

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #10, Chapter 10 Overview

TEACHER'S GUIDE

The goal of this particular lesson is the foundation of all Bible study. It is the practice of observing what's in the text. At this stage in our Bible study you're simply taking note and then recording what God has put into the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what it means or how it applies to your life—that will come later. Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding word of God. You'll be glad you did!

On the pages that follow you'll find the text of Chapter 10 in the New American Standard Bible version. *Use those pages to do this lesson.* Feel free to make notes on the page or mark it up as much as you like to help you do this lesson. Using the same Bible version to do this lesson will cut down on any confusion that would arise if we were all using different versions of the Bible when we get together for class discussion.

1. To begin, read through Chapter 10. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 10. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.¹

Note: This chapter contains direct quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures. The author of Hebrews repeats them exactly as they are used in their original context in the Old Testament which means that sometimes the pronouns don't follow the context. Don't let those pronoun changes fool you. Take note of when a quote is used and trace who or what the author is talking about. You should then be able to identify the pronoun references properly.

- a. Summarize the contents of the first paragraph (verses 1-10).

The Law cannot make a man perfect, even when they follow it to the letter. The continual, yearly need for cleansing is a reminder that the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin, which is why Jesus, in obedience to God's will, gave Himself as a sacrifice, so that we can be sanctified/cleansed.

- b. Summarize the contents of the second paragraph (verses 11-18).

¹The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.

The author compares the work of the priest to Jesus. The priest *stands* daily offering sacrifices that can never take away sins, while Jesus sacrificed once and *sat* down. Jesus' completed and magnificent work shows the glory of the new/second covenant that God inaugurated for us so that there is no longer a need for sacrifices for sins—because it's been taken care of by Jesus.

- c. Summarize the contents of the third paragraph (verses 19-25).

The author encourages believers that since Jesus' sacrifice has removed the stain and guilt of sin, then by all means we should draw near to God! He reveals how we are now freed up to draw near to God, to live differently, and to aid one another in seeking the Lord by gathering together.

- d. Summarize the contents of the fourth paragraph (verses 26-31).

This paragraph is closely tied to the one above. The last thing the author mentions is to not forsake gathering together, but to encourage one another, and all the more as the Lord's return draws near. Willfully, stubbornly disobeying these express commands reveals that we really aren't even saved and will face judgment. The author shows how disobeying the Lord's commands under the New Covenant is even weightier and has greater judgment than the Old Covenant.

- e. Summarize the contents of the fifth paragraph (verses 32-39).

The author moves from admonishing those who are tempted to turn away from the Lord to then encouraging the faithful saints. He reminds them of their past faithfulness and perseverance in suffering and affliction to prepare them for more trials and persecutions. He tells them plainly that they will need endurance and tells them not to throw away their reward when they get tired and lose heart. By continuing to exercise faith, we will not shrink back and will gain our renewed and sanctified souls.

2. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all the details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

The main point of this chapter is that Jesus' perfect and completed sacrificial work on our behalf changes everything! So that we draw near to God and press on toward heaven, living by faith, no matter what difficulties and afflictions await.

3. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your title should reflect the contents of the chapter in an abbreviated way. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

Jesus' Perfect Sacrifice Changes Everything!
 Press On Knowing Your Salvation is Secured!
 Live by Faith Upon the Finished Work of Christ

4. On the *Hebrews Bible Text* handout at the end of this lesson, mark *key words*. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. Start with these first. Then mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

Mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

5. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word, you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned in Hebrews Chapter 1. Your Chapter 1 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below. Include the details that you learn about Him. For example: verse 1—*He* spoke long ago to the fathers; verses 1-2—*God...has* spoken to us in *His* Son.

God

Verse 5 sacrifice and offering You [God] have not desired, but a body You [God] have prepared

Verse 6 in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You [God] have taken no pleasure

Verse 7 I have come to do Your [God's] will, O God.

Verse 8 offerings and sacrifices You [God] have not desired, nor have You [God] taken pleasure in them

Verse 9 "Behold I have come to do Your [God's] will."

Verse 12 He [Jesus] sat down at the right hand of God

Verse 16 "This is the covenant I [God] will make with them after those days, says the Lord [God]: I [God] will put my laws upon their heart, and on their mind I [God] will write them," He [God] then says...

Verse 17 their sins and their lawless deeds I [God] will remember no more

Verse 21 since we have a great priest [Jesus] over the house of God

Verse 23 for He [God] is faithful

Verse 29 trampled under foot the Son of God

Verse 30 for we know Him [God] who said, "Vengeance is Mine [God's], I [God] will repay." And again, "The Lord [God] will judge His [God's] people."

Verse 31 it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God

Verse 36 so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised

Verse 38 but My [God's] righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, My [God's] soul has no pleasure in him

Jesus Christ

Verse 5 when He [Jesus] comes into the world, He [Jesus] says, “sacrifice and offering You [God] have not desired, but a body You [God] have prepared for Me [Jesus].

Verse 7 then I [Jesus] said, “Behold, I [Jesus] have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of Me [Jesus]), to do Your [God’s] will

Verse 9 then He [Jesus] said, “Behold, I [Jesus] have come to do Your will. He [Jesus] takes away the first in order to establish the second.

Verse 10 sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all

Verse 12 but He having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God

Verse 13 (implied He/Jesus) waiting from that time onward until His [Jesus] enemies be made a footstool for His [Jesus’] feet

Verse 14 for by one offering He [Jesus] has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Verse 19 we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus

Verse 20 by a new and living way which He [Jesus] inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His [Jesus’] flesh

Verse 21 (implied) we have a great Priest over the house of God

Verse 29 trampled under foot the Son of God

Verse 37 yet in a little while, He [Jesus] who is coming will come and will not delay

Holy Spirit

Verse 15 and the Holy Spirit also testifies to us...

Verse 29 and has insulted the Spirit of grace

Will

Verse 7 Behold, I have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of Me) to do Your [God’s] **will**, O God. (God’s desirous or revealed will).

Verse 9 then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your [God’s] **will**. (Again, this is God’s desirous or revealed will).

Verse 10 by this **will** we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Again, this is referring to God’s desirous/revealed will, rather than His absolute/decreed will).

Verse 36 for you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the **will** of God, you may receive what was promised. (Here too, this is God’s desirous revealed will, not God’s absolute/decreed will).

Sacrifices/offering

Verse 1 the Law can never by the same sacrifices which they offer continually make perfect those who draw near.

Verse 2 Would *they* [implied, referring to sacrifices] not have ceased to be offered because the worshipers having once been cleansed would no longer have had consciousness of sins?

Verse 3 but in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year
Verse 5 He [Jesus] says, “sacrifice and offering You God have not desired
Verse 6 in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You God have not taken pleasure.
Verse 8 sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You God have not desired, not have you taken pleasure in them [implied referring to sacrifices and offerings]
Verse 8 which [implied, referring to sacrifices and offerings] are offered according to the Law
Verse 10 we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all
Verse 11 every priest stands daily ministering and *offering* time after time the same *sacrifices*, which can never take away sins
Verse 12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time
Verse 14 for by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified
Verse 18 where there is forgiveness of sins, there is no longer any offering for sin
Verse 26 if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins

Blood

Verse 4 for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins
Verse 19 we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus
Verse 29 how much severer punishment ... and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which [implied, referring to blood of the covenant] he was sanctified

Sin

Verse 2 would they not have ceased to be offered because once cleansed, have had no consciousness of sins?
Verse 3 in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year
Verse 4 impossible for blood of bulls and goats to take away sins
Verse 6 “in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You God have taken no pleasure”
Verse 8 offerings and sacrifices for sin You God have not desired, nor have You God taken pleasure in them [sacrifices for sins]
Verse 11 same sacrifices which can never take away sins
Verse 12 He having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time
Verse 17 “and their sins and lawless deeds [synonym for sin] I will remember no more”
Verse 18 where there is forgiveness of these things [sins and lawless deeds] there is no longer any offering for sin

6. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. It helps to look for any actions that are required of the reader or things they are told to do or be.

7. Now, list the commands on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.

See Observation Sheet

8. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted.

9. Now list the comparisons and contrasts you discovered on the extra paper you’ve been using.

See Observation Sheet

10. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)

See Observation Sheet

11. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.

See Observation Sheet

12. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *God* and *Father* from 1:1.

See Observation Sheet

13. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter and add them to your list paper.

How to identify attributes: Look back over the list you compiled about God and identify any of His attributes that you may see. Identifying attributes is easy when you differentiate between what God is *doing* versus *who He is*. Begin your attribute statements with *God is...*and then finish the sentence. List the verse that identified that particular characteristic for you. For clarity’s sake you may want to explain why you identified that particular attribute as shown in the examples. For example: God is sovereign from verse 1 (because He ordained His plan and how it would be revealed to the world); God is knowable from verse 2 (because He has spoken to us in Christ and made His will known).

14. Look for *lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts* in the chapter text. Number any lists you find within the Bible text, then write out your list to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper of the Hebrews Chapter 1 Bible text. This

step will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action. For example, in Hebrews 1:1-2 *we find a list about God speaking*. We discover 1) God spoke long ago; 2) God spoke to the fathers; 3) God spoke through the prophets; 4) God spoke through the prophets in many portions; 5) God spoke through the prophets in many ways; 6) and now in these last days God has spoken; 7) God has spoken to us; and 8) God has spoken to us in His Son.

15. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed that you thought were interesting.

Thinking on **Hebrews 10:35-36** and found this letter written by Pastor John Hooper, one of the Reformation Martyrs. The letter in its entirety is such a blessing!

A letter which Master Hooper did write out of prison to certain of his friends, three weeks before his cruel burning at Gloucester.

“But now is the time of trial, to see whether we fear God or man. It was an easy thing to hold with Christ while the Prince and world held with Him; but now the world hateth Him, it is the true trial who be His. Wherefore, in the name and in the virtue, strength, and power of His Holy Spirit, prepare yourselves in any case to adversity and constancy. Let us not run away when it is most time to fight. Remember, none shall be crowned but such as fight manfully; and he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in each chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life at this time. Your task at this time is to look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter. Have fun digging into God's word!

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

Discovering the Treasures of the Word

Hebrews Chapter 10

1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?

3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year.

4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You have not desired, But a body You have prepared for Me;

6 in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have taken no pleasure.

7 "Then I said, 'Behold, I have come (In the scroll of the book it is written of Me) To do Your will, O God.'"

