

Online Grace Bible School

With

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**Online Grace Bible School
Phase 6
Faith People**

1) God Witnesses To Faith

Hebrews 11 is God's picture gallery of those who lived by faith in various circumstances. What is faith? *'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen'* (Heb.11:1). 'Substance' is from *hupostasis*, made up from *hupo* = under; *stasis* = stand. Substance, then, is that which stands under; it is a foundation. God speaks and lays a foundation in our lives which we can build upon. He initiates. *'So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God'* (Rom.10:17). Don't confuse faith with presumption.

- ✓ *'For by it the elders obtained a good testimony'* (Heb.11:2). Each one heard from God and regulated the course of their entire lives around what they heard. In response God bore witness to them.
- ✓ *'But 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 diligently seek Him'* (Heb.11:6). Faith pleases God because it glorifies Him.
- ✓ **11:3**. Faith believes God can make something out of nothing. The worlds did not make themselves. God made them out of nothing – ex-nihilo. No pre-existent matter.

Saving Faith. *'By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks'* (Heb.11:4). 2 religions depicted by Cain and Abel. *'And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering'* (Gen.4:4-5). The important point is that neither of these men were accepted or rejected on personal merit but on account of their offering. Where did Abel's faith come from?

- ✓ After the Fall God promised the Seed of the woman would enter the human race as the second Man, the last Adam, and bring salvation, but not without the shedding of blood (Gen.3:15).
- ✓ Adam and Eve's solution to cover themselves with fig leaves replaced these with skins of an animal.

His offering was more excellent than Cain's, who thought he could approach God without blood. God said, *'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it'* (Gen.4:6-7). If Cain came to God through the shed blood he would be accepted.

'Now 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 killed him' (Gen.4:8). Cain probably tried to get Abel to renounce his faith and join his rebellion. But Abel stood firm in his faith. Cain vent his anger on the one who was made righteous through the blood. *'For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous'* (1 Jn.3:11-12).

- ✓ Cain and Abel represent the division of the human race, as God foretold in the Garden (Gen.3:15). Enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.
- ✓ *'...sin lies at the door'*. What is the greatest sin? Crucifying the Son of God? No it is to crucify Him again. The Hebrews were warned of this. *'It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame'* (Heb.6:4-6).
- ✓ Peter says a similar thing, *'It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them'* (2 Pet.2:21).
- ✓ Cain was in danger of final apostasy, *'If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it'* (Gen.4:7). Our forgiveness was paid for at great cost. To reject it leaves a person without excuse and condemned. *'And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me'* (John 16:8-9). *'...in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ'* (2 Thes.1:8).

2) Faith Witnesses To God

Two books. One is book of death (Gen.5:1). The other is the Lamb's book of life (Matt.1:1).

2 seeds: 1) **Cain** went out from the presence of God to the land of Nod (wandering). He built a city. 2) **Seth**: appointed, set, fixed. His seed was characterized by 1) corporate worship; 2) faith; 3) they walked with God.

Enoch. *'By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him" for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God' (Heb.11:5-6). 'Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God ...' (Gen.5:21-22).*

He pleased God by faith. He was *'taken away'* (translated), carried across from one place to another. God told him he would not die. He believed this and regulated his whole life around this blessed hope.

'Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed' (1 Cor.15:51-52). 'Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord' (1 Thes.4:17). The rapture is:

- ✓ A catching away from all **distress of soul and body**, (2 Cor.5:4); all **persecution and oppression**, (2 Thes.1:7); and from the **wrath** that will be poured out upon the world (1Thess.1:10; 1 Thes.4:14).
- ✓ A catching away to the Lord Jesus Christ, (Jn.14:3; 1 Thes.4:17).

Noah was another man whose faith witnessed to God. *'By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith' (Heb.11:7).*

See Gen.6:5-8. First mention of grace. Where sin abounds God's grace abounds more.

'Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God' (Gen.6:9). What did grace do for Him?

- a) It **justified** him. He was made righteous by faith in the sacrificial offering.
- b) It made him **perfect** in his generations. Heb. *tamin* = without blemish, i.e. uncontaminated.
- c) Enabled him to **walk with God**.

