

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #18, Chapter 11:17-31

Read Hebrews 11:1-31 to prepare for this week's lesson. Ask for the Lord's help and insight as you study.

1. What did Abraham do by faith according to verse 17? For more details read Gen. 22:1-12.

2. What was God's purpose for asking this of Abraham (verse 17)?

3. Define *testing* (KJV *tried* [Strong's #3985]).
 - a. Why would God test someone? See Ex. 16:4; 20:20; Deut. 8:2-5, 11-18; 13:3; Prov. 17:3; James 1:12-14; 1 Pet. 1:6-9.

 - b. Can you think of times when God has tested you? What things did you learn about the Lord and about your faith?

4. Abraham fully understood that God intended to use Isaac to proliferate Abraham's line, so when God asked Him to offer up Isaac, what did Abraham think? See verse 19. Now read Rom. 4:16-21 to understand the depth of Abraham's faith in God.

5. How did Abraham receive Isaac back from the dead *figuratively speaking* (ESV, NIV) as it says in verse 19? See Gen. 22:13-14.

6. Think of the sweetness of Abraham's tested faith! Yet, Abraham isn't the only one whose faith has been tested; God tests and tries the faith of all His children. Don't begrudge those trials their sharpening work, for they are perfecting you. They are causing you to live relying upon your God. How are you responding to the trials, tests, and temptations in your life right now? Is there anything you need to change so your response can be more like Abraham's?

7. Verse 20 tells us Isaac gave a blessing to his sons *by faith*. Giving a blessing to his sons as his death approaches doesn't seem to take much faith, yet Isaac is commended for that very act of faith in this chapter. What was it about the situation that caused Isaac to exercise his faith and trust in God? See Gen. 25:23; 27:1-10, 18-29, 30-37.

8. What did Jacob do by faith according to verse 21?
 - a. Scenes from his own life may have been playing in his head as Jacob blessed Joseph's sons. Read Gen. 48:1-22 for the details. How did this act reveal his faith in God?

9. How was Joseph's faith in God exhibited in verse 22 and Gen. 50:24-26; Ex. 12:40-41; 13:18-19; Josh. 24:31-32.

10. In verse 23, who acted by faith and what did they do? How did that reveal faith in the Lord?

11. Moses' story is next in this chapter. Read Ex. 1:8-2:10 for the background details of his story.
12. What did Moses do by faith in verse 24?
13. What were the results of this choice as seen in verse 25?
14. What did Moses understand about sin from verse 25? See also James 5:1-5; 1 Jn. 2:17.
15. Why was Moses able to make this choice according to verse 26?
 - a. What choices did other heroes of the faith make? See Ps. 84:10; Rom. 6:16-18; 2 Tim. 2:8-10.
16. Verse 27 recounts that Moses left Egypt "not fearing the wrath of the king." There are many reasons for taking the view that this is the first time Moses left Egypt when he was 40 years old, before he spent the 40 years in the wilderness, before he was commissioned by the Lord to lead the people out of Egypt.

Some compelling reasons for taking this view are the following: *the singular use of "he."* He left Egypt alone the first time, but the second time Moses left Egypt he was accompanied by a million or more people. Another even more compelling reason is the *chronology* of the story. We have Moses growing up, choosing not to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter in verses 24-26, and then in verse 28 the story jumps to the Passover, which was celebrated in Egypt before the nation left there.

So, what do we do with Exodus 2:13-15 that describes Moses leaving Egypt the first time? Read Exodus 2:13-15 and record what you learn about Moses' departure from Egypt as recounted there.

17. Step back a moment and consider what the author of Hebrews is doing in Chapter 11. *He is telling story after story of ordinary people who went through harrowing ordeals and difficult trials, yet kept their eyes fixed on the Lord and His promises.* They were characterized by faith, though they may have had moments of fear, despair, and unbelief. Moses left Egypt because his eyes were fixed on the One, true God. It was this God who motivated Moses to endure ill-treatment with the rest of the Israelites, rather than enjoy the passing pleasures of sin (Hebrews 11:25). Moses was credited with faith, in spite of the moments of fear and failure because over the long haul, he was faithful. How does that encourage you as you seek to trust the Lord in fearful and difficult times, knowing that you haven't always responded in every moment with complete and perfect faith?

18. What key mindset allowed Moses to leave Egypt in faith according to verse 27?

19. Look up the following verses and then ask yourself, "Am I living like this? Am I living by faith, as seeing Him who is unseen?" See 2 Cor. 4:18; Heb. 11:1, 13-16, 27; 12:2; 1 Pet. 1:8-9.

20. What is another situation in which Moses also exhibited faith in God? See verse 28. As you read the details of the Passover which they celebrated in Ex. 12:1-13, 23-27, think about the ways Moses revealed his faith in God and record them here.

21. Another scene of Moses' faith-filled life is listed in verse 29. What is the situation and how was his faith in the Lord displayed? Add any extra details of faith you see in Moses from Ex. 14:13-31.

22. What did God do for the Israelites according to verse 30? See also Josh. 6:1-21. Whose faith is on display in this example?

23. How did Rahab exhibit faith in God according to verse 31? Read the details of her story and explain why her faith in God was so amazing. See Josh. 2:1-21; 6:22-25.

24. It's important to make a distinction here about faith. The mighty acts the people saw and experienced didn't happen as a result of their great or unusual faith. Rather, they got to be part of what God was doing because they put their faith in Him and obeyed His commands. Our faith doesn't *make* God do anything. Our faith lines us up with what God intends to do. The point is not their "great" faith. The point is their faith in a great God who does great things. Summarize what you learn about putting your faith in God from the following verses: Ps. 16:8-9; 62:5-8; Prov. 3:5-6; Matt. 6:30; 17:20; John 11:39-40; 14:1; 2 Cor. 4:7-13.

25. Write your own "by faith" story in a manner similar to what we have read in Hebrews 11. Be encouraged as you remember Heb. 11:6: *And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.* Tell your story starting with, "By faith, (your name)"

Lord, We Know That Thou Art near us

By Jane Crewdson

Lord, we know that Thou art near us,
Though Thou seem'st to hide Thy face;
And are sure that Thou dost hear us,
Though no answer we embrace.

Not one promise shall miscarry
Not one blessing come too late
Though the vision long may tarry
Give us patience, Lord to wait.

While withholding—Thou art giving
In Thine own appointed way
And while waiting, we're receiving
Blessings suited to our day.

O the wondrous lovingkindness
Planning, working out of sight,
Bearing with us in our blindness,
Out of darkness bringing light.

Weaving blessings out of trials,
Out of grief evolving bliss;
Answering prayer by wise denials
When Thy children ask amiss.

And when faith shall end in vision,
And when prayer is lost in praise,
Then shall love, in full fruition,
Justify Thy secret ways.