8 After saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have not desired, nor have You taken pleasure in them"

(which are offered according to the Law),

9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will." He takes away the first in order to establish the second.

10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES
Discovering the Treasures of the Word

12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,

13 waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet.

14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

15 And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying,

16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws upon their heart, And on their mind I will write them," He then says,

17 "And their sins and their (lawless deeds) will remember no more."

18 Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.

19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,

20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,

21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

Discovering the Treasures of the Word

25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.

28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge His people."

31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

32 But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings,

33 partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated.

34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.

35 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.

- Not regarding
1. severe punishment
 2. trampled
 3. regarded as unclean
 4. insulted
 5. vengeance
 6. induced
 7. Hell into

- The Great Conflict of Sufferings
1. public spectacle
 2. reproaches
 3. tribulation
 4. sharing in sufferings of others
 5. showed sympathy to prisoners
 6. joyfully accepted seizure of property

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

Discovering the Treasures of the Word

TT
36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

37 For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay.

38 But My righteous one shall live by faith; And if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

Faith vs Shrink Back

1. righteous live by faith
2. God not pleased when shrink back
3. Those who shrink back are destroyed
4. live by faith are preserved

- △ God
- + Jesus
- ✓ Holy Spirit
- sacrifice/offering
- ⋈ blood
- ≡ sin
- ▬ will

- Ⓢ time reference
- ccc command
- /// sanctified/cleaned
- ⊞ comparison
- TT transition terms
- S & S synonyms

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #11, Chapter 10:1-7

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Read Hebrews 9:23-10:7 at least once before beginning this lesson. Please take the time to bow your heart before the Lord and ask for His guidance and insight as you study.

“Under the Old Covenant, the priests were busy all day long, from dawn to sunset, slaughtering and sacrificing animals. It is estimated that at Passover as many as three hundred thousand lambs would be slain within a week. The slaughter would be so massive that blood would run out of the Temple ground through specially prepared channels into the Brook Kidron, which seemed to be running with blood.

But no matter how many sacrifices were made, or how often, they were ineffective. They failed in three ways: they could not bring access to God; they could not remove sin; and they were only external.” ~John MacArthur¹

1. What two things are being contrasted in verse 1 of Chapter 10?
The *shadow* of the good things to come and the “real” good things to come.
2. How does that continue the line of reasoning of Hebrews 9:23-28?
In the chapter 9 verses the author references the *copies* and the *real* things in heaven.
3. What key points about the law does the author reiterate in verse 1? Reread the following verses for confirmation of those same points being made: 7:18-19; 8:5; 9:9, 11.

The Law can never by its continual animal sacrifices make the worshiper perfect in conscience. The Law is only a shadow of the good things to come.

Hebrews 7:18–19 For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

Hebrews 8:5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, “See,” He says, “that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.”

Hebrews 9:9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, **Hebrews 9:11** But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made

¹John MacArthur, *Hebrews*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1983), 246.

with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;

4. Define *shadow* [Strong's #4639].

"The emphasis is on this thought. The legal system was a shadow. Σκιὰ is a *rude outline, an adumbration*, contrasted with εἰκὼν, *the archetypal or ideal pattern*. Σκιὰ does not accurately exhibit the figure itself. Comp. ch. 8:5." [Vincent's Word Studies]

"(Shadow) is in the emphatic place, as that characteristic of the law which determines its inadequacy. 'A shadow' suggests indefiniteness and unsubstantiality; a mere indication that a reality exists." [Wuest's Word Studies]

a. Define *form* (NIV *reality*; KJV *image* [Strong's #1504]).

Image, figure, likeness. Exact and distinct replica.

"*Eikon* (Ἔικον) (image) suggests what is in itself substantial and also gives a true representation of that which it images. The *eikon* (εἰκὼν) (image) brings before us under the conditions of space, as we can understand it, that which is spiritual' (Westcott) ... The contrast is between a bare intimation that good things were to be given, and an actual presentation of these good things in an apprehensible form. It is *implied* that this latter is given in Christ; but what is asserted is, that the law did not present the coming realities in a form which brought them within the comprehension of the people." [Wuest's Word Studies]

5. What is the law not able to do according to verse 1?

The Law can never make perfect those who draw near.

6. What logic does the author use to further substantiate this truth in verse 2?

If the Law was able to cleanse the conscience from sin, then the sacrifices would have ceased to be offered. *Genius!*

7. Explain how verse 3 help us understand the meaning of the phrase,

"worshippers...would no longer have had *consciousness of sins*?" Look up the following verses for help in forming your answer: Heb. 8:12; 9:9, 13-14; 10:22.

The continual offering up of the sacrifices reveals that there is a need to have sin removed, so the conscience can be clean. Nothing is sweeter than a clean conscience.

Hebrews 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And I will remember their sins no more."

Hebrews 9:9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience,

Hebrews 9:13–14 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh,

how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

“If the offerings had completely and finally absolved them from sin, then would they not have ceased making the annual trek to the tabernacle or temple? The regular recurrence of the sacrifices branded them as ineffectual. Whoever has to take medicine every hour to stay alive can hardly be said to be cured.” ~ *Believer's Bible Commentary*²

8. What definitive statement is made in verse 4?

It is IMPOSSIBLE for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

9. Why was this a necessary reminder for those who were considering a return to Judaism?

They needed to understand this obviously. Returning to Judaism would not remove the stain of sin and shame. It would not ease their guilty conscience, nor would it make them right with God.

10. Stop for a moment and consider again these words, *It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins* and then read the hymn that follows. What does take away your sin? How should that impact your life?

The ONLY thing that can take away my sin, shame, guilt, and separation from God is the blood of Jesus. My putting my trust in Jesus for my hope, salvation, and rescue I am saying that I believe this is the only way my conscience can be cleansed.

How should this impact my life? In every way! It should inspire greater love, devotion, and gratitude in me. It should give me freedom in my soul to know that I am free and clean from the stain of sin, that nothing can separate me from the love of God.

Nothing But the Blood
by Robert Lowry

²William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995), Heb 10:2.

What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus; What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.	For my pardon, this I see, Nothing but the blood of Jesus; For my cleansing this my plea, Nothing but the blood of Jesus.	This is all my hope and peace, Nothing but the blood of Jesus; This is all my righteousness, Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
Oh! precious is the flow That makes me white as snow; No other fount I know, Nothing but the blood of Jesus.	Nothing can for sin atone, Nothing but the blood of Jesus; Naught of good that I have done, Nothing but the blood of Jesus.	Glory! Glory! This I sing— Nothing but the blood of Jesus, All my praise for this I bring— Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

11. Verse 5 reveals that someone was going to come into the world. Who was that? He refers to Jesus.

- a. Explain how you figured out the answer to the question above from the surrounding context of verse 5.

Verses 9 and 10 provide the strongest proof that this is Jesus. The author's comments end up with the summary statements in verses 9 and 10. Must also consider how and why the author is using these Old Testament Scripture references. They reveal *how* God provided cleansing for sin when it is *impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins* (see verse 4). The answer is revealed that Jesus accomplishes salvation and rescue from sin when He perfectly obeys God's law. Because Jesus never sinned, He obeyed God's will perfectly. The Old Testament reference says that Jesus came to "do God's will." Jesus said the very same thing in John 4:34; 5:36; 6:38; 17:4. In Jesus coming to do the will of God perfectly (verse 9), God institutes/establishes the second/new covenant. All this takes us to verse 10 where the author states, "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.

John 5:36 "But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

John 6:38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 17:4 "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.

12. The author of Hebrews is quoting Ps. 40:6-8 to make a key point that we will look into in a moment. Read Ps. 40 and summarize the contents of the psalm. Pay particular attention to the context of Ps. 40:6-8.

David rejoices in the Lord's gracious help, deliverance, and upholding for him in

trial. David praises the Lord for His many and continued wonders on David's behalf. David understands that God has always desired our hearts (verse 6), not the *form* of religious worship, which is why David desires to do God's will with his whole heart. In verse 9 David explains the loving desires of his heart to proclaim the Lord and His mercies. In verses 11-17 David continues to seek the Lord and puts his trust in Him to rescue him from his distresses and sins. He closes the psalm by affirming that the Lord is his help and deliverer.

13. The author of Hebrews quotes Ps. 40:6 from the LXX or the Septuagint, which is the Greek version of the Old Testament. The Hebrew language version of Ps. 40:6 reads, "My ears you have opened," while the Greek language version reads "a body you have prepared for Me," as we have here in our text (Heb. 10:5).

a. According to Heb. 10:1-5 the "body" was prepared for what purpose?

The body was prepared to take away sins, to cleanse, to remove consciousness of sins, to make perfect those who draw near.

b. What point is the author making in Heb. 10:1-5?

The blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins, but God has provided and prepared a "body" that can take away sins and cleanse the guilty worshiper from their wicked and shameful deeds.

c. Why would the author have preferred the LXX translation here?

Because there needed to be a body...a human body, not the body of a bull or the body of a goat to take away sins. A human body was needed—and God provided and prepared a human body that would remove our sins! Oh, the grandeur of God's plan and the nuanced precision of the author of Hebrew's arguments is just magnificent.

d. Now read Heb. 10:10. How does that add insight into the author's meaning in verse 5?

Hebrews 10:5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME;

Hebrews 10:10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

You can trace the author's intended path when you read them together. God prepared a body for Christ (His incarnation) so that through the offering of His body, we would be sanctified. Oh, blessed thought! Oh, gracious God! Oh, mighty Savior!

14. What does Heb. 10:6 reveal?

God has not taken pleasure in the offerings and sacrifices for sin.

15. Why aren't those things pleasing to God *in this context* (10:1-6)?

Because those things are copies and shadows of God's planned and now revealed new covenant. The blood of bulls and goats never took away sin. They have always been the means of turning faithful worshipers to God *in faith* for complete cleansing.

- a. Now look up the following verses to see what else God has to say about why those things aren't pleasing to Him: 1 Sam. 15:22-23; Ps. 50:8-15; 51:16-17; Is. 1:11-17; Amos 5:21-26.

1 Samuel 15:22–23 Samuel said, "Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices *As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.* "For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king."