God's way of escape was an ark. A picture of Christ and the gospel:

- ✓ It was to be covered with pitch. The word 'cover' is *kapher*. The pitch protected the ark and all in it from the judgment of the waters. *'It is the blood that makes atonement (kapher) for the soul' (Lev.17:11).*
- ✓ Jesus endured the wrath of God. The bow in the sky directed heavenward has no arrow, as if discharged.
- ✓ A rainbow is the joint product of a storm and sunshine. Grace, against a backdrop of sin.

Was there any excuse for their sin? Was there any warning? God never leaves Himself without a witness:

- ✓ There was a continuous prophetic voice in the earth. Enoch's walk, witness and rapture.
- ✓ Methuselah. *'When he dies it will come.'* *'Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech' (Gen.5:25). 'Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son' (Gen.5:28). 'Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth' (Gen.7:6). 'So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died' (Gen.5:27).*
- ✓ The ministry of the Holy Spirit. **Gen.6:3.**
- ✓ The preaching of Noah & the building of an ark. The 10th generation = the completion of God's dealings.
- ✓ 'By which he condemned the world' – he didn't save the world but left them without excuse.
- ✓ The world in the end times will be like the days of Noah. Iniquity will reach full measure. But as God was long suffering in the days before the flood so He is in the end times. (2 Pet.3:3-9).

3) Faith To Inherit

11:8. *'By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going'*. There was nothing in Abraham to merit God's favor. He was an idolater (Josh.24:2). God sovereignly called him (Acts 7:2-3). See 2 Cor.4:6.

Abraham receives more mention in this chapter than any other character. He is mentioned 74 times in NT. He is called the Friend of God and the father of those who are justified by faith. We are sons of Abraham.

- ✓ God said: 'Get out'. He went out not knowing where he was going. He had faith in God.
- ✓ Like Abraham, we have been taken out of this world. *'... who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father'* (Gal.1:4).
- ✓ The call to leave this world includes a call to inherit a kingdom. We have an inheritance. *'...to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me'* (Acts 26:18).
- ✓ The place which he was to go to he would afterwards receive as an inheritance. *'...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love'* (Col.1:12-13).
- ✓ Like Abraham we regulate our whole lives according to our new creation identity and destiny. *'We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one'* (1 John 5:19).
- ✓ We are transformed according to this. *'And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind'* (Rom.12:2).
- ✓ We do this by faith. *'For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?'* (1 Jn.5:5-6).
- ✓ It is not something we have to do but something we believe has been done for us at the cross. *'But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world'* (Gal.6:14).

11:9. *'By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise'*.

- ✓ The word for 'dwelt' means to dwell beside. He passed through the land not finding a place to rest. He pitched his tent among the Canaanites, awaiting the time he would one day possess their land.
- ✓ God required him to dwell in the land, to perceive himself to one day be the heir of it.
- ✓ The actual inheritance of it was reserved for his posterity in generations to come, a long time after his death. In fact they would be removed and then come back after several generations to inherit.
- ✓ For more than 50 years he lived in tents. He never left them any property; but the promise of inheritance.

11:10. *'...for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God'*.

- ✓ What are the foundations? Whenever tents are mentioned so is the altar, (Gen.12:8; 13:3-4, 18). The foundation God builds upon is that of the sacrificial work of Jesus.
- ✓ The world does not build on the foundation of altars but on lust, greed and ambition, (Gen.4:17; Gen.11:4; Rev.18:10,19).
- ✓ But parallel to this is the city God is building, (Rev.21:10, 14).
- ✓ God said He would make Him a great name. God doesn't mind you having a great name as long as He is the architect of it.
- ✓ A city whose builder (architect) is God. One who plans, arranges, etc. Its meaning is in the sense of one who carves or engraves. In this context it means the cutting out of stones in a distant quarry face to shape and then transport them to the city for placing in a building. As with Solomon's temple. Stones were made ready beforehand. No sound of axe, hammer or any iron tool heard in the temple.
- ✓ The fashioning of stones indicates preparation for a city, (see 1 Pet.2:5).

4) Faith That Laughs At Impossibilities

'By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised' (Heb.11:11). Sarah is called the 'mother of the faithful' (1 Pet.3:6; Gal.4:22-23).

- ✓ The first thing we read of Sarai is she was barren: *'But Sarai was barren; she had no child'* (Gen.11:30).
- ✓ God promised Abraham a seed. He was tempted to ask God to fulfill that promise via Eliezer. But God assured him that he would sire the seed. *'And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir"'* (Gen.15:4).
- ✓ The years rolled by and nothing changed. Sarai proposes a way to work it out themselves. *'Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar. So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai'* (Gen.16:1-2).
- ✓ Next, they are both beyond the age of childbearing. But God promises Abraham a supernatural birth, to which he laughs because it is such an amazing thing (Gen.17:15-17).

