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For Hebrews 11

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HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

In Your Group Read Hebrews chapter eleven (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As a Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF HEBREWS CHAPTER 11 King James Version

HEB 11: [1] Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. **[2]** For by it the elders obtained a good report. **[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. **[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. **[5]** By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: (Gen. 5:24) for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. **[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. **[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. **[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. **[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: **[10]** For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. **[11]** Through faith also Sarah 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. **[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. (Gen. 15:5-6; 22:17; 32:12) **[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. **[14]** For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. **[15]** And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. **[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. **[17]** By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, **[18]** Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: (Gen. 21:12) **[19]** Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. **[20]** By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. **[21]** By faith Jacob, when he was a-dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. **[22]** By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. **[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. **[24]** By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; **[25]** Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; **[26]** Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. **[27]** By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. **[28]** Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. **[29]** By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. **[30]** By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. **[31]** By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. **[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: **[33]** Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, **[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. **[35]** Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: **[36]** And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: **[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; **[38]** (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. **[39]** And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: **[40]** God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the “Additional Information” in each box provided.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSES 1-2

Hebrews 11:[1] Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. [2] For by it the elders obtained a good report. (King James Version)

[1] Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. [2] This is what the ancients were commended for. **(New International Version)**

[1] Now faith means that we have full confidence in the things we hope for, it means being certain of things we cannot see. [2] It was this faith that won their reputation for the saints of old. **(Phillips Translation)**

[1] To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see. [2] It was by their faith that the men of ancient times won God's approval. **(Today's English Version)**

[1] Now faith means that we are confident of what we hope for, convinced of what we do not see. [2] It was for this that the men of old won their record. **(Moffatt Translation)**

Additional Information: Consider the context of these verses. The context is that which proceeds or follows any part of a discourse.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSE 3

Hebrews 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. (King James Version)

³Because of our faith, we know that the world was made at God's command. We also know that what can be seen was made out of what cannot be seen.

(Contemporary English Version)

[3] By faith, we see the world called into existence by God's word, what we see created by what we don't see. **(The Message)**

[3] And it is only by faith that our minds accept as fact that the whole universe was formed by God's command – that the world which we can see has come into being through what is invisible. **(Phillips Translation)**

[3] It was by faith that we understand that the world was created by one word from God, so that no apparent cause can account for the things we can see.

(Jerusalem Bible)

[3] By faith we understand that the worlds [during the successive ages] were framed (fashioned, put in order, and equipped for their intended purpose) by the word of God, so that what we see was not made out of things which are visible. **(The Amplified New Testament)**

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSE 4

Hebrews 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. (King James Version)

⁴It was by faith that Abel obeyed God and brought an offering that pleased God more than Cain's offering did. God accepted Abel and proved it by accepting his gift; and though Abel is long dead, we can still learn lessons from him about trusting God.

(Living Bible)

[4] [Prompted, actuated] by faith Abel brought God a better and more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, because of which it was testified of him that he was righteous [that he was upright and in right standing with God], and God bore witness by accepting and acknowledging his gifts. And though he died, yet [through the incident] he is still speaking. [Gen. 4:3-10] **(The Amplified New Testament)**

[4] Because Abel had faith, he gave a better gift in worship to God than Cain. His gift pleased God. Abel was right with God. Abel died, but by faith he is still speaking to us. **(The New Life Testament)**

[4] It was by faith that Abel offered God a richer sacrifice than Cain did, and thus won from God the record of being 'just,' on the score of what he gave; he died, but by his faith he is speaking to us still. **(The Moffatt Translation)**

Additional Information: You may want to read Genesis 4:3-10 and discuss.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSES 5-6

Hebrews 11: [5] By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: (Gen. 5:24) for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. [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. (King James Version)

⁵Enoch had faith and did not die. He pleased God, and God took him up to heaven. That's why his body was never found. ⁶But without faith no one can please God. We must believe that God is real and that he rewards everyone who searches for him. **(Contemporary English Version)**

By an act of faith, Enoch skipped death completely. "They looked all over and couldn't find him because God had taken him." We know on the basis of reliable testimony that before he was taken "he pleased God." It's impossible to please God apart from faith. And why? Because anyone who wants to approach God must believe both that he exists and that he cares enough to respond to those who seek him. (verses 5-6) **(The Message)**