Psalm 50:8–15 "I do not reprove you for your sacrifices, And your burnt offerings are continually before Me. "I shall take no young bull out of your house Nor male goats out of your folds. "For every beast of the forest is Mine, The cattle on a thousand hills. "I know every bird of the mountains, And everything that moves in the field is Mine. "If I were hungry I would not tell you, For the world is Mine, and all it contains. "Shall I eat the flesh of bulls Or drink the blood of male goats? *"Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving And pay your vows to the Most High; Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me."*

Psalm 51:16–17 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.*

Isaiah 1:11–17 "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle; And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. "When you come to appear before Me, Who requires of you this trampling of My courts? "Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies— I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. "I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. "So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. *"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow.*

Amos 5:21–26 "I hate, I reject your festivals, Nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. "Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; And I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. "Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. "But *let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.* "Did you present Me with sacrifices

and grain offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel? “You also carried along Sikkuth your king and Kiyyun, your images, the star of your gods which you made for yourselves.

16. If sacrifices and offerings aren’t pleasing to the Lord, what is? See verse 7.
To do God’s will.
Well, that’s awfully simple.

17. The author of Hebrews sees Ps. 40:6-8 as predictive of Christ who came to do God’s will. Look up the following verses and record what you learn about Christ doing God’s will. See Matt. 26:39-42; Jn. 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:42.

Matthew 26:39–42 And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.” And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? “Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, “My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.” *The Lord Jesus was committed to doing God’s will. He was submitted to it, even when it would cost Him everything. Jesus willingly gave up His will to do the Father’s will. May I do the same!*

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. *Jesus saw doing God’s will as His nourishment, for His own daily health and sustenance.*

John 5:30 “I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. *Jesus asserts that He does all that the Father tells Him to do. He doesn’t seek His own will, only God’s.*

John 6:38 “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. *Ditto from above.*

John 8:42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. *Jesus does all that the Father desires Him to do—even putting on flesh and dwelling on earth as a man.*

18. What did God’s will for Christ involve?

Death. The cross. Living on earth in human flesh and being subject to all the indignities, failures, and weaknesses of a human body, then add to that living among sinful, weak, hateful men, who have no thought of God, no love for Him or others. It was a continual dying to self, so that God’s will—the cross—would be accomplished. Yet, Hebrews 12:2 says that Jesus considered this as joyful as He did the Father’s will. He endured, waited, hoped, suffered, was lonely, rejected, betrayed, misunderstood, berated, shunned, not listened to.

19. How did Christ respond to God'?

He did God's will joyfully, fully, completely, to the end, without complaint, perseveringly, remembering the promises of God and the truths of the Scriptures.

20. How have you benefitted from Christ understanding God's will for His life?

In every way! Can you imagine if Jesus hadn't obeyed God? All would be lost! No hope. Forever separated from God. I have gained hope, heaven, access to God Himself, rescue from sin, cleansing from shame and guilt. He strengthens me, helps me, delivers me, upholds me. He is all in all and does all.

21. Christ proclaimed, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins (10:4), so Jesus Christ shed His blood to take them away. What response does this debt of love inspire in you as you consider your life and His sacrifice?

I want to live more faithfully for Him, to have my life here on earth bring Him glory, so that in heaven even more praises will ring out for Him.

All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.

I surrender all, I surrender all;
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.

My Soul Complete in Jesus Stands

by Grace Hinsdale

My soul complete in Jesus stands!
It fears no more the law's demands;
The smile of God is sweet within,
Where all before was guilt and sin.

My soul at rest in Jesus lives:
Accepts the peace His pardon gives;
Receives the grace His death secured,
And pleads the anguish He endured.

My soul its every foe defies,
And cries—'tis God that justifies!

Who charges God's elect with sin?
Shall Christ, who died their peace to win?

A song of praise my soul shall sing
To our eternal, glorious King!
Shall worship humbly at His feet,
In Whom alone it stands complete.

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #12, Chapter 10:8-18

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Ask the Lord to prepare your heart to study His Word in this lesson.

1. Explain the flow of Heb. 10:1-7.

The Law, sacrifices, and offerings can never make a soul perfect or right in God's sight. The need for continual sacrifices shows that the Law was insufficient to cleanse the soul, as the author of Hebrews says, "It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." The author explains that Jesus came in the flesh, to obey the Law perfectly, so that He could atone for our sin. It was God's will for Jesus to do this—and Jesus desired to obey the Lord in every way.

2. What parenthetical information does the author of Hebrews include in his verse 8 commentary?

That the sacrifices and offerings are done so *according to the Law's requirements*. Though the author is making the point that God doesn't take pleasure in the sacrifices and offerings, he is quick to add the sacrifices and offerings are lawful and at God's command. The problem is with their hearts and motives.

3. Why is that a significant point in light of what he has just said?

It was the Father's will that Christ be the fulfillment of the Law. He is the perfect sacrifice.

4. What parenthetical information does the author include in his verse 9 commentary?

Christ took away the first covenant (that is, He abolished it) when He instituted the second/new covenant. In fact, the old covenant had to be set aside when Christ instituted the new covenant. This sentence in verse 9 is basically making the same point the author was making in chapter 9.

5. What does Jesus coming to do God's will have to do with establishing the second (or new) covenant?

God's will *is* to establish a new covenant—and Jesus was the One to do it.

6. Verse 10 begins, *By this will*. What "will" is the author referring to (verse 7, 9)? "This will" in verse 10 refers to the will that Jesus came to do, as stated in verses 7 and 9.

7. Just what is God's will in this case? See verse 10.

Our sanctification which is accomplished through the body and blood of Jesus—once for all.

- a. How do we benefit from Christ's obedience to God's will?

We are sanctified/cleansed/given access to God/freedom from sin/the Helper/grace/mercy/compassion/heaven/hope! How do we NOT benefit?!!!

8. Define *sanctified* (NIV *made holy* [Strong's #37]).

To purify, cleanse internally, no longer for common use, but set apart for holiness. Having been made partakers of holiness.

The Greek word "to sanctify," hagiazo (ἁγιάζω), means "to set apart for God." Here the work of sanctification refers to the placing of the believing sinner into the status of a saved person, with all the accompanying blessings and enablements which that act includes. [Kenneth S. Wuest, [Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 175.]

9. What is significant about the verb choice here—*have been sanctified*? What does that tell you about your position before God? See also 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 4:24; 1 Thess. 3:13; Heb. 10:14.

The work is done. There no longer remains a need for the sacrifice for sins. Jesus took care of it all. The work began and continues into the present.

"The will of God expresses the reason for believers being made holy, and the result is shown in the construction in Greek which literally reads, "we are having been made holy." The means of our sanctification is the offering of the body of Christ in obedience to the will of God. The construction in Greek is used by the author to highlight the permanence of Christ's work and the continuing state of sanctification which believers enjoy." [David L. Allen, [Hebrews](#), The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2010), 500.]

"The words "we are sanctified" are in the Greek text a perfect participle and a finite verb, showing in the strongest way the permanent and continuous state of salvation into which the believer is brought and in which he lives. [Kenneth S. Wuest, [Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 175.]

1 Corinthians 6:11 Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

Ephesians 4:24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

10. What key words in verse 11 reveal the hopelessness of the old covenant system? Stands, daily, ministering (present tense), time after time, same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. Basically, the whole verse points out the hopelessness of the old system.

11. What key words in verse 12 provide a contrast to the hopelessness of verse 11? He offered one time, all time, sat down.

12. What did Jesus do after He made sacrifice for sins (verse 12)? He sat down at the right hand of God.

a. What does that indicate about Christ's work?

It means it is finished, accomplished, that God is fully satisfied with Christ's work.

13. What is He doing *now* (verse 13)?

Waiting! Jesus has been waiting since He made atonement for our sins.

a. *When* will that change (verse 13)?

The day when His enemies be made a footstool for His feet.

b. What does that tell you about God's future plan?

Jesus wins! There will come a day when He will receive the glory, honor, and rights He deserves. God's future plans are still future. They include the vindication of Jesus' honor.

14. Jesus paid the ultimate price and gave the perfect sacrifice, yet we read that He *waits*. He waits for the day when all the world will see Him as King of kings and Lord of lords. Why does God make Jesus wait? See Phil. 2:9-11; 2 Pet. 3:8-9; Rev. 19:1-18.

Philippians 2:9–11 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. *God intends that Jesus be exalted and worshiped by ALL!*

2 Peter 3:8–9 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. *God desires all to be saved and come to repentance. God makes Jesus wait to receive His just honor and glory, so that more sinful men can be saved—and then add their voices of praise to the Lord in heaven with all the rest of the saints of old.*

Revelation 19:1–18 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has

judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.” And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.” And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.” Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ ” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.” *God makes Jesus wait for the day of final judgment and for Jesus to finally rule as King on the earth. Oh, what a day, glorious day, that will be!*

15. In verse 14 the author sums up his statements from verses 11-13. What was Christ able to do through His *one* offering?

He perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

16. Define *perfected* [Strong’s #5048]. Now rewrite verse 14 using the definition. To complete, to carry through to completion, to finish, to bring to an end. When something is perfected, nothing else remains to do. No tweaking is necessary, no final touches, all is just as it should be.

“The new sacrifice was effective because it gives believers eternal perfection. Again, it must be emphasized that perfection is eternal salvation. To make **perfected** here mean “spiritually matured” would not be consistent with the context. The death of Jesus Christ removes sin forever for those who belong to Him. We are totally secure in our Savior. We need cleansing when we fall into sin, but we need never fear God’s judgment on us because of our sin. As far as Christ’s sacrifice is concerned, we have *already been sanctified and perfected*—which is why He had to sacrifice Himself only once.” [John F. MacArthur Jr., [Hebrews](#), MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 256.]

Verse 14 rewrite: (original: For by one offering Jesus has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.) My rewrite: In Jesus’ one offering, He perfected what was lacking in us, so that no more offering, no more sacrifice was needed to make us holy. We have been made perfectly and completely holy through Jesus’ sacrifice for us.

17. Explain how verse 15 adds weight to what has already been said. It’s like saying, “Not only that, but the Holy Spirit also tells us...” The Holy Spirit also speaks to this accomplished work.

18. What truths were confirmed (verses 16-17)?
The Holy Spirit reminds us that Jesus’ work means that the new covenant is in effect when the Lord puts His laws on our hearts and minds and “cancels out the certificate of decrees against us.” The Holy Spirit confirms that the new covenant is in effect as a result of Jesus’ death on the cross for us.

19. How do the truths of verses 16-17 confirm what the author teaches us in verse 14? The covenant relationship is established through the work of Christ. The work of God in us is accomplished through Christ, which then brings the covenant promises to fruition in our lives.

20. What jaw dropping statement is made in verse 18?
Where there is forgiveness for sins and lawless deeds, then the need for a sin offering is obsolete!

- a. Verse 18 states, *where there is forgiveness of these things*. What are those *things* according to verse 17?