3 visitors appeared to Abraham and Sarah. They did not know at first that these visitors were from heaven (Heb.13:2). Sarah prepared a meal for them. When did they know they were heavenly visitors?

- ✓ **Abraham:** when God named his wife and spoke of a son. Only God had previously promised this. *'Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent." And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son" (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.)'* (Gen.18:9-10).
- ✓ **Sarah:** While preparing a meal she overheard them say within one year she would have a child. *'Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"'* (Gen.18:12-15).
- ✓ When the angel of the LORD said 'Is anything too hard for the Lord?' she received strength to conceive. Why? Because she judged Him faithful who promised. She looked beyond the promise to the Promiser.
- ✓ She also received strength to bear, carry and nurse the child. She judged God faithful.
- ✓ God is not in a hurry to fulfill His plans. *'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily'* (Isa.28:16).
- ✓ He has set a time *'But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year'* (Gen.17:21). *'At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son'* (Gen.18:4). *'For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him'* (Gen.21:2). *'For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry'* (Hab.2:3). See Gal.4:4. He is faithful to perform His Word.
- ✓ Their bodies were wonderfully rejuvenated – Sarah not only conceived but carried and gave birth and nursed Isaac. Abraham had 6 more sons through Keturah. When God heals it is perfect healing.
- ✓ Like Abraham her cynical laugh was turned into the laugh of faith. *'And Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me"'* (Gen.21:6). See Psa.126:1-2.
- ✓ They were as one. See 1 Pet.3:1-7. Sarah obeyed Abraham. *'Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered'* (1 Pet.3:7).
- ✓ Abraham was too old; Sarah was barren (her womb was 'dead' – Rom.4:19). Nothing is too hard for Him.
- ✓ The Lord visited Sarah as He said. The promise was fulfilled in God's time, not man's.
- ✓ Her unbelief is passed over in Heb.11.

5) Faith That Stands The Test

'By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called"'. (Heb.11:17-18.) 'Test' here and in Gen.22:1 is to try, examine, scrutinize and prove. Abraham was tested, not for God's sake but for the sake of Abraham and those who would be made righteous by faith.

The Bible says nothing about Abraham's emotional response. But no doubt he had many questions. He sometimes tests us contrary to our understanding. His ways are higher than ours.

- ✓ He arose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, took two young men and Isaac, split the wood for the burnt offering and set off to the place God told him to go to.
- ✓ On the third day he saw the place afar off and told the two men to stay there; he and Isaac would go and worship and 'we will come back to you'.
- ✓ Isaac: 'Where is the offering?' Abraham: 'God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering'.
- ✓ When he arrived at the place he built an altar and bound Isaac to it. Isaac did not resist.
- ✓ Abraham stretched out the knife but was restrained: 'Abraham, Abraham! ... now I know...'
- ✓ Abraham saw a ram and offered it. He called the name of the place 'The LORD will provide'.

'... concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense' (Heb.11:19). Compare *'And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you"'* (Gen.22:5).

- ✓ He rolled all upon God, believing that God would raise him from the dead, though there was no previous example of a resurrection. The test of all faith is obedience. This is the first mention of obedience.
- ✓ This is what James addressed. James agrees we are justified by faith but asks do we have genuine faith?
- ✓ *'... concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense'* (Heb.11:19). In a 'figurative sense'. The whole incident is a picture of Calvary.
- ✓ He was to offer him up on one of the mountains of Moriah (pointed out by the Lord). It was here God appeared to David and later became the site of the temple (2 Sam.24:18-25; 2 Chron.3:1). Calvary. It is called 'the Mount of the Lord' and called 'The LORD will provide'. The LORD has provided salvation for us!
- ✓ Abraham tells his 2 servants to remain behind while he and Isaac went on alone. They went so far, but no further. Like the 2 thieves on the Cross. They could not enter into the divine fellowship between Father and Son. They saw the physical suffering but not the suffering for the sins of the world.
- ✓ Abraham then laid the wood on Isaac.
- ✓ He dismounted and he and Isaac went alone, side by side. God drew a curtain across so that no one else would enter into the depths of what was to take place.
- ✓ God will provide Himself a Lamb. Yet it was a *ram* caught in a thicket that was provided. The complete fulfillment awaits a lamb. *"Behold the Lamb!"* If God has provided, then we know that it is adequate.
- ✓ They went for 3 days. The deed was as good as done as far as Abraham was concerned. Resurrection.
- ✓ The first mention of 'love'. The source of all love is God's love for Jesus. The truest definition of love is to give up the greatest thing you have for the one you love. *'In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins'* (1 Jn.4:10).
- ✓ The first mention of love in synoptics emphasized the source of love – The Father's love for the Son: *'And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"'* (Matt.3:17); *'Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."'* (Mk.1:11); *'And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."'* (Lk.3:22). Then, *'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life'* (John 3:16). Three times He shouts His love from heaven for Jesus – then He tells us He was willing to sacrifice the One He loved so much for us. Rom.8:32.

