?
19. Read over the story of Abraham's near-sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22:1-14. How did Abraham exercise faith? According to Hebrews 11:19, what did Abraham believe God could do? How was his faith in God and His promises unwavering? See also Romans 4:21.
20. The boy nearly slaughtered by his father's knife on the altar also exercised soul-saving faith. How are Isaac and his son Jacob portrayed as exercising faith (Hebrews 11:20-21)?

Jacob, who was named Israel by God, had twelve sons who became the twelve tribes of Israel. One of those sons was Joseph (Genesis 37-50).

21. What were the orders Joseph gave concerning his bones in Genesis 50:24-25? How does that display faith in the promises of God?

### **Faith in the Face of Fear**

Read Hebrews 11:23-31.

22. Moses is the focus of the next several verses in Hebrews. What were the results of Moses' parents' faith? (The "king's edict" found in Exodus 1:16 and 22 was that all male babies of the Israelites should be killed.)

23. How could Moses have avoided suffering with the people of God and what did he choose to do instead (Hebrews 11:24-26)?
24. As he went before Pharaoh and led the Israelites out of Egypt, what did he consider and why was he not afraid? See Hebrews 11:26-27.
25. The author of the letter to the Hebrews credits faith to the Israelites who crossed the Red Sea. In Exodus 14:9-12, what was their original reaction?
- ❖ How does God's crediting them with faith encourage you?

Hebrews 11:30 refers to the first battle for the Promised Land, which is found in Joshua 6. The Israelites marched around Jericho as God commanded them for six days. On the seventh day, after marching, they erupted in worship and the city walls of Jericho fell down. The Israelites' first victory in the Promised Land was a display of God's incredible power to those who believe.

26. Upon whom did the Israelites rely? What was their faith in?

Rahab (Hebrews 11:31) was one of the inhabitants of Jericho who made a life-saving decision when she helped the Israelite spies in Joshua 2.

27. What did she do in Joshua 2:3-11? In whom did she have faith?

### **Faith and Circumstance**

Finish reading Hebrews 11:32-40.

Hebrews 11:32 continues the list of the faithful.

28. What are some outcomes of their faith in Hebrews 11:33-35a?
29. In Hebrews 11:35b, there is a shift. What are some outcomes of faith listed in Hebrews 11:35b-38?

30. After considering questions 28 and 29, do you think our circumstances can be seen as evidence of our faith (or lack thereof)?

31. How were these people of faith regarded according to 11:39? What did they not receive?

❖ In the context of Hebrews 1-10, who do you think it was that they were promised but did not receive?

32. What do we have under the New Covenant that they did not have? See Hebrews 4:16, 7:27 and 10:17-18.

**Prepare for Life Question:**

God calls us to be people of faith, and He gives us glimpses of His faithfulness in the lives of the ones who've gone before us. Their faith is noteworthy only because the One in whom they put their faith is faithful!

33. As you consider the faithfulness of God in the lives of these ancient people, take some time to thank God for the ways you can see His faithfulness in your life.

**Lecture Notes:**  
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