The sins and lawless deeds mentioned in verse 17.

21. Why would it be crucial to understand verse 18 in the battle against returning to Judaism?

If in the new covenant—which was instituted by Jesus’ death—there is forgiveness of sins, then there really isn’t any need to return to the temple to offer up sacrifices for sins. It would have been such a mind blower for some of the

Jews to consider this! And even after accepting it, it would still have been hard to change habits and thoughts about the need to offer up continual sacrifices. They would have needed to remind themselves of these truths over and over again, so their consciences wouldn't have been hurt.

22. Summarize what you learned about Christ from verses 8-18. Christ came to do the Father's will in full obedience. In obeying and carrying out the Father's will, He (Jesus) established the second/new covenant. It was the Father's good pleasure and will that Jesus make us holy through His once for all sacrifice. In fact, His once for all sacrifice is so complete that He now sits and waits until He is exalted and glorified as King. That's all that remains—Jesus' enemies must be judged and then He will be exalted. Because there is complete forgiveness and changed heart in the new covenant, there is no need for further sacrifices for sin.

23. Think of at least one way these bedrock truths about Christ can make a difference for *you* in your daily life.

The truth of these verses should so encourage and strengthen me to have a holy boldness in approaching God for help and grace in time of need. I am clean! No fear, no guilt, no shame. No reproach for Jesus paid it all and then ushered in a whole new relationship for me to grow in.

O Happy Day

By Philip Doddridge

O happy day that fixed my choice
on Thee, my Savior and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice
and tell its raptures all abroad.

O happy bond that seals my vows
to Him who merits all my love!
Let cheerful anthems fill His house,
while to that sacred shrine I move.

High Heav'n that heard the solemn vow,
that vow renewed shall daily hear;

till in life's latest hour I bow,
and bless in death a bond so dear.

'Tis done, the great transaction's done—
I am my Lord's and He is mine;
He drew me, and I followed on,
charmed to confess the voice divine.

Now rest, my long-divided heart,
fixed on this blissful center, rest;
nor ever from my Lord depart,
with Him of ev'ry good possessed.

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #13, Chapter 10:19-31

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Read Hebrews 10:1-31 in preparation for this lesson. Ask the Lord to help you grow in wisdom and understanding of His ways.

Keep in mind the recipients of this letter are a mixed group of people just like any church congregation. There are believers at all stages of growth, as well as unbelievers, who range from seeking God to scoffing at Him. The believers in this group have endured suffering and persecution and are now trying to withstand the wiles of false teachers who want to lure anyone they can back to Judaism and the sacrificial system known by their fathers. Just like any good preacher, the writer of this letter addresses his comments to the majority, those who are believers, trying to minister to their spiritual needs, but at times he addresses those on the sidelines, seeking to win them to Christ and to woo them back to the right path.

1. What do we have according to verse 19 and what does it allow us to do?
Verse 19 tells us we have confidence. It allows us to enter the holy place.

a. How is that possible? See also 10:16-18.

By the blood of Jesus.

Because we are partakers of the new covenant and have had our sins and lawless deeds forgiven.

2. What term does the writer use to describe Jesus' flesh (verse 20)?
The author of Hebrews calls Jesus' flesh the veil.

a. How is Jesus' flesh or body like the veil in the temple? See Matt. 27:51, then look up Heb. 9:11-14 and then read Is. 53:1-12.

Matthew 27:51 And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. *When Jesus died the veil in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, showing that the way into God's presence was open and accessible to all. Through Jesus' death on the cross, God became freely accessible to all men, not just the priests once a year. The veil gave way and access to God was gained.*

Hebrews 9:11-14 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? *As priest and sacrifice, Jesus removed*

all that kept us from entering into God's presence.

Isaiah 53:1–12 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors. *His body had to be torn (i.e. He had to die) so that the way to God could be accomplished. **Without the rending of His flesh (symbolically seen in the temple curtain torn from top to bottom) the way to God would have remained forever closed to us.***

In front of the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, there hung the veil to screen off the presence of God. For anyone to enter into that presence, the veil would have to be torn apart. **Jesus' flesh is what veiled his godhead. Charles Wesley, in his great hymn 'Hark the herald angels sing', made this appeal: *Veiled in flesh the godhead see. It was when the flesh of Christ was torn upon the cross that people really saw God.*** All his life showed God; but it was on the cross that God's love really was revealed. ***As the tearing of the tabernacle veil opened the way to the presence of God, so the tearing of the flesh of Christ revealed the full greatness of his love and opened up the way to him.***

[William Barclay, [The Letter to the Hebrews](#), The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 142.]

The thick veil that separated the holy place from the holy of holies was a barrier between people and God. Only the death of Christ could tear that veil (Mark 15:38) and open the way into the *heavenly* sanctuary where God dwells. [Warren W. Wiersbe, [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*](#), vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 314–315.]

3. What are we to do since we have a great high priest who rules over the house of God? See verse 22.

Draw near! Oh, draw near because we *do have* a great high priest who rules over the house of God!

- a. What qualities should our hearts have as we draw near to God (verse 22)? They should be sincere. In full assurance of faith. Sprinkled clean from an evil conscience.

4. Define *conscience* [Strong’s #4893].

The soul distinguishes between what is morally good and bad, and prompts us to do what is right and shun what is bad. Conscience is that inward part of us that distinguishes between right and wrong. We can sin against our conscience. When we do what is right our conscience is eased. The conscience is our soul is our heart is our inward part of us.

5. What kind of conscience is described here?
An evil conscience.

- a. What other kinds of consciences are described in the Scriptures? See Acts 23:1; 24:16; 1 Cor. 8:7; 2 Cor. 4:2; 1 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:15; Heb. 9:9, 14.

Acts 23:1 Paul, looking intently at the Council, said, “Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly *good conscience* before God up to this day.”

Acts 24:16 “In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a *blameless conscience* both before God and before men.

1 Corinthians 8:7 However not all men have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and their *conscience being weak is defiled*.

2 Corinthians 4:2 but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to *every man’s conscience* in the sight of God. *God sees the conscience. It may be closed to the eyes of men, but not to God’s sight.*

1 Timothy 4:2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars *seared in their own conscience* as with a branding iron,

Titus 1:15 To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their *conscience are defiled*.

Hebrews 9:9 which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper *perfect in conscience*,

Hebrews 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, *cleanse your conscience* from dead works to serve the living God?

b. According to verse 22 what can happen to even an evil conscience? Even an evil conscience can be made clean, sprinkled clean because of our great high priest.

6. Unlike most of us, the recipients of this letter were familiar with the preparations necessary to enter God's presence. What things needed to be done? See Num. 19:16-19 for an example. How does that coincide with what the author is describing in verse 22?

Numbers 19:16–19 'Also, anyone who in the open field touches one who has been slain with a sword or who has died naturally, or a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean for seven days. 'Then for the unclean person they shall take some of the ashes of the burnt purification from sin and flowing water shall be added to them in a vessel. 'A clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it on the tent and on all the furnishings and on the persons who were there, and on the one who touched the bone or the one slain or the one dying naturally or the grave. 'Then the clean person shall sprinkle on the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify him from uncleanness, and he shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and shall be clean by evening.

A defiled person could be made clean by being sprinkled with water. The author of Hebrews uses the same terminology to describe what Christ did for us in cleansing us from our sin.

7. Since we have confidence to enter God's presence because of our great high priest what else are we urged to do according to verse 23? Why? Hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. Why? This is the best! Why should we hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering? *Because He who promised is faithful!!!*

8. Just what is the *confession of our hope*? See 2 Cor. 9:13; 1 Tim. 6:12; Heb. 3:1, 6; 4:14; 10:23.

2 Corinthians 9:13 Because of the proof given by this ministry, *they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ* and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; *take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession* in the presence of many witnesses.

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;

Hebrews 3:6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, *if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope* firm until the end.

Hebrews 4:14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, *let us hold fast our confession*.

Hebrews 10:23 *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope* without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

The confession of our hope is our testimony that we have placed our faith in Jesus Christ as the only answer and hope for rescue from our sins and death.

9. This command would have been especially poignant to the Hebrews readers because of the ones in their midst who were wavering in the faith. They had forgotten the crucial truth contained in this verse. What is the key to holding fast to your hope *without wavering* (verse 23)?

We won't waver when we remember that our hope is anchored in God's faithfulness. It has nothing to do with our grip, with our determination to hold on. It all depends on the Lord and His faithfulness. He promised, so our salvation is assured, our acceptance is assured, our welcome is assured.

10. Think of one area of your life where you need to be reminded that *He who promised is faithful*. Write down 3 ways you can shore up your thoughts so they will not falter.

Going over this passage is one such stop to not wavering. Reviewing God's character changes everything and bolsters my faltering steps. Not giving into my feelings, but instead choosing to believe God over my fears.

11. Since we have confidence to enter God's presence because of our great high priest, we are to draw near, we are to hold fast, and we are also to do what according to verse 24?

Consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.

12. Define *consider* [Strong's #2657].

Attentive, continuous care. Take careful note of each other's spiritual welfare. This command really puts a different emphasis on our responsibility to one another than what we often put into practice within the body of Christ.

Lenski says, "Let us put our mind down on each other. Each is to continue to think of what his own attitude and conduct mean in their effect upon his brethren. Remissness causes double damage, to ourselves and to all the rest; our faithfulness produces double fruit, our own good deeds and a stimulation of others to like good deeds." [R. C. H. Lenski, [*The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Epistle of James*](#) (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1938), 352–353.]

- a. Define *stimulate* (NIV *spur*; KJV *provoke* [Strong's #3948]).

Stir up. Cause a *paroxysm* of love and good works. Incite and provoke but in a good sense. Stir up each other's religious affections and ministries. I love this command and love seeing it put into practice in our body.

Matthew Poole says, "***In this place it is used to set out the vehemency of affection to which the sacrifice of Christ obligeth Christians***, as those who had *their whole persons acted by love to each other, with all vehemency, to the highest and fullest pitch of it*; as who should exceed in benevolence, beneficence, and complacency in each other, such as is conscientious, pure, and extensive to the very end, chap. 13:1; Rom. 12:9, 20; 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; and manifesting itself in good works to them, especially merciful ones, pitying, counselling, succouring, supplying, and comforting them, James 2:13, 15, 16; 1 John 3:14, 16–18; and this freely, cheerfully, and constantly, Eph. 2:10; 4:32; 1 Tim. 6:18." [Matthew Poole, [*Annotations upon the Holy Bible*](#), vol. 3 (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1853), 856.]