6) Long-term Vision In A Short-term World

Isaac lived the longest of the patriarchs, yet the least is recorded of him. What is recorded about him? *'By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come'* (Heb.11:20).

- ✓ *'Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, "My son." And he answered him, "Here I am."'* (Gen.27:1). He lost his focus on spiritual things and gave way to fleshly appetites. *'And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob'* (Gen.25:28).
- ✓ In contrast, God revealed His purposes to Rebekah because she enquired of the LORD. She understood that His purposes for her would stretch beyond her lifetime. But she feared that Isaac's favoritism was going to thwart God's plans and so tried to manipulate God's will into coming to pass.
- ✓ When the plot was known Isaac trembled. Because he discovered he had been working against God.
- ✓ Once he learned he had blessed Jacob and that it was in the will of God, he affirmed the prophecy. He submitted to it in faith. He prophesied again; he now had a long-term vision in a short-term world (see Gen.28:3-4). Faith learns to make our plans subservient to the will of God.
- ✓ This was Isaac's finest hour and earned him a place in this chapter.

Jacob. *'By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff'* (Heb.11:21). Why mention this event? Jacob was another manipulator. But enter Laban.

- ✓ He was a cheat like Jacob. He tricked Jacob time and time again. But through his trickery he married his two daughters, through whom came his 12 sons who would be heads of the 12 tribes of Israel.
- ✓ Because of rivalry in his home one son was missing for 13 years, presumed dead. Joseph and his family were embedded in Egypt. His two sons were princes, destined for great things in this powerful nation.
- ✓ God miraculously reconciled Jacob and his family with Joseph. Jacob never thought this would take place. He never expected to bless Joseph's sons.
- ✓ In faith Jacob blessed them *'And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine'* (Gen.48:5), *'The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth'* (Gen.48:16).
- ✓ By that blessing he drew their hearts away from Egypt. God would do this by faith, not manipulation.
- ✓ Genesis gives the human perspective of these lives. The book of Hebrews gives the divine or spiritual side. The good news of the gospel is that we are not held guilty for anything we have done. God takes our sinful past and makes it His own, taking it to the cross.
- ✓ In blessing both the sons of Joseph he made Ephraim the firstborn giving him a double portion.
- ✓ Jacob, too, now had a long-term vision in a short-term world.

Joseph. *'By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones'* (Heb.11:22).

- ✓ Why? He 'made mention of' literally means he 'remembered'. See Gen.15:13-16.
- ✓ Jacob and his family found great favour in Egypt. See Gen.45:16-18; Gen.47:6.
- ✓ But, though blessed with material blessings his heart was on the spiritual purposes of God.
- ✓ *'Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."'* (Gen.50:25). *'And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you."'* (Ex.13:19).
- ✓ He did this to encourage faith in his brethren. His heart was not in the wealth of Egypt but in the purpose of God. Joseph had a long-term vision in a short-term world.

Heb.11:13-16. They all died in faith not having received the promises but believing in God's time they would be fulfilled

7) Faith To Embrace A New Identity

'By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command' (Hebrews 11:23).