⁵Enoch trusted God too, and that is why God took him away to heaven without dying; suddenly he was gone because God took him. Before this happened God had said how pleased he was with Enoch. ⁶You can never please God without faith, without depending on him. Anyone who wants to come to God must believe that there is a God

and that he rewards those who sincerely look for him. **(Living Bible)**

By faith Enoch was carried away to another life without passing through death; he was not to be found, because God had taken him. For it is the testimony of Scripture that before he was taken he had pleased God, and without faith it is impossible to please him; for anyone who comes to God must believe he exists and that he rewards those who search for him. (verses 5-6) **(New English Bible)**

[5] By faith, Enoch was taken up to God. He did not die: “No one could find Enoch because God had taken him to heaven.” Genesis 5:24 Before Enoch was taken up, it was said that he pleased God. **[6]** If someone doesn’t believe in God, he cannot please God, because the person who comes to God must believe that He lives. That person must also believe that God will give rewards to the people who are searching for Him. **(The Simple English Bible)**

[5] It was by faith that Enoch was taken to heaven, so that he never died (*he was not overtaken by death, for God had taken him away*). For before he was taken to heaven, his record was that *he had satisfied God*; **[6]** and apart from faith it is impossible *to satisfy him*, for the man who draws near to God must believe that he exists and that he does reward those who seek him. **(The Moffatt Translation)**

[5] Enoch was carried away from this earth. He never died. The Scripture says that, before Enoch was carried off, he was a man who truly pleased God. Later, people could not find Enoch, because God took Enoch to be with him. This happened to Enoch because he had faith. **[6]** Without faith, a person cannot please God. Any person who comes to God must believe that God is real. And any person who comes to God must believe that God rewards those people who truly want to find him. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: You may want to read Genesis 5:21-24 and discuss.

The bible uses “faith” in ways that link it with what is assuredly and certainly true. The Bible shifts our attention from subjective experience and centers it on the object of our faith – God himself. Two words in Hebrews (*bath* and *mahseh*) express the idea of trust in or reliance on another. In Abraham’s case (Gen. 15:6) faith was accepted by the Lord in place of a righteousness that Abraham did not possess. Faith is also expressed in actions as Hebrews 11 shows many examples.

Only when one recognizes Jesus as the Son of God and commits himself completely to him does a person believe in the fullest, saving sense. This commitment involves accepting his words and making them the framework of one’s life. In each age, faith is accepted by God in place of a righteousness that no human being could have. (Expository Dict. Of Bible Words by Lawrence O. Richards, p.113).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11 VERSE 7

Hebrews 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. (King James Version)

⁷ It was by faith that Noah heard God’s warnings about things he could not yet see. He obeyed God and built a large boat to save his family. By his faith, Noah showed

that the world was wrong, and he became one of those who are made right with God through faith. **(New Century Version)**

By faith, Noah built a ship in the middle of dry land. He was warned about something he couldn't see, and acted on what he was told. The result? His family was saved. His act of faith drew a sharp line between the evil of the unbelieving world and the rightness of the believing world. As a result, Noah became intimate with God.

(verse 7) **(The Message)**

⁷Noah was another who trusted God. When he heard God's warning about the future, Noah believed him even though there was then no sign of a flood, and wasting no time, he built the ark and saved his family. Noah's belief in God was in direct contrast to the sin and disbelief of the rest of the world—which refused to obey—and because of his faith he became one of those whom God has accepted. **(The Living Bible)**

[7] It was through his faith that Noah, on receiving God's warning of impending disaster with reverence, constructed an ark to save his household. This action of faith condemned the unbelief of the rest of the world, and won for Noah the righteousness before God which follows such a faith. **(Phillips Translation)**

[7] Noah had faith. So he built an ark to save his family. He built it because of his great respect for God. God had warned him about things that could not yet be seen. Because of his faith he showed the world that it was guilty. Because of his faith he was considered right with God. **(New International Reader's Version)**

[7] It was Noah's faith that led God to warn him about things which he couldn't see. And since he was a God-fearing man, Noah built a houseboat to save his family. And by his faith Noah told everyone that the world was going to be destroyed, and became one of those heirs whom God says are perfectly holy because of their faith. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

[7] Noah was warned by God about things that Noah could not yet see. But Noah had faith and respect for God. So Noah built a large boat to save his family. With his faith, Noah showed that the world was wrong. And Noah became one of those people who are made right with God through faith. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: You may want to read Genesis 6:13-22 and discuss.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11 VERSES 8-10