13. How are you doing in these three areas—drawing near, holding fast, considering how to stir up others? Which of these three areas do you need to give special attention to? What specific steps do you need to take to do so?

Every area always needs attention. The specific steps are always to draw near in the Word, to apply it by faith, and then live it out by doing.

14. Besides encouraging others in the body, what else do we need to be mindful of according to verse 25? Why?

Not forsaking our own assembling together (as some do). Instead, encourage one another to gather and come together. Why? Because the day of Christ is drawing near.

For discussion: Based on what we know about these people the author is writing to, consider what it is that tempts people to not come together for the teaching, preaching, and mutual encouragement of fellowship? What is happening in their world and in their lives, and in their hearts, that makes some forsake assembling together? Sound familiar?

15. Verse 26 is connected to the previous verses by the transition word *for*. What do the two phrases—*forsaking the assembling together* and *sinning willfully*—have to do with each other?

The sin of verse 25—not gathering together—is indicative of a sinful, willful refusal to obey the Lord, to trust the Lord, to minister our gifts to others, and to shine as a light of Christ in a watching world. The “for” connects verse 26 with the contents of verse 25. Sometimes people try to distance the two verses, though they take into account how “for” or “therefore” is used in other places, while here in this section of Scripture, they are unwilling to take such a hard or definitive stand that a **refusal** to gather together speaks to a hardened heart.

16. Explain what it means to *willfully and deliberately* sin against what you know is the right thing to do. See also James 4:17. How is deliberately sinning different than falling into sin?

To willfully and deliberately sin to know the right thing to do and then not do it—to choose not to, to think we know better than God, to disdain God’s wisdom and choose our own. Deliberately sinning is high-handed rebellion. It is pride put on display. Thinking we know better than God is a great and wicked sin. But we do it every day when we choose our own way, seek our own wisdom or listen to others, instead of seeking the Word’s counsel. Owie!

17. If we continue to willfully sin against the knowledge of the truth, what is the result (verses 26-27)?

A continual and ongoing, persistent refusal to obey the Word of God points to our unbelief and our true spiritual state. Continually acting in unbelief reveals that we are not saved, in other words. **Verse 26 says this reveals that no forgiveness has been applied to our souls. Verse 27 explains that the folly of our unbelief and rejection of God and His immense goodness is a terrifying judgment.** In fact, we can expect it for sure. That judgment is a fury of fire that consumes Christ’s adversaries, His enemies. Willfully choosing not to believe God’s Word and turn to Christ in faith means we are God’s enemies and not His friends. Such a scary section since we know so many who fall into this camp!

18. What is the point of comparing the Law of Moses and the new covenant in verses 28-29?

It fits with every other argument that the author of Hebrews has laid out in the book. Jesus is greater, the new covenant is greater, Jesus’ priesthood is greater, His forgiveness is greater, *so it’s also true that the consequences for rejecting Him will be greater*, which is what the author is saying in verses 28-29. The covenant of grace (the New Covenant) is so gracious and kind and merciful, that to reject it—and go back to the old ways—is just foolhardy. And yet, many do, to their eternal destruction.

- a. What does the comparison in verses 28-29 have to do with “sinning willfully”?

Those who refuse to gather together because they don’t want to obey God or value His work of grace or His people are sinning willfully. Their continual rejection of God and disobedience actually reveals their unsaved state, even though they may say all the right things and do all the right things.

- b. Why would this person receive a severer punishment according to verses 28-29?

Because they make a value judgment (making themselves judges, believing they are wiser than God, creating their own way to please God rather than believing His Word) about Christ’s incredible sacrifice (which was planned before time began). The words used by the author of Hebrews like *trample, regarded as*

unclean, and *insulted* all point to the grievousness of rejecting the free gift of salvation in Jesus Christ.

19. What awaits those who sin willfully according to verses 30-31? God's judgment which God will faithfully bring to pass. Oh, it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of a just and righteous God with no blood of Jesus to cover us!

20. If judgment and punishment await the person who sins willfully, what does this tell you about their spiritual condition? See also Jn. 3:36; 5:24; Rom. 8:1; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 3:12; 4:2.

John 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

John 5:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

Romans 8:1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"— [I included Romans 8:1 and Galatians 3:13 to show grievousness of their rejection of Christ. When they reject Christ, they are condemned. When they reject Christ, they are cursed, for in essence, they must suffer their own punishment "hang on a tree" for their sin, rather than receiving the offered gift of Christ's sacrifice.]

Hebrews 3:12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; *but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.*

They are lost in their trespasses and sins.

21. The writer of Hebrews urges us to examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith. If we find a pattern of willful rebellion against what we know is right, then we need to be suspicious of our "salvation." We need to realize we may not be saved at all. And if we are not saved, then we deserve the full wrath of God. How can you escape this judgment from God?

By believing that Jesus IS the only way I can be saved and by turning to Him in faith. Only by placing my faith and hope in Him can I ever hope to be right with God, have my sins washed away, and have hope of heaven.

What a sweetness there is when we stand fully assured of our faith and hope in Jesus Christ. Condemnation from God does not nip at our heels, rather His compassion welcomes us to come to Him. Though the day of Christ's return is drawing near, His children have nothing to fear.

Discovering the Treasures of the Word

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.
—Fanny Crosby

Charles Spurgeon commenting on these verses states: “Notice the practical teaching of this great truth. If you have been thus washed, do not defile yourselves again. If, by God’s rich mercy, you have been delivered from the transgressions of the past, let gratitude move you to holy living, and endeavor, not only to grow in grace yourselves, but to help others in the same direction, that so the abounding mercy of God may have from us abundant praise. God grant it for his name’s sake! Amen.”¹

¹Charles H. Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Sermons: Volume 51*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Spurgeon's Sermons (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998)

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #14, Chapter 10:32-39

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Prepare your heart for this lesson by asking the Lord for His help and trusting Him to do just that!

1. What is it about the former days that the Hebrews readers were supposed to remember? See verses 32-34.

Hebrews 10:32–34 But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.

They were to remember how after they were saved, they endured suffering and aligned themselves with other believers who were being persecuted. They didn't shrink back, but willingly, trustingly, and perseveringly endured discomfort, persecution, shame, and loss for the name of Christ. This should encourage them that their salvation is real and that they are showing themselves faithful to their calling.

2. Why would the author of Hebrews remind these believers about the former days after hearing 10:26-31 read to them?

The author was assuring them that their testimony was one of faithfulness, that their faithful deeds and endurance, even in suffering, was a testimony of God's overcoming work of grace in them. They were not of the group who were trampling underfoot the Son of God.

3. Explain what the term *enlightened* means after looking up the following verses: See John 1:9; Acts 26:18; 2 Cor. 4:6; and Eph. 1:18.

John 1:9 There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. *The true light gives "enlightenment." The true light is not native to this world, so when it comes, it gives some eye opening understanding that we wouldn't naturally have.*

Acts 26:18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.' *Enlightenment means to have our eyes opened. We see things we wouldn't have been able to see previously. Enlightenment enables us to turn from darkness to light so that we are saved.*

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory

of God in the face of Christ. *Enlightenment comes when God shines in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God through Christ.*

Ephesians 1:18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. *Paul desires that all saints be enlightened so that we know and understand our hope and all its riches.*

So what is enlightenment? It is an understanding, a spiritual “having our eyes opened” to the true realities of life as a believer.

4. What happened after they were enlightened according to verse 32? They endured a great conflict of sufferings. There is so much contained in those few words. An ocean of feelings and fears, of doubts and determinations, of looking to the Lord in weakness.

5. Define *endured* (NIV *stood your ground* [Strong’s #5278]). Now list what you learn about enduring from the following verses: Matt. 10:22; 24:13; Rom. 12:12; 1 Cor. 13:7; 2 Tim. 2:10, 12; Heb. 12:2-3, 7; James 1:12; 1 Pet. 2:20.

Endured means to wait, to be patient and wait for rescue, to tarry under the trial. To stand your ground and hold out. I love this! Enduring is really about not running away. It is about standing your ground, of standing firm, even when the ground seems to erode around you. Endurance fixes its eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, trusting Him to rescue and redeem. All will be well if we only look to Him. Endurance believes the best of God, even when it *seems* like He isn’t good.

Matthew 10:22 “You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

Matthew 24:13 “But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

Romans 12:12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer,

1 Corinthians 13:7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

2 Timothy 2:10 For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

2 Timothy 2:12 If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

Hebrews 12:2–3 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Hebrews 12:7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been

approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

1 Peter 2:20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.

The Enduring Ones

The enduring ones are believers who make it through to the very end and enjoy the fullness of their salvation. The enduring ones persevere in great trial and difficulties, even in the loss of life. The enduring ones bear all things, believe all things, and hope all things because they know whom they have believed and trust Him alone. The enduring ones understand the greater, bigger picture, so they willingly undergo much hurt, suffering, and loss because of the promises to come. The enduring ones look to Jesus, so they won't grow weary and lose heart. The enduring ones watch how Jesus endured so they can follow His example. The enduring ones understand that all discipline, trials, and hardship come from a loving Father's hand. Rather than disproving His love, the suffering proves how much He loves us. The enduring ones look to the reward of blessing and the crown of life. The enduring ones know God is faithful and will keep His promises. The enduring ones don't chafe or lash out under the suffering and persecutions but respond in a godly manner.

6. We have seen from these verses that standing firm in the face of trial is a supernatural response to suffering. What is our natural response to suffering and trials?

Our natural response is to want to run, to have God take it away, to moan and cry and fuss and fume, but enduring ones entrust themselves to a faithful creator, who always does what is right. Enduring ones look to Jesus and look beyond what is happening right in front of them. Enduring ones see Him who is unseen even when our natural response is to get fixated upon what is right in front of us.

7. What does *being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations* mean? To help you develop your answer look up 1 Cor. 4:9; 1 Thess. 1:8-10; 2:1-2, 14; Heb. 11:35-38.

Being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations means to be put on display and the means of that happening is not through the fawning, fickle favor of the world, but through the world's hate and disdain. While the world wickedly attacks the saints and seeks to hurt them, the enduring ones are put on display, so that their testimony about Christ is all the more poignant and lasting.

Literally means to be gazed at and made sport of. Shame is associated with this word in that the world puts the enduring ones on display publicly to try to shame them, but God uses that public display as a way to put Christ in view in a way the world can never comprehend. Christ is exalted!

Just as Christ was lifted up in His humiliation and suffering, so His brethren will undergo similar trials, to be a spectacle to the world.