- ✓ The proof of the faith of Moses' parents is that they were not afraid of the King's command. They knew that God would raise up a deliverer, now it was revealed to them that this deliverer would be Moses.
- ✓ Faith conquers fear. Faith and fear are opposites. When we worry we do not trust; and when we trust we do not worry, *'Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid' (Isa.12:2). 'Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You' (Psa.56:3).* Fear focuses on the problem; faith focuses on the promises.
- ✓ Their faith lasted 3 months. Because that's how long God intended them to hide Moses. They were meant to give him up so that he would be found by Pharaoh's daughter.
- ✓ Then he was given back to them for a season to nurse him. Their influence on him was profound. Not until he was 40 years old did their prayers begin to be answered.

'By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin' (Heb.11:24-25).

He came to terms with his true identity *'Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel' (Acts 7:23).* There were two aspects to this - negative and positive:

- ✓ **Refusing.** His faith demonstrated itself in denying the identity forced upon him by the world. He deliberately renounced the privileges and pleasures of the royal palace. Faith overcomes the world – 1 John 5:4. It empowers us against conformity to this world.
- ✓ **Choosing,** i.e. accepted his new identity (v.25). He knew he was a Hebrew because of his circumcision and what his parents had sown into him. Only one who knows his true identity can set others free.
- ✓ By faith he rejected his old identity (11:24) then accepted his true identity (11:25) and lived accordingly.
- ✓ God's way of change is not behavior modification but transformation. Our behavior collides with our identity. It's not what you do that determines who you are but knowing who you are will determine what you do.
- ✓ Moses' choice involved suffering with the people of God. Suffering with them, for them and by them. *'For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand' (Acts 7:25).*
- ✓ This shock was the beginning of preparation for Moses. It prepared him more than the previous 40 years.
- ✓ The worst thing that can happen to a person is to have success before they are ready for it. The gift might get you there, but character will keep you there.

11:26. *'...esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward' (Heb.11:26).* Why? Because he looked to the reward.

- ✓ The pleasures of life are for a season; life is forever more *'You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore' (Psa.16:11).* The world offers treasure now; but God for eternity.
- ✓ He esteemed the reproach itself greater treasure than all the riches of Egypt.

11:27. *'By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible' (Heb.11:27).* This refers to his second leaving Egypt. The first time he left by fear (Ex.2:14-15). Not the second.

11:28-29. *'By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned' (Heb.11:28-29).*

8) Faith In The Blood of the Lamb

'By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them' (Heb.11:28).

- ✓ Pharaoh said, 'I know not the LORD'. He was about to know Him through judgment plagues. But Israel were as guilty as Egypt. They were idolaters (Josh.24:14).
- ✓ God didn't spare the angels who sinned. How could He overlook Israel? Because of the blood of the Lamb

1) 'The LORD's Passover' (Ex.12:11-13)

- ✓ This is penal substitution: Sin's penalty is death, but God accepts a substitute. A lamb was slain for each Israelite household and its blood sprinkled on the door posts and lintel. Into every house where the blood was not sprinkled, the destroying angel came. But wherever the blood was God passed over them.
- ✓ Why? Another had borne the wrath of God for sin in that home. His anger against sin had been appeased, His justice upheld and His holiness vindicated.
- ✓ For this reason it is called the 'Lord's Passover' (v.11). It speaks of the God-ward aspect of Christ's death. It totally satisfied divine justice. *'It pleased the LORD to bruise Him'* (Isa.53:10).
- ✓ Gen.22:8 is the first mention of 'lamb'. God provided *Himself* a lamb to meet the demands of His holiness.
- ✓ Also, there were two goats on the Day of Atonement. Lots were cast for both goats, *'He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat'* (Lev.16:7-8).

2) 'Our Passover'

- ✓ He who was first the Lord's Passover, is now ours. *'Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us'* (1 Cor.5:7b).
- ✓ On Palm Sunday everyone was looking for a lamb. **Ex.12:3**. On the 10th of Nisan, Palm Sunday, the lamb was to appear at the house, corresponding to the triumphal entry of Christ, and then, **12:6**, be killed between the 14th and 15th, corresponding to the day and time when Christ was sacrificed.
- ✓ Then we received Him as Saviour and He became our lamb. By His obedience we are made righteous.
- ✓ **12:7**. The *shedding* of blood is what Christ did. The *sprinkling* of the blood is what we do. One is propitiation, the other appropriation (Heb.10:22; 1 Pet.1:2). Personal appropriation is by faith.

'By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned' (Heb.11:29). *'And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on that very same day—it came to pass that all the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt'* (Ex.12:41). All the hosts of the Lord (purchased by Him) went out from the land of Egypt. They are His property; His People. They have taken the Lord and the Lord has taken them. They were redeemed by the blood of the lamb.