Hebrews 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. [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: [10] For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (King James Version)

By an act of faith, Abraham said yes to God's call to travel to an unknown place that

would become his home. When he left he had no idea where he was going. By an act of faith he lived in the country promised him, lived as a stranger camping in tents. Isaac and Jacob did the same, living under the same promise. Abraham did it by keeping his eye on an unseen city with real, eternal foundations – the City designed and built by God. (verses 8-10) **(The Message)**

⁸Abraham had faith and obeyed God. He was told to go to the land that God had said would be his, and he left for a country he had never seen. ⁹Because Abraham had faith, he lived as a stranger in the promised land. He lived there in a tent, and so did Isaac and Jacob, who were later given the same promise. ¹⁰Abraham did this, because he was waiting for the eternal city that God had planned and built. **(Contemporary English Version)**

⁸Abraham trusted God, and when God told him to leave home and go far away to another land that he promised to give him, Abraham obeyed. Away he went, not even knowing where he was going. ⁹And even when he reached God's promised land, he lived in tents like a mere visitor as did Isaac and Jacob, to whom God gave the same promise. ¹⁰Abraham did this because he was confidently waiting for God to bring him to that strong heavenly city whose designer and builder is God. **(The Living Bible)**

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the summons to go out to a place which he would eventually possess, and he set out in complete ignorance of his destination. It was faith that kept him journeying like a foreigner through the land of promise, with no more home than the tents which he shared with Isaac and Jacob, co-heirs with him of the promise. For Abraham's eyes were looking forward to that city with solid foundations of which God himself is both architect and builder. (verses 8-10) **(Phillips Translation)**

[8] It was faith that made Abraham obey when God called him, and go out to a country which God had promised to give him. He left his own country without knowing where he was going. **[9]** By faith he lived in the country that God had promised him, as though he were a foreigner. He lived in tents with Isaac and Jacob, who received the same promise from God. **[10]** For Abraham was waiting for the city which God has designed and built, the city with permanent foundations. **(Today's English Version)**

[8] It was Abraham's faith that made him obey when God called him to leave his home and go to a land which God was going to give him as His child and heir. And he left home without even knowing where he was going. **[9]** And it was his faith that led Abraham to live in that promised land like a foreigner who was living in a land belonging to others. He lived in tents, and so did Isaac and Jacob, to whom God made the same promise, that He would give them that land. **[10]** You see, Abraham was looking forward to the City which God has designed and built, the city which has the real foundations. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

[8] God called Abraham to travel to another place that God promised to give Abraham. Abraham did not know where that other place was. But Abraham obeyed God and started traveling, because Abraham had faith. **[9]** Abraham lived in that country that God promised to give him. Abraham lived there like a visitor who did not belong. Abraham lived in tents with Isaac and Jacob. Isaac and Jacob also received that same promise from God. **[10]** Abraham was waiting for the city that has real foundations. He was waiting for the city that is planned and built by God. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)** **Additional Information:** You may want to read Genesis 12:1-8 and discuss.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11
VERSES 11-12

Hebrews 11: [11] Through faith also Sarah 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. [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. (Gen. 15:5-6; 22:17; 32:12) (King James Version)

¹¹It was by faith that Sarah together with Abraham was able to have a child, even though they were too old and Sarah was barren. Abraham believed that God would keep his promise. ¹²And so a whole nation came from this one man, Abraham, who was too old to have any children—a nation with so many people that, like the stars of the sky and the sand on the seashore, there is no way to count them. **(New Living Translation)**

¹¹Even when Sarah was too old to have children, she had faith that God would do what he had promised, and she had a son. ¹²Her husband Abraham was almost dead, but he became the ancestor of many people. In fact, there are as many of them as there are stars in the sky or grains of sand along the beach. **(Contemporary English Version)**

By faith, barren Sarah was able to become pregnant, old woman as she was at the time, because she believed the One who made a promise would do what he said. That's how it happened that from one man's dead and shriveled loins there are now people numbering into the millions. (verses 11-12) **(The Message)**

¹¹Sarah, too, had faith, and because of this she was able to become a mother in spite of her old age, for she realized that God, who gave her his promise, would certainly do what he said. ¹²And so a whole nation came from Abraham, who was too old to have even one child—a nation with so many millions of people that, like the stars of the sky and the sand on the ocean shores, there is no way to count them. **(The Living Bible)**