1 Corinthians 4:9 For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.

1 Thessalonians 1:8–10 For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything. For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 2:1–2 For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain, but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition.

1 Thessalonians 2:14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews,

Hebrews 11:35–38 Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

8. The Hebrews endured suffering by becoming sharers with those who had been made a public spectacle. Why would they do this? See Rom. 12:9-13, 15; Phil. 1:7; 2:3-4; Heb. 13:1, 3.

The enduring ones love the saints. The enduring ones enter into the sufferings of other and seek to lift their burdens. The enduring ones are not afraid of what man can do to them for they fear God more than they fear man's wicked designs.

Romans 12:9–13 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Philippians 1:7 For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.

Philippians 2:3–4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with

humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Hebrews 13:1 Let love of the brethren continue.

Hebrews 13:3 Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.

- a. How does their “joining in” show courage on their part?

Joining in shows the faith of the enduring ones. It shows that they believe God’s promises over the impotent promises of men to do harm. Man can threaten and rage, but the enduring ones would rather identify with the people of God than save their skins by accepting the “rescue” that man offers.

9. Part of the suffering the believers endured was being thrown in prison because of their faith in Jesus Christ. How did they respond to their brethren (verse 34)?

The enduring ones showed sympathy to those who had been thrown in prison. They thought of them, prayed for them, and sought ways to minister to them.

- a. While some were thrown in prison, what happened to some of the other believers (verse 34)?

For some believers, all their property was seized. “Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also. The body they may kill. [But] God’s truth abideth still. His Kingdom is forever!”

- b. How did they respond to those circumstances according to verse 34? Why?

While the wicked were seizing their property, seeking to punish and do harm, the enduring ones accepted this *joyfully!* Talk about contentment and trust in the Lord! They were able to humbly and joyfully submit to these injustices and breaches of the law and governmental overreach because they knew they had a better and lasting possession waiting for them in heaven.

- c. How would that same attitude aid you in *any* circumstance of suffering you might be asked to face?

It would help me not to be afraid or fear whatever circumstances I might find myself in. I wouldn’t need to fear what the world would do to me or fear the shame it might try to heap upon me. By fixing my eyes on heaven and Jesus, by trusting that God has sovereignly and lovingly appointed these events for my good and His glory will help me not to be anxious and to *actually rejoice* that the wickedness of man cannot truly harm the enduring ones. I would be able to affirm and say with Hebrews 13:5-6, “Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,” so that we confidently say, “The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?”

10. What are some specific steps you can take to equip yourself now, so that when the time comes you will stand firm in suffering like the Hebrews believers did?

Study doctrine. Meditate on God's character. Study His past faithfulness. Practice responding with faith and trust and joy in any less than wonderful circumstances. Apply faith over my feelings.

11. What exhortation is given to the Hebrews in verse 35? Why would their previous circumstances and their previous godly response be a motivation to stand firm now?

Do not throw away your confidence.

So from below, then it means "Do not throw away or cast aside your cheerful courage in the face of threats and sufferings.

12. Define *confidence* [Strong's #3954].

Boldness. Free and fearless courage, even in the face of intimidation and threats. Cheerful courage.

*From Wuest: The word "confidence" is the translation of *parresia* (παρρησια) which is a compound of *pan* (παν) (all) and *resis* (ῥησις) (speech). The word means "freedom in speaking, unreservedness in speech, free and fearless confidence, cheerful courage, boldness, assurance." The writer exhorts the Jewish recipients of this letter **not to throw away that cheerful courage, that boldness, that free and fearless confidence which they were displaying while they were enduring this persecution** referred to in verses 32–34. If they would persist in it, and go on to the act of faith in Messiah as High Priest, they would receive salvation. If they shrank away in fear and returned to the temple sacrifices, they would be committing apostasy, an act from which there would be no recovery, and because of which they would be doomed to everlasting banishment from the presence of God.*

Translation. Do not throw away, therefore, your courage and boldness, which is of such a nature that it has great recompense of reward. [Kenneth S. Wuest, [*Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 189.]

13. Any runner will tell you that the most difficult time to persevere in the race is right before the finish line is in view. That is exactly the place where the Hebrews believers found themselves in their spiritual race. From what you know about the Hebrews and their circumstances, what factors contributed to their temptation to throw away their confidence?

They were living in fear for their lives, that their livelihood would be taken away, that they would have no place to live, that they would undergo ostracization for their faith. They were being maligned and shamed for their faith in Christ. Add to that, that their numbers were declining as professing believers walked away and returned to the law. They were tired too. They were worn out, which always

contributes to losing courage and boldness.

14. The author of Hebrews has encouraged these beleaguered believers to stand firm, to stay the course, to finish the race all the way through this book. Skim over Chapters 1-10 and list at least 5 times when the author encourages them to keep holding on in the same way that he encourages them here in 10:35.

Hebrews 2:1–3 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

Hebrews 2:14–18 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

Hebrews 3:6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

Hebrews 3:14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 4:11 Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.

Hebrews 4:14–16 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 6:9–12 But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 6:19–20 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of

Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

15. Why do they need to continue to show endurance according to verse 36? So that when they have done God's will (implied, by the way, that their sufferings are God's will), they will receive what was promised! Their full salvation and Jesus!

16. What encouragement is given in verse 37? How is that a motivation to stay on course and finish the race?

It's only a little while longer to wait until we receive what was promised. **Hebrews 10:37** *For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay.*

It is such a motivation to me! My King is coming soon! Soon I will see Him. How I long to be found doing what He has asked of me—to be found faithfully attending to my calling, my priorities, and tasks, as He recorded for me in the Scriptures. Oh what joy to think that my time to wait for Him is short. His return is near, soon, imminent. May I be ever watchful, on guard, and careful!

17. What is the warning of verse 38? How is that a motivation to stay on course and finish the race as well?

Hebrews 10:38 BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.

The warning is that God's children live by faith, but those who shrink back, who do not endure, who do not hold fast, are revealed as unbelievers and still lost in their sins, though they may hang out with the saints, have all the right words and actions, yet they will shrink away when trouble and distress come. They will not endure by maintaining their faith that Jesus alone is the way of salvation.

18. What affirmation does the writer of Hebrews give to his readers in verse 39? The writer of Hebrews affirms that the enduring ones are not of the shrink back group. The enduring ones are those whose faith assures that they will be preserved at the end, in the time of judgment.

19. What does a person shrink back from according to verses 35-39? A person shrinks back from the long, hard slog to heaven. A person shrinks back from doing God's will, which may include suffering, discomfort, and hardship. A person shrinks back from waiting longer than they think they need to wait or want to wait. A person shrinks back from exercising faith and seeks to live on feelings or their own wits.

20. What kind of person shrinks back? See Matt. 12:43-45; Heb. 3:12; 6:4-6; 10:26-27; 1 Jn. 2:19.

The person who shrinks back is an unbeliever. Believers may be fearful, tentative, and feel very weak, but they will endure, not because they can do it, but because God holds them. They endure because He holds them fast. They overcome and make it through to the end because of the Lord, not their own efforts.

Matthew 12:43–45 “Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. “Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order. “Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation.”

Hebrews 3:12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

Hebrews 6:4–6 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

Hebrews 10:26–27 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.

1 John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

21. Dear storm-tossed and troubled soul, are these words of exhortation for you? Do not throw away your confidence, your boldness, your open faith in Jesus Christ just because you are experiencing difficulty. Stand firm. Your boldness and confidence in Christ have great reward. He is coming soon. How have the encouragements from this lesson been a balm for your soul?

Yes, these words are for all of us, which means I must heed them and take heart to persevere, to be an enduring one, an overcomer!

I have been so encouraged and strengthened to prepare my heart and think rightly in the fray, and before the fray, so that I will look to Christ for help and rescue.

Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken
by Henry F. Lyte

Jesus, I my cross have taken, all to leave and follow Thee.
Destitute, despised, forsaken, Thou from hence my all shall be.
Perish every fond ambition, all I've sought or hoped or known.
Yet how rich is my condition! God and heaven are still mine own.

Let the world despise and leave me, they have left my Savior, too.
Human hearts and looks deceive me; Thou art not, like them, untrue.
And while Thou shalt smile upon me, God of wisdom, love and might,
Foes may hate and friends disown me, show Thy face and all is bright.

Go, then, earthly fame and treasure! Come, disaster, scorn and pain!
In Thy service, pain is pleasure; with Thy favor, loss is gain.
I have called Thee, "Abba, Father"; I have set my heart on Thee:
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather, all must work for good to me.

Man may trouble and distress me, 'twill but drive me to Thy breast.
Life with trials hard may press me; heaven will bring me sweeter rest.
Oh, 'tis not in grief to harm me while Thy love is left to me;
Oh, 'twere not in joy to charm me, were that joy unmixed with Thee.

Take, my soul, thy full salvation; rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy to find in every station something still to do or bear:
Think what Spirit dwells within thee; what a Father's smile is thine;
What a Savior died to win thee, child of heaven, shouldst thou repine?

Haste then on from grace to glory, armed by faith, and winged by prayer,
Heaven's eternal day's before thee, God's own hand shall guide thee there.
Soon shall close thy earthly mission, swift shall pass thy pilgrim days;
Hope soon change to glad fruition, faith to sight, and prayer to praise.

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #15, Chapter 11 Overview

TEACHER'S GUIDE

The goal of this particular lesson is the foundation of all Bible study. It is the practice of observing what's in the text. At this stage in our Bible study you're simply taking note and then recording what God has put into the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what it means or how it applies to your life—that will come later. Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding word of God. You'll be glad you did!

On the pages that follow you'll find the text of Chapter 11 in the New American Standard Bible version. *Use those pages to do this lesson.* Feel free to make notes on the page or mark it up as much as you like to help you do this lesson. Using the same Bible version to do this lesson will cut down on any confusion that would arise if we were all using different versions of the Bible when we get together for class discussion.

1. To begin, read through Chapter 11. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 11. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.¹

- a. Summarize the contents of the first paragraph (verses 1-7).

Faith is defined, then the author points out that the men of old found favor with God because of their faith in Him for without faith it is impossible to please God. Even creation must be believed by faith. It's at that point that the author begins to consider those who have exercised faith—Abel, Enoch, Noah.

- b. Summarize the contents of the second paragraph (verses 8-12).

In this paragraph the author focuses on Abraham and Sarah and the ways they exercised their faith in the promises of God.

- c. Summarize the contents of the third paragraph (verses 13-16).