There are 9 words used which speak of being delivered from something.

- ✓ **The kingdom of darkness.** *'He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love'* (Col.1:13).
- ✓ **Judgment.** *'...to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come'* (1 Thes.1:10).
- ✓ **Sin.** *'Having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness'* (Rom.6:18)
- ✓ **This world system.** *'...Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age'* (Gal.1:4).
- ✓ **The Law.** *'But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by'* Rom.7:6.
- ✓ **Satan.** Jesus *'partook of flesh and blood that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil'* (Heb.2:14). Satan is destroyed *luo* (loosed).
- ✓ **Fear of untimely death.** *'We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us'* (2 Cor.1:9-10).
- ✓ **Fear of death.** *'...and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage'* (Heb.2:15)

9) Faith To Possess Our Possessions

'By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days' (Heb.11:30). Is there any moral justification for the destruction of the city?

- ✓ Its inhabitants were as corrupt and perverse as any people, practicing child sacrifice.
- ✓ We can justify its destruction the same way we would justify cutting out cancer in order to preserve life.
- ✓ Also, God gave them space to repent 'But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete' (Gen.15:16).
- ✓ They could have been saved through faith. Rahab was.

Heb.11:30. The difference between belief and faith. I believe that God can destroy walls. I believe that He did destroy the walls of Jericho. Do I have faith to believe that He will destroy the walls between me and my God-given inheritance? *'...and you complained in your tents, and said, 'Because the LORD hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us''* (Deut.1:27).

- ✓ *'And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "Are You for us or for our adversaries?"'* (Josh.5:13). The Lord appeared to Joshua as a Man of war with a sword drawn. Joshua, not recognizing the heavenly visitor, asked, 'Are you for us or for our adversaries?'
- ✓ *'So He said, "No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?"'* (Josh.5:14). He was not there to help Joshua in his battle. Joshua was there to enter into the LORD's victory. The battle is the Lord's. *'Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so'* (Josh.5:15).
- ✓ There is a warfare. Sit. We fight it in His strength, His armour and with His weapons.
- ✓ The particular aspect of warfare illustrated here is the enemy's attempt to rob us of our inheritance. Israel was to possess the inheritance given to Abraham. The Church possesses that given to us in Christ.
- ✓ Faith must have a foundation to rest upon. *'And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor"'* (Josh.6:2.) 'See...' with the eye of faith. Faith *'calls those things which do not exist as though they did'* (Rom.4:17). *'I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You'* (Psa.42:5). Have we passed from hearing to seeing? Seeing Him Who is invisible
- ✓ Joshua 6:3-5. The Lord's Battle Plan. Had Joshua discussed a plan of action with his military leaders they never would have come up with this plan!
- ✓ The ark was a manifestation of the Lord's presence. Every other piece of tabernacle furniture speaks of what He has done, but this speaks of who He is, His person. The ark is a picture of Christ.
- ✓ The two tables of stones within. The first set of commandments were broken, morally and literally, before they even got to the ark. They were dashed to the ground when Israel committed idolatry. The second set was deposited in the ark. He has fulfilled them perfectly. *'Thy law is within my heart.'* *'For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people'* (Heb.8:10). Not a command but a promise. Not a law but a life which goes beyond the law.
- ✓ The ark went before them to open a way for them to cross Jordan. It stood in the midst of the Jordan while the people passed over. Now it was to lead the way as Israel marched around the walls of Jericho.
- ✓ Jesus must always go before us lest we have a Christless Christianity. Ichabod - the glory departed.

1) Walk. The Christian life is not a series of crises. It is a walk of faith. They walked around the wall then came home. Same next day, etc. What is happening? God is being obeyed; therefore He is being glorified.

2) Don't Talk. For millions to hold their peace must have been a real miracle.

'The Lord shall fight for you, and you shall hold your peace' (Ex.14:14).

3) Then shout! Before the walls were down. God got them to applaud before it happened.

10) Assurance Is The Essence Of Faith

Heb.11:31. *'By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace'* (Heb.11:31). Rahab was a harlot before God saved her (1 Cor.1:27-28; 1 Cor.6:9-11). She was immoral, but never remained immoral (Titus 2:11-12).