Additional Information: You may want to read and discuss Genesis 17:19; 18:11-14; 21:2 and Genesis 15:5-6; 22:17; 32:12.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11
VERSES 13-16

Hebrews 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. [14] For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. [15] And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. [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. (King James Version)

Each one of these people of faith died not yet having in hand what was promised, but still believing. How did they do it? They saw it way off in the distance, waved their greeting, and accepted the fact that they were transients in this world. People who live this way make it plain that they are looking for their true home. If they were homesick for the old country, they could have gone back any time they wanted. But they were after a far better country than that – *heaven* country. You can see why God is so proud of them, and has a City waiting for them. (verses 13-16) **(The Message)**

¹³These men of faith I have mentioned died without ever receiving all that God had promised them; but they saw it all awaiting them on ahead and were glad, for they agreed that this earth was not their real home but that they were just strangers visiting down here. ¹⁴And quite obviously when they talked like that, they were looking forward to their real home in heaven. ¹⁵If they had wanted to, they could have gone back to the good things of this world. ¹⁶But they didn't want to. They were living for heaven. And now God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has made a heavenly city for them. **(The Living Bible)**

All these whom we have mentioned maintained their faith but died without actually receiving God's promises, though they had seen them in the distance, had hailed them as true. They freely admitted that they lived on this earth as exiles and foreigners. Men who say that mean, of course, that their eyes are fixed upon their true home-land. If they had meant the particular country they had left behind, they had ample opportunity to return. No, the fact is that they longed for a better country altogether, nothing less than a heavenly one. And because of this faith of theirs, God is not ashamed to be called their God for he has prepared for them a city. (verses 13-16) **(Phillips Translation)**

[13] It was in faith that all these persons died. They did not receive the things God had promised, but from a long way off they saw and welcomed them, and admitted openly that they were foreigners and refugees on earth. **[14]** Those who say such things make it clear that they are looking for a country of their own. **[15]** They did not think back to the country they had left; if they had, they would have had the chance to return. **[16]** Instead, it was a better country they longed for, the heavenly country. And so God is not ashamed to have them call him their God, because he has prepared a city for them. **(Today's English Version)**

[13] All these people died as believers, since they hadn't yet received what God had promised them. But they saw the promises as something they would receive in the future. They also spoke of themselves as visitors and foreigners here on earth. **[14]**

And people who say such things make it clear that they're looking for a homeland of their own. [15] For if they were thinking about the land they had left, they could have gone back there. [16] But the truth is that they had their heart set on a better land, a heavenly one. And for this reason God isn't ashamed to be called their God. In fact, He has prepared a city for them. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

[13] One by one these all died in faith without having received what was promised. But they saw it far ahead and welcomed it, and they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth. [14] To be sure, those who talk that way show that they are looking for a land of their own. [15] If their hearts had been in the land which they had left, they could have found an opportunity to go back. [16] Instead, they were longing for a better land – I mean heaven. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, because He has prepared a city for them. **(God's Word to the Nations)**

[13] These people all died controlled and sustained by their faith, but not having received the tangible fulfillment of [God's] promises, only having seen it and greeted it from a great distance by faith, and all the while acknowledging and confessing that they were strangers and temporary residents and exiles upon the earth. [Gen. 23:4; Ps. 39:12] [14] Now those people who talk as they did show plainly that they are in search of a fatherland (their own country). [15] If they had been thinking with [homesick] remembrance of that country from which they were emigrants, they would have found constant opportunity to return to it. [16] But the truth is that they were yearning for and aspiring to a better and more desirable country, that is, a heavenly [one]. For that reason God is not ashamed to be called their God [even to be surnamed their God – the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob], for He has prepared a city for them. [Exod. 3:6. 15; 4:5.] **(The Amplified New Testament)**

Additional Information: Verse 15 - If their hearts had been in the land which they had left, they could have found an opportunity to go back. (God's Word to the Nations). Consider: 2 Timothy 4:10, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica..."