All those previously mentioned died still “in faith” not seeing God's completed promises. In doing so, they continued to exercise faith and trusted in that “better country.”

¹ The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor, as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.

d. Summarize the contents of the fourth paragraph (verses 17-22). Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph all relied on the Lord in faith in their lives.

e. Summarize the contents of the fifth paragraph (verses 23-29). Moses' trust in the Lord at different times in his life are highlighted.

f. Summarize the contents of the sixth paragraph (verses 30-31). The author focuses on the acts of faith that happened when Israel entered the long-anticipated promised land.

g. Summarize the contents of the seventh paragraph (verses 32-38). The author of Hebrews realizes he can't even point out all the faith-filled acts of trust and hope by those who have gone before, so he summarizes and generalizes some of the stories.

h. Summarize the contents of the eighth paragraph (verses 39-40). The author summarizes the previous contents by saying that the "by faith" people received God's approval for their faith in Him (verse 6), yet they still didn't see the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises to them. The "better something" God provided is Jesus Himself at the apex of history. Without Jesus appearing at this point in history, their faith would have been in vain.

2. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all the details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

The main point of the chapter is to show how people through all the ages exercised faith in an unseen God and the future fulfillment of His promises. Many died without seeing the fulfillment of God's promises, yet they endured, which is the point the author of Hebrews is trying to impart to his readers.

3. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your title should reflect the contents of the chapter in an abbreviated way. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

The Enduring Faith of the Saints
Gaining God's Approval *by Faith*

4. On the *Hebrews Bible Text* handout at the end of this lesson, mark *key* words. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. Start with these first. Then mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

Mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

5. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word, you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned in Hebrews Chapter 1. Your Chapter 1 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below. Include the details that you learn about Him. For example: verse 1—*He* spoke long ago to the fathers; verses 1-2—*God*...has spoken to us in *His* Son.

God

- Verse 3 the worlds were prepared by the Word of God
- Verse 4 God testified about Abel's righteous gifts/offerings
- Verse 5 God took Abel up to heaven
- Verse 5 Abel had obtained the witness that he was pleasing to God
- Verse 6 without faith it is impossible to please God
- Verse 6 for he who comes to God must believe that *He* is and that *He* is a rewarder of those who seek *Him*.
- Verse 7 Noah was warned by God about things not yet seen
- Verse 10 Abraham looked for the city, whose architect and builder is God.
- Verse 11 Sarah considered God faithful who had promised
- Verse 16 *God* is not ashamed to be called their *God*; for *He* has prepared a city for them.
- Verse 19 Abraham considered that God is able to raise people from the dead
- Verse 25 Moses chose to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin.
- Verse 27 Moses endured as seeing Him who is unseen
- Verse 40 God had provided something better for us

Christ

- Verse 26 Moses considered the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt

Faith

See observation page since there are soooo many!

Promises

- Verse 9 Abraham lived in the land of promise
- Verse 9 Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise

Verse 11 Sarah considered Him faithful who had promised
Verse 13 all these died in faith without receiving the promises
Verse 17 he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son
Verse 33 those who by faith...obtained promises
Verse 39 all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised

Approval/Pleasing

Verse 2 by [faith] men of old gained approval
Verse 5 Enoch obtained witness that he was pleasing to God
Verse 6 without faith it is impossible to please Him

6. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. It helps to look for any actions that are required of the reader or things they are told to do or be.
7. Now, list the commands on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.

No commands in this chapter.

8. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted.

9. Now list the comparisons and contrasts you discovered on the extra paper you’ve been using.

See observation sheet.

10. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)

See observation sheet.

11. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.

See observation sheet.

12. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *God and Father* from 1:1.

See observation sheet.

13. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter and add them to your list paper.

How to identify attributes: Look back over the list you compiled about God and identify any of His attributes that you may see. Identifying attributes is easy when you differentiate between what God is *doing* versus *who He is*. Begin your attribute statements with *God is...* and then finish the sentence. List the verse that identified that particular characteristic for you. For clarity's sake you may want to explain why you identified that particular attribute as shown in the examples. For example: God is sovereign from verse 1 (because He ordained His plan and how it would be revealed to the world); God is knowable from verse 2 (because He has spoken to us in Christ and made His will known).

God's Attributes

Verse 3 God is creator and spoke the worlds into existence

Verse 4 God is worthy to be worshiped

Verse 4 God is affirming of His children

Verse 5 God is involved in the lives of men; sovereign; ordering events

Verse 6 God is pleased by faith

Verse 6 God is knowable, eternal, king

Verse 7 God is proactive, judge

Verse 10 God is in heaven; God is builder

Verse 11 God is faithful

Verse 16 God is personal; God is preparing

Verse 19 God is powerful

Verse 25 God is Father to His people; knowable; holy

Verse 27 God is unseen; knowable

Verse 40 God is provider; holy

Jesus' Attributes

Verse 26 Christ is a servant; Christ suffered on our behalf

14. Look for *lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts* in the chapter text. Number any lists you find within the Bible text, then write out your list to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper of the Hebrews Chapter 1 Bible text. This step will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action. For example, in Hebrews 1:1-2 *we find a list about God speaking*. We discover 1) God spoke long ago; 2) God spoke to the fathers; 3) God spoke through the prophets; 4) God spoke through the prophets in many portions; 5) God spoke through the prophets in many ways; 6) and now in these last days God has spoken; 7) God has spoken to us; and 8) God has spoken to us in His Son.

See observation sheet.

15. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed that you thought were interesting.

I thought verses 21 and 22 contained some interesting fodder in the repetition of “as he was dying.” Both Jacob and Joseph exercised faith even in their dying moments. Pretty cool!

Verse 17—Abraham’s testing gave him the opportunity to exercise faith.

Verses 39-40 reveals the main point of this chapter and it’s the reason why the author of Hebrews wrote as he did. He wants to remind the people he’s writing to that many, many others have gone through difficulty and persecution, yet they were still found pleasing to God. The people in chapter 11 were found to be pleasing to God, but many did not receive the fulfillment of the promises of God in their lives, but they still trusted the Lord—and looked to the unseen, considering it more “real” than what is seen.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in each chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life at this time. Your task at this time is to look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter. Have fun digging into God’s word!

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES
Discovering the Treasures of the Word

Hebrews Chapter 11

1 Now **faith** is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

2 For by it the men of old gained approval.

3 By **faith** we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

4 By **faith** **Abel** offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through **faith**, though he is dead, he still speaks.

5 By **faith** Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.

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.

7 By **faith** **Noah**, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to **faith**.

8 By **faith** **Abraham**, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

9 By **faith** he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise.

Faith is
1. assurance of things hoped for
2. conviction of things not seen
3. men of old approved of God by their faith

Faith's Results
- v. 3 understand worlds prepared by God speaking
- v. 4 obtained righteous + testimony
- v. 5 reputation of pleasing God
- v. 6 to look for God's reward
- v. 7 God faithful to keep promises
- v. 8 all family coming - v. 9 did not obtained inheritance
- v. 10 he lived as an alien - v. 11 fellow heirs of the same promise
- v. 12 received approval of their faith

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES 3
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SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

Discovering the Treasures of the Word

10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

God = architect builder

11 By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants as the stars of heaven in number, and innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

13 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

vs. 14 explains "confessed"

14 For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.

15 And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.

16 But as it is they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;

18 it was he to whom it was said, "In Isaac your descendants shall be called."

19 He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come.

These

1. died in faith
2. not receiving the promise
3. seen them
4. welcomed them from a distance
5. confessed they were strangers & exiles on earth
6. seeking a country of their own
7. desire a better country
8. God prepares a city for them

Abraham's faith in God is important because he offered up his only son.

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

Discovering the Treasures of the Word

*Jacob - as
to the word
Jacob - as it
is identifying*

21 By **faith** **Jacob** as he was dying, **blessed** each of the sons of Joseph, and **worshipped**, leaning on the top of his staff.

22 By **faith** **Joseph**, when he was dying, **made mention of the exodus** of the sons of Israel, and **gave orders** concerning his bones.

23 By **faith** **Moses**, when he was born, **was hidden** for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child, and they were **not afraid** of the king's edict.

*Most parents
would not
be afraid!*

24 By **faith** **Moses**, when he had grown up, **refused** to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

25 **choosing** rather to **endure** ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the **passing pleasures** of sin,

*Endure
rather than
enjoy*

26 **considering** the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.

27 By **faith** he **left** Egypt, **not fearing** the wrath of the king; for he **endured**, as seeing Him who is unseen.

28 By **faith** he **kept** the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them.

29 By **faith** they **passed** through the Red Sea as though they were **passing** through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they **attempted** it, were drowned.

30 By **faith** the walls of Jericho fell down after they **had been encircled** for seven days.

31 By **faith** **Rahab** the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she **had welcomed** the spies in peace.

SCRIPTURE PATHS BIBLE STUDIES

Discovering the Treasures of the Word

32 And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

39 And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

The Actions of Faith

- vs 1 assurance
- vs 1 conviction
- vs 2 believes in god + this godliness
- vs 7 prepared
- vs 8 obeyed
- vs 10 loved
- to unseen
- vs 11 considers
- vs 13 see
- vs 13 welcome
- vs 13 confers
- vs 14 seals
- vs 16 desire
- vs 17
- vs 19 consider
- vs 20 bless
- vs 21 bless
- vs 22 orders
- vs 23 not afraid
- vs 24 refuse
- vs 25 chose
- vs 26 consider
- vs 27 not fear
- vs 27 endure
- vs 28 kept
- vs 29 passed through
- vs 30 atoned
- vs 31 welcomed
- vs 33-38 all acts

The Point of Hebrews Chapter 11
They had God's approval but all was not fulfilled yet.

- △ God
- + Jesus
- ✓ spirit
- faith
- ≡ promises
- ≡ approval/pleasing
- seen

eeee righteous (perfect)
□ receive
The subject/verbs of the acts of faith
/// endured

no commands
// transition terms
comparison
⊙ time references

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #16, Chapter 11:1-7

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Before you begin your study, stop and ask the Lord for His help to apply His Word to your life.

1. What is the connecting thought or idea between 10:39 and 11:1?

Hebrews 10:39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

The connection is “faith” between the two verses. The author talks about those who have faith in 10:39 and then goes on to define just what faith is. It’s such an exciting introduction to the chapter on faith!

2. How does the author define faith in verse 1?

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for—that is assurance that God will bring the hoped for promises to pass. Faith is the conviction, the steadfast belief that what is not seen is more real than what is seen and experienced. Oh, to live more on faith, by faith, in faith!