- ✓ A picture of God's people entering the enemy's territory to win a soul. The 2 spies sent to Jericho to meet this woman chosen by God for salvation. Their steps were ordered by the Lord (Jn.4:4; Acts 16:14).
- ✓ Evil powers are aware of our plans. They are alarmed. But we do not need to defeat them. They are already defeated
- ✓ Rahab lied. Abraham also lied. Salvation begins with an awakening. Justification is before sanctification.
- ✓ Faith comes by hearing. *'...said to the men: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath"'* (Josh.2:9-11).
- ✓ For 40 years the Canaanites feared the Israelites. Contrast this with unbelief of wilderness generation. *'So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief'* (Heb.3:19). They had seen the things she only heard of. Jn.20:29. Rahab heard of the miracles; these SAW them.
- ✓ 'I know'. Faith brings assurance. *'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen'* (Heb.11:1). *hupostasis*, comes from *hupo*, meaning 'under,' and *histemi*, meaning 'to stand'. It literally means 'a standing under' – 'a confidence.' *'And faith is of things hoped for a confidence, of matters not seen a conviction'* (Young's Literal Translation).
- ✓ Heb. 11:1 should read: *'Now faith is the confidence of things having been hoped'* or *'Now faith is the assurance of things having been hoped.'* Assurance, confidence, and certainty are synonyms of each other
- ✓ Assurance (confidence, certainty) is MOST DEFINITELY of the essence of faith. Assurance equals faith. If there is no assurance, there is no faith. If there is no faith, there is no assurance. In fact, according to God's definition of faith, faith IS assurance! Faith is the assurance of things hoped for.
- ✓ This is the record of NT. *'For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in [the] Holy Spirit, and in much assurance...'* (1 Thes.1:5). *'I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day'* (2 Tim.1:12). *'These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God'* (1 John 5:13). *'And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name'* (John 20:30-31). *'The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God'* (Rom.8:16). *'But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?'* (Gal.4:9).
- ✓ A person with true faith looks to CHRIST ALONE for all of his salvation, sanctification and assurance. He never looks to himself. If we are faithless He remains faithful.
- ✓ Assurance is not the result of self-examination but Christ-examination.
- ✓ She was alone in her faith. 'I know' expresses the loneliness of faith. Same as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Joseph.
- ✓ 'When we see the scarlet cord we will pass over you'. It was for the purpose of identification.
- ✓ Remember, the spies did not know that God would work a miracle and only her house would be standing.
- ✓ The end of her faith. *'And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father's household, and all that she had. So she dwells in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho'* (Josh.6:25). *'...receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls'* (1 Pet.1:9).

11) Faith To Overcome Rejection

'And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets' (Heb.11:32). The writer moves from Joshua to Judges.

- ✓ **Jephthah** was the son of a Gileadite and a prostitute. He was disinherited by his half-brothers. Driven from his home he went to Tob. He was a rejected man; not of pure pedigree, not in the mainstream.
- ✓ God often passes the torch to people, like Jephthah who are not in the mainstream. He demonstrates that the real mainstream is that which God chooses to use.
- ✓ Jesus was not in the mainstream (Heb.13:12-13).
- ✓ Like David, Jephthah learned that God can minister effectively to the rejected. *'When my father and mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me'* (Psa.27:10).
- ✓ He attracted outcasts, making him more rejected. *'Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob; and worthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out raiding with him'* (Jud.11:3)

- ✓ The Ammonites made war against Israel, and there was no leader to lead them. The elders begged him to be their leader because of his fame as a successful leader. Suddenly he was the flavor of the month.
- ✓ *'So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?"'* (Judges 11:7).
- ✓ Jephthah agreed to be their leader. He tried to negotiate peacefully at first, but this was not successful.
- ✓ Then the Spirit came upon Jephthah to empower him to battle the Ammonites (Judges 11:28).
- ✓ Gathering his men from Tob, he passed through Manasseh. Judges 11:32-33.
- ✓ He won a great victory, driving them all the way back to their home and taking twenty of their cities.
- ✓ Israel were thus delivered from their enemies of 18 years, leaving the Ammonites without even any cities of protection. Jephthah was made judge of Israel.