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11 VERSES 17-19

Hebrews 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, [18] Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: (Genesis 21:12) [19] Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. (King James Version)

¹⁷ It was by faith that Abraham, when God tested him, offered his son Isaac as a sacrifice. God made the promises to Abraham, but Abraham was ready to offer his own son as a sacrifice. ¹⁸ God had said, "The descendants I promised you will be from Isaac." ¹⁹ Abraham believed that God could raise the dead, and really, it was as if Abraham got Isaac back from death. **(New Century Version)**

By faith, Abraham, at the time of testing, offered Isaac back to God. Acting in faith, he was as ready to return the promised son, his only son, as he had been to

receive him – and this after he had already been told, “Your descendants shall come from Isaac.” Abraham figured that if God wanted to, he could raise the dead. In a sense, that’s what happened when he received Isaac back, alive from off the altar.

(verses 17-19) **(The Message)**

¹⁷⁻¹⁸ Abraham had been promised that Isaac, his only son, would continue his family. But when Abraham was tested, he had faith and was willing to sacrifice Isaac, ¹⁹ because he was sure that God could raise people to life. This was just like getting Isaac back from death. **(Contemporary English Version)**

¹⁷While God was testing him, Abraham still trusted in God and his promises, and so he offered up his son Isaac and was ready to slay him on the altar of sacrifice; ¹⁸yes, to slay even Isaac, through whom God had promised to give Abraham a whole nation of descendants! ¹⁹He believed that if Isaac died God would bring him back to life again; and that is just about what happened, for as far as Abraham was concerned, Isaac was doomed to death, but he came back again alive! **(The Living Bible)**

[17] Because of his faith Abraham, when he was put to the test, offered up Isaac as a sacrifice. The one who had received the promises was ready to offer up his specially born son, **[18]** even though God had said, “Your descendants will come from Isaac.” **[19]** But Abraham counted on God to raise Isaac from the dead; and indeed Abraham did, so to speak, receive Isaac back from death. **(The New Translation)**

[17-18] God tested Abraham’s faith. God told Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham obeyed because he had faith. Abraham already had the promises from God. And God had already said to Abraham, “It is through Isaac that your descendants will come.” But Abraham was ready to offer his only son (*Isaac*). Abraham did this because he had faith. **[19]** Abraham believed that God could raise people from death. And really, when God stopped Abraham from killing Isaac, it was like Abraham got Isaac back from death. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: Consider what “faith” causes people to do. You may want to read and discuss Genesis 22:1-10 and James 2:21-24.

While Abraham was in Ur of the Chaldees, God promised him that he would be the heir of the world (Genesis 12:1-3; Romans 4:13). How long he had been a believer in God, we are not told. Years later, God promised him a seed as numerous as the stars in heaven. Abraham believed in God and God counted it to him for righteousness (Genesis 15:5-6). About 15 years later, God promised that Sarah would bear a son. Abraham believed (Genesis 17:15-21). Perhaps 25 years later, God commanded Abraham to offer his son Isaac, upon an altar (Genesis 22:2). Abraham’s faith did not fail. James says, “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God” (James 2:23). Abraham was righteous by faith, and his faith was affirmed on at least, four separate occasions. Abraham’s faith covered a period of perhaps 50 years. It is this kind of faith that God calls every believer to exercise. A momentary, one-time act of faith that does not continue is not saving faith according to the scriptures (Luke 8:13).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSE 20

Hebrews 11: [20] By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. (King James Version)

²⁰ It was by faith that Isaac blessed the future of Jacob and Esau. **(New Century Version)**

Additional Information: You may want to read and discuss Genesis 27:27-29; 39-40.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSE 21

Hebrews 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. (King James Version)

²¹ Later, when Jacob was about to die, he leaned on his walking stick and worshiped. Then because of his faith he blessed each of Joseph's sons.

(Contemporary English Version)

Additional Information: You may want to read and discuss Genesis 48.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSE 22

Hebrews 11: [22] By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. (King James Version)

[22] By an act of faith, Joseph, while dying, prophesied the exodus of Israel, and made arrangements for his own burial. **(The Message)**

²² And it was by faith that Joseph, as he neared the end of his life, confidently spoke of God bringing the people of Israel out of Egypt; and he was so sure of it that he made them promise to carry his bones with them when they left! **(The Living Bible)**

Additional Information: You may want to read and discuss Genesis 50:24-25 and Exodus 13:19.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSE 23

Hebrews 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. (King James Version)

[23] By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. **(New**

International Version) Additional Information: You may want to read and discuss Exodus 1:22; 2:2.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11 VERSES 24-28

Hebrews 11: [24] By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; [25] Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; [26] Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. [27] By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. [28] Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. (King James Version)

²⁴ It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be treated as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. ²⁵ He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He thought it was better to suffer for the sake of the Messiah than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the great reward that God would give him. ²⁷ It was by faith that Moses left the land of Egypt. He was not afraid of the king. Moses kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible. ²⁸ It was by faith that Moses commanded the people of Israel to keep the Passover and to sprinkle blood on the doorposts so that the angel of death would not kill their firstborn sons. **(New Living Translation)**

²⁴ It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be called the son of the king of Egypt's daughter. ²⁵ He chose to suffer with God's people instead of enjoying sin for a short time. ²⁶ He thought it was better to suffer for the Christ than to have all the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking for God's reward. ²⁷ It was by faith that Moses left Egypt and was not afraid of the king's anger. Moses continued strong as if he could see the God that no one can see. ²⁸ It was by faith that Moses prepared the Passover and spread the blood on the doors so the one who brings death would not kill the firstborn sons of Israel. **(New Century Version)**

By faith, Moses, when grown, refused the privileges of the Egyptian royal house. He chose a hard life with God's people rather than an opportunistic soft life of sin with the oppressors. He valued suffering in the Messiah's camp far greater than Egyptian wealth because he was looking ahead, anticipating the payoff. By an act of faith, he turned his heel on Egypt, indifferent to the king's blind rage. He had his eye on the One no eye can see, and kept right on going. By an act of faith, he kept the Passover Feast and sprinkled Passover blood on each house so that the destroyer of the firstborn wouldn't touch them. (verses 24-28) **(The Message)**

Additional Information: You may want to read and discuss Exodus 12:21-30.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSE 29

Hebrews 11: [29] By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. (King James Version)

²⁹It was by faith that the people of Israel went right through the Red Sea as though they were on dry ground. But when the Egyptians followed, they were all drowned. **(New Living Translation)**

[29] By an act of faith, Israel walked through the Red Sea on dry ground. The Egyptians tried it and drowned. **(The Message)**

Additional Information: (Verse 29) The word “*assaying*” means *attempting* or *trying*. You may want to read and discuss Exodus 14:21-31.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSE 30

Hebrews 11: [30] By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. (King James Version)

³⁰It was by faith that the people of Israel marched around Jericho seven days, and the walls came crashing down. **(New Living Translation)**

³⁰It was faith that brought the walls of Jericho tumbling down after the people of Israel had walked around them seven days as God had commanded them. **(The Living Bible)**

[30] It was by faith that the walls of Jericho collapsed, for the people had obeyed God’s command to encircle them for seven days. **(Phillips Translation)**

Additional Information: You may want to read and discuss Joshua 6:12-21.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSE 31

Hebrews 11: [31] By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. (King James Version)

³¹It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute did not die with all the others in her city who refused to obey God. For she had given a friendly welcome to the spies. **(New Living Translation)**

³¹By faith—because she believed in God and his power—Rahab the harlot did not die with all the others in her city when they refused to obey God, for she gave a friendly welcome to the spies. **(The Living Bible)**

[31] By an act of faith, Rahab, the Jericho harlot, welcomed the spies and escaped the destruction that came on those who refused to trust God. **(The Message)**

[31] It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute welcomed the spies and so was not killed with the unbelievers. **(Jerusalem Bible)** **Additional Information:** You may want to read and discuss Joshua 2:1-21; 6:22-25 and James 2:25.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSES 32-34

Hebrews 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: [33] Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, [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. (King James Version)

³² Do I need to give more examples? I do not have time to tell you about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. ³³ Through their faith they defeated kingdoms. They did what was right, received God's promises, and shut the mouths of lions. ³⁴ They stopped great fires and were saved from being killed with swords. They were weak, and yet were made strong. They were powerful in battle and defeated other armies. **(New Century Version)**

³² Well, how much more do I need to say? It would take too long to recount the stories of the faith of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah and David and Samuel and all the other prophets. ³³ These people all trusted God and as a result won battles, overthrew kingdoms, ruled their people well, and received what God had promised them; they were kept from harm in a den of lions ³⁴ and in a fiery furnace. Some, through their faith, escaped death by the sword. Some were made strong again after they had been weak or sick. Others were given great power in battle; they made whole armies turn and run away. **(The Living Bible)**

Additional Information: (Verse 33) "Wrought" means to work or do righteousness. (Verse 34) "Waxed valiant" means grew courageous, brave or strong. "Aliens" means foreigners. (Verses 32-34) You may want to read and discuss Judges 4:1-5, 31; 6:1-8, 35; 11:1-12, 15; 13:1-16, 31; 1 Samuel 1-30; 2 Samuel 1-24; 1 Kings 1-2; Daniel 6; and Daniel 3.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11

VERSES 35-38

Hebrews 11: [35] Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: [36] And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: [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; [38] (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. (King James Version)

[35] Some women received their sons back from death. Other people were told to turn against God, but they refused. So, they were not set free. Instead, they were tortured to death. They chose to have something better – when they rise from death.