- ✓ But he made a foolish vow in an attempt to invoke God's blessing. *'And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD, and said, "If You will indeed deliver the people of Ammon into my hands, then it will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the people of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering"'* (Judges 11:30-31).
- ✓ This was made in unbelief. He was already assured of victory. The Spirit of God was already upon him.
- ✓ Jephthah shows us we can be of faith one moment, then legalists the next.
- ✓ Vows are a subtle way of robbing God of His glory (Gen.28:20-22). It makes us feel better.
- ✓ The flesh reacts to grace. But the law supports vows, *'When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you'* (Deut.23:1). But the law is not of faith *'Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them'* (Gal.3:12).
- ✓ He was greatly distressed when his daughter came out to meet him. He told her of his vow and she only requested that she might bewail her virginity for two months with her friends.
- ✓ She was not killed as a 'burnt-offering', but remained celibate for the rest of her life.
- ✓ Vows marry us to the law and we experience its defeat. *'To will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find'* (Rom.7:18).

- ✓ We remember people's blemish rather than their faith. With God it is the opposite. He remembers a man who was rejected by his brethren but who had faith to overcome his rejection.
- ✓ Jesus can change anyone like this, (Isa.53:4). We are now accepted. *'He has made us accepted in the Beloved'* (Eph.1:6).
- ✓ That's our position. Learn to distinguish between your condition and your position.
- ✓ Who will you permit to write the identity message across your heart? Your past rejection says nothing about your value as a person.
- ✓ When you need to be reminded about the true nature of your worth, then look to the cross.

12) Faith To Conquer and Faith To Endure

Faith is to be exercised for both great exploits and when in difficulties.

Exploits. Heb.11:33-35a

Some conquered kingdoms. They were weaker than their enemies or circumstances, yet overcame through faith in God. They stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fires, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned foreign armies to flight, women received their dead raised to life, etc.

The early Church, out of weakness, was made strong and conquered kingdoms.

- ✓ Jesus, the founder of the faith was a humble man who lived in a despised part of the Roman Empire. See Isa.53:2-3; John 1:46.
- ✓ He entrusted His kingdom to eleven men of lowly status, and told them to make disciples of all nations!
- ✓ And, the message He entrusted to them was a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks.
- ✓ They were despised. *'Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him?'* (John 7:47).
- ✓ And persecuted. *'Concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere'* (Acts 28:22).
- ✓ Yet, church after church was planted. City after city, nation after nation fell to the gospel, until within 40 years the gospel had reached all the great centers of the Roman world. Nearly all of Europe, part of Asia and all of North Africa had fallen to the gospel. Today there is a church in most nations.

Difficulties. Heb.11:35b-38:

But others...endured mockings and scourgings, chains and imprisonment; they were stoned, sawn in two, tempted, slain with the sword, wandered about destitute, afflicted, tormented, banished to mountains, caves and dens, etc.

- ✓ Paul said: *'I die daily'* (1 Cor.15:31). *'Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often'* (2 Cor.11:23).
- ✓ *'And you will be hated by all for My name's sake'* (Lk.21:17). *'Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also'* (Jn.15:20).
- ✓ They have 'a better resurrection' i.e. than those mothers who had their dead raised to life.
- ✓ Which is harder, to bring someone back to life or to remain faithful in the face of death? Fight or flight. If they persecute you in one city, flee to another. Flee or stand – anything but deny.
- ✓ What is greater? What is best? To conquer kingdoms or to endure? Either way we win!
- ✓ Heb.11:6 says that God rewards those who are faithful to Him. Heb.11:39-40 says that the rewards may not come in this life.
- ✓ All these heroes in Hebrews 11 have their faith recorded as an example to us.
- ✓ Yet, though they gained the *promises* (Heb.6:15; 11:33) none saw the fulfillment of the *promise* they commonly shared, i.e. of the coming Messiah and the blessing of the New Covenant He would usher in.
- ✓ They looked for them (1 Pet.1:10-11), longed for them (Lk.10:24) & by faith embraced them (Heb.11:13)
- ✓ **Application:** Heb.12:1. The focus shifts from past to present. These are witnesses. They do not look at us but we to them. They have run their race; now it's our turn. They bear witness to the life of faith.
- ✓ *'...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God'* (Heb.12:2).
- ✓ Looking away from everything which may distract. Looking to Jesus the Author) and finisher. Not just as an example but as an enabler. He is now seated at God's right hand dispensing grace to the needy.
- ✓ *'For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin'* (Heb.12:3-4).
- ✓ If we do not consider Him we'll become discouraged.