[36] Some people were beaten and laughed at. Others were tied up and thrown in jail.

[37] Some people were stoned to death. Others were sawed in two. Some were murdered with swords. Others went around in sheepskins and goatskins. They really

needed help. They suffered. They were mistreated. **[38]** They wandered in deserts, mountains, caves, and holes in the ground. The world was not worthy of having these people! **(The Simple English Bible)**

[35] Women received their dead raised to life again. But others with faith were tortured to death, refusing to deny God and be freed, in order to receive a better resurrection. **[36]** Others were tested by tortures and floggings, yet others by chains and imprisonment. **[37]** They were killed by rocks hurled upon them, they were sawed in two, they were killed by the sword, they went about clothed in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated. **[38]** The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains and lived in caves and holes in the ground. **(The New Translation)**

[35] Women got their loved ones back alive even after they had died. And others were tortured because they refused to be set free if it meant giving up their faith. And they refused because they believed that God would raise them up again to a better Life. **[36]** Others were laughed at and whipped or were even put in chains or thrown in jail. **[37]** And others were killed with stones, or sawed in two, or killed with the sword. They went around dressed in sheepskins and goatskins, having no money or food, and suffering from all kinds of bad treatment. **[38]** The world wasn't good enough for people like this, and so they wandered around in the deserts and mountains, living in caves and holes in the ground. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

³⁵ Women received their loved ones back again from death. But others trusted God and were tortured, preferring to die rather than turn from God and be free. They placed their hope in the resurrection to a better life. ³⁶ Some were mocked, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in dungeons. ³⁷ Some died by stoning, and some were sawed in half; others were killed with the sword. Some went about in skins of sheep and goats, hungry and oppressed and mistreated. ³⁸ They were too good for this world. They wandered over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground. **(New Living Translation)**

³⁵ Some women received their loved ones back from death. Many of these people were tortured, but they refused to be released. They were sure that they would get a better reward when the dead are raised to life. ³⁶ Others were made fun of and beaten with whips, and some were chained in jail. ³⁷ Still others were stoned to death or sawed in two or killed with swords. Some had nothing but sheep skins or goat skins to wear. They were poor, mistreated, and tortured. ³⁸ The world did not deserve these good people, who had to wander in deserts and on mountains and had to live in caves and holes in the ground. **(Contemporary English Version)**

³⁵ And some women, through faith, received their loved ones back again from death. But others trusted God and were beaten to death, preferring to die rather than turn from God and be free—trusting that they would rise to a better life afterwards. ³⁶ Some were laughed at and their backs cut open with whips, and others were chained in dungeons. ³⁷⁻³⁸ Some died by stoning and some by being sawed in two; others were promised freedom if they would renounce their faith, then were killed with the sword. Some went about in skins of sheep and goats, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in dens and caves. They were hungry and sick and ill-treated—too good for this world. **(The Living Bible) Additional Information: (Verse 35)** You may want to read and discuss 1 Kings 17:17-24 and 2 Kings 4:25-37.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11
VERSES 39-40

Hebrews 11: [39] And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: [40] God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. (King James Version)

³⁹ All of these people we have mentioned received God's approval because of their faith, yet none of them received all that God had promised. ⁴⁰ For God had far better things in mind for us that would also benefit them, for they can't receive the prize at the end of the race until we finish the race. **(New Living Translation)**

³⁹ All these people are known for their faith, but none of them received what God had promised. ⁴⁰ God planned to give us something better so that they would be made perfect, but only together with us. **(New Century Version)**

³⁹ And these men of faith, though they trusted God and won his approval, none of them received all that God had promised them; ⁴⁰ for God wanted them to wait and share the even better rewards that were prepared for us. **(The Living Bible)**

[39] What a record all of these have won by their faith! Yet they did not receive what God had promised, **[40]** because God had decided on an even better plan for us. His purpose was that they would be made perfect only with us. **(Today's English Version)**

[39] Yes, all these people have become famous because of their faith, but they haven't yet received what God promised them, **[40]** because God has planned something better for us. His plan is that we and they will all be made perfect at the same time. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

[39] All these people are known for their faith. But none of these people got God's great promise. **[40]** God planned to give us something better. Then those people could be made perfect, but only together with us. **(The Easy-to-Read New Testament)**

Additional Information: (Verses 39-40) "The important thing is that these all persisted in their faith even though they received not the promise. Genuine faith persists unto the end; emotional decisions do not. True faith continues to believe..." (Liberty Bible Commentary, Vol.2, p.708). "There is a solidarity among believers (see 12:23). Old and New Testament believers will be glorified together. Not only are we one in the body of Christ with all those alive, but we are also one with all those who ever lived. It takes all of us to be perfect in him." (Life Application Bible). "The faith of Old Testament saints looked forward to the promised salvation, whereas the faith of those after Christ looks back to the fulfillment of the promise. Both groups are characterized by genuine faith and are saved by Christ's atoning work on the cross" (MacArthur Bible Commentary, p. 1872) (See Romans 4:20-25).

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Hebrews Chapter 11)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Hebrews Chapter 11.**

1. **Read Hebrews 11:1.** Now faith is: a. being certain of what we do not see. b. being sure of what we hope for. c. none of the above.
2. **Read Hebrews 11:3.** It is only by faith that our minds accept as fact that the whole universe was formed by God's command. True or False.
3. **Read Hebrews 11:4.** Prompted by faith Abel brought God a better and more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. True or False.
4. **Read Hebrews 11:5.** By an act of faith, Enoch skipped death completely. True or False.
5. **Read Hebrews 11:6.** You can please God without faith. True or False.

6. **Read Hebrews 11:7.** By faith, Noah built a ship in the middle of dry land. True or False.
7. **Read Hebrews 11:8.** It was faith that caused Abraham to obey God. True or False.
8. **Read Hebrews 11:10.** Abraham looked for a City designed and built by God. True or False.
9. **Read Hebrews 11:13.** Many people died controlled and sustained by their faith, but not having received the total tangible fulfillment of God's promises. True or False.
10. **Read Hebrews 11:16.** Even the Old Testament saints had a heavenly hope. True or False.
11. **Read Hebrews 11:17.** It was by faith that Abraham, when tested, offered his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God. True or False.
12. **Read Hebrews 11:22.** By an act of faith, Joseph, while dying, prophesied the exodus of Israel. True or False.
13. **Read Hebrews 11:25.** By faith, Moses chose to suffer with God's people instead of enjoying sin for a short time. True or False.
14. **Read Hebrews 11:27.** By faith Moses kept his eyes on the One who is invisible. True or False.
15. **Read Hebrews 11:28.** It was an act of faith that sprinkled the blood on the doorposts of the Israelites so that the death angel would not kill their firstborn. True or False.
16. **Read Hebrews 11:29.** By an act of faith, Israel walked through the Red Sea on dry ground. The Egyptians tried it and drowned. True or False.
17. **Read Hebrews 11:31.** It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute welcomed the spies and so was not killed with the unbelievers. True or False.
18. **Read Hebrews 11:32.** There are many more examples of faith that Hebrews eleven doesn't have time to mention and explain. True or False.
19. **Read Hebrews 11:35-38.** Some people that had faith went around dressed in sheepskins and goatskins, having no money or food and suffered all kinds of bad treatment. True or False.
20. **Read Hebrews 11:39-40.** The people of faith in the Old Testament will receive with us God's promised salvation. True or False.

Instructions for Group Leader: You may want to summarize the chapter (for the group) by reading aloud the following.

Putting the Chapter in Context: Hebrews Chapter 11.

(Verses 1-3) Defining Faith. **(Verses 4-7)** Faith at the beginning of History. **(Verses 8-12)** Faithful Abraham. **(Verses 13-16)** The Heavenly Hope. **(Verses 17-22)** The Faith of the Patriarchs. **(Verses 23-29)** The Faith of Moses. **(Verses 30-38)** Overcoming Faith. **(Verses 39-40)** When Perfection Comes.

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