3. Define these two synonymous words: *assurance* (KJV *substance*, NIV *being sure* [Strong’s #5287]) and *conviction* (KJV *evidence*, NIV *certain* [Strong’s #1650]).

Assurance means to stand upon. It is the foundation of all hope. The word has “legal” connotations attached to it, so that it could read, “Faith is the title-deed of things hoped for.” Vincent says faith is the “firm grasp of faith on the unseen fact.”

Conviction adds force and umph to assurance. Conviction—a thing by which something is proved or tested.

The word translated “substance” means literally “to stand under, to support.” Faith is to a Christian what a foundation is to a house: it gives confidence and assurance that he will stand. So you might say, “Faith is the confidence of things hoped for.” When a believer has faith, it is God’s way of giving him confidence and assurance that what is promised will be experienced.

“The word *evidence* simply means “conviction.” This is the inward conviction from God that what He has promised, He will perform. The presence of God-given faith in one’s heart is conviction enough that He will keep His Word.”¹

¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 317–318.

4. How did these “men of old” mentioned in verse 2 gain approval? See verse 1. The men of old gained God’s approval by their faith in Him and His promises. By their faith that stood upon the promises of God rather than their experiences or the world right in front of them. They trusted in the unseen over the seen. Since God Himself is not seen, then the first step of faith is believing in the God who cannot be seen, yet is more real than anything seen.

5. Doesn’t verse 2 just make you perk up a bit? The men of old were not super-saints. They were fallible, just like us, yet they gained God’s approval. How does that make the information in verse 1 all the more important to pay attention to and understand, since we desire to be pleasing to God as well?

No kidding! If they gained approval through their faith, then sure as shootin’ we need to understand what faith is, so we too, can gain God’s approval.

6. What do we understand “by faith” according to verse 3?
The worlds were prepared by the word of God.

7. Explain what “so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible” means according to verses 1-3.

The physical creation was made by the invisible God out of His invisible spoken words. God has always intended that believing in creation be an act of faith on our part. The author starts at the very beginning to show that faith has always been necessary to gain God’s approval—and that all those who believe in Him have exercised it *from the very beginning*.

8. What did Abel do by faith (verse 4)?
He offered to God a sacrifice that was better than Cain’s.

9. What do you learn about Abel according to Gen. 4:1-8, 25; Matt. 23:35; Heb. 11:4; 12:24; 1 Jn. 3:11-12?

Genesis 4:1–8 Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, “I have gotten a manchild with the help of the Lord.” Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.” Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

Genesis 4:25 Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, she said, “God has appointed me another

offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him.”

Matthew 23:35 so that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of *righteous Abel* to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, *through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous*, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

Hebrews 12:24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. [NOTICE the similarity in language between Hebrews 11:4 and 12:24 about Abel speaking! So cool!]

1 John 3:11–12 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and *his brother's were righteous*.

10. Based on what you have learned from Heb. 11:1-4, why was Abel's sacrifice considered better than Cain's? See also Heb. 4:2.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Abel's sacrifice was considered better than Cain's because Abel offered his gifts by faith. Because he put his faith in God, God accepted his offering.

11. How do Abel, and men like him, still speak to us? See Heb. 11:4 and 12:1.

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

He speaks through his example of faith. He speaks through his witness of having run the race well. He speaks to us that faith endures and overcomes sin and suffering and discomfort and disappointment, so that in the end, we shall see God having gained His approval.

12. How can that be an encouragement to you as you continue on your journey to Heaven?

His life of faith is an example for us today. He pressed on, he persevered, he trusted the Lord—and so can I. *to not shrink back, but to have faith to the preserving of my soul.*

13. What happened to Enoch according to verse 5? See also Gen. 5:18-24 and Jude

14-15.

Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death. But before God took him, everyone knew that he was a man of faith and hope in God. Enoch also lived 7 generations out from Adam. He also prophesied on behalf of God.

Genesis 5:18–24 Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and became the father of Enoch. Then Jared lived eight hundred years after he became the father of Enoch, and he had other sons and daughters. So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years, and he died. Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah. Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. *Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.*

Jude 14–15 It was also about these men that *Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”*

14. What was Enoch’s secret to pleasing God? See verse 6.
Enoch’s secret to pleasing God was his faith, for no one can please God unless he has faith, lives by faith, walks by faith. When we live by faith, we believe in God and believe His character.

15. What must *you* exhibit in your heart and life in order to please God?
I must exhibit that same kind of trust and hope in God if I am to please Him. I must come to Him in faith, believing that He rewards those who seek Him with knowledge of Himself.

16. According to verse 6 what two things do you need to believe about God?
That He is.
And that He rewards those who seek Him.

a. Do *you* really believe those two things about God?
Kind of nosy, aren’t you, Lisa? But yes, I really, really do believe those things about God.

b. How is it manifested in your life?
My faith shows up in how I think about God, really, it shows up in where I run when I am hurting and in trouble. Faith looks to the unseen One, who alone can help. He answers our pleas for rescue with Himself.

c. What is at stake if you don’t believe those two things about God? See Jn. 3:16-18; Heb. 3:12; 4:2.

John 3:16–18 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Hebrews 3:12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

If we don't believe in God and who is, by faith, and that He rewards those who seek Him, then we will never have peace with God, we will never please Him. We will face judgment and eternal destruction away from His presence.

The Bible calls our unbelief evil. The preached gospel must be responded to by faith.

- d. If you struggle with unbelief, what do you need to do so you can think rightly about Him?

Ask Him to help my unbelief, trusting that He rewards those who seek Him, however imperfectly.

17. How does the Lord reward those who seek Him? See Ps. 9:10; Jer. 29:13; Luke 11:10; Col. 3:24.

Psalms 9:10 And those who know Your name will put their trust in You, For You, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.

Jeremiah 29:13 ‘You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

Luke 11:10 “For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.

Colossians 3:24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

He will not forsake us. We will know Him. We will find Him. We will receive the reward of the inheritance waiting for us in heaven.

18. How did Noah show his faith in God according to verse 7? What attitude accompanied this action?

Noah believed God and obeyed. He built the Ark. His attitude was one of reverence toward God as he obeyed the Lord.

19. Noah's faith in action, and his attitude while going about it, are an example to us! Consider your responses to the Lord each day. Does your faith look like Noah's?

What steps may be necessary for you to “tweak,” so your response matches Noah’s faithful example?

I love how the text says that Noah reverently obeyed as he put his faith into action. It shows that when we understand God, then our hearts respond. It’s not simply just doing the right thing. My greatest danger is always just zooming off without really stopping to reverently seek the Lord so that my obedience becomes an act of worship.

20. What did God warn Noah about? See Gen. 6:13-22.

Genesis 6:13–22 Then God said to Noah, “*The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.*” “Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch. “This is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. “You shall make a window for the ark, and finish it to a cubit from the top; and set the door of the ark in the side of it; you shall make it with lower, second, and third decks. “*Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish.* “But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. “And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. “Of the birds after their kind, and of the animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. “As for you, take for yourself some of all food which is edible, and gather it to yourself; and it shall be for food for you and for them.” Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.

God warned Noah about the impending flood of judgment that was to come upon the whole world.

21. How did Noah condemn the world? See 1 Pet. 3:20 and 2 Pet. 2:5.

Noah condemned the world because he preached the message of God’s merciful rescue in the face of God’s coming judgment. Noah “condemned” the world by being the one who preached that judgment message to them. In all actuality, they condemned themselves in their rejection of Noah’s message. Through Noah’s message, the world was condemned.

1 Peter 3:20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

2 Peter 2:5 and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.

22. Why is this discussion on faith a crucial building block in the author's argument to his Hebrew readers to place their hope in Christ, rather than return to the Old Testament law system?

He wants them all to see that all the righteous from the beginning of time have lived by faith. No one can please God apart from living by faith in Him.

23. *Without faith it is impossible to please Him.* When do you need to live by faith? What is the *opposite* of living by faith? Do you ever live that way? What truths from this lesson can you implement, so you do live by faith that is pleasing to God?

I must/need to live by faith every day. All day. As long as I am in this body on earth.

The opposite of living by faith is unbelief. And yes, I sure do act in unbelief—far too often. It's such a good reminder to see just what God desires from us. To believe Him and come to Him for help—and this simple act of dependence and trust pleases God.

“Faith does not ask for any other evidence than for the written Word of God.”

Author unknown

For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, YOU MAY RECEIVE WHAT WAS PROMISED. For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay. But MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; and if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of THOSE WHO HAVE FAITH TO THE PRESERVING OF THE SOUL.

Heb. 10:36-39

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #17, Chapter 11:8-16

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Before you begin your study, stop and ask the Lord for His help to apply His Word to your life.

1. How did Abraham show his faith in God in verse 8?
He obeyed. Nothing fancy. No mighty deed. He just did what God told him to do! Oh, may we all have the faith of Abraham and simply *obey!*

2. How did Abraham live in the place God promised to give him according to verse 9?

He lived as an alien. The land of promise was to Abraham like living in a foreign land. He also lived in tents, in other words, he lived in temporary mode in that land the Lord promised to give him.

3. Why did Abraham—and Isaac and Jacob—live like foreigners in the land promised to them? See verse 10.

Because they were looking for something more permanent. They were looking for the city which has foundations built by God.

a. Quick refresher: Who are Isaac and Jacob? See Matt. 1:2.

Isaac was Abraham's son and Jacob was Abraham's grandson, the son of Isaac. **Matthew 1:2** Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.

4. Read the details of God's promise to Abraham. What did Abraham understand about his inheritance? See Gen. 12:1-3; 17:1-8; Heb. 11:10.

Genesis 12:1–3 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Genesis 17:1–8 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. "I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly." Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. "No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. "I have made you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you. "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant,

to be God to you and to your descendants after you. “I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

Hebrews 11:10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

God would show Abraham his inheritance once he traveled away from his own country. In that new land, Abraham would become the fruitful father of many nations. The land would be a permanent possession for Abraham and his descendants. It would be in the land of his sojournings, his “temporary” living place, which would encompass the whole land of the Canaanites. Even in that land of promise, Abraham was looking for more, understanding that there was an even better land built by God, which is where Abraham desired to live even more than the land of promise.

5. What do you know about a city that God builds? See Heb. 12:28.

Hebrews 12:28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

The city that God builds *cannot* be shaken! The earth shakes. The things that man builds can shake and fall apart. But whatever God builds will not crumble or fall apart. What comfort!

- a. We’ve already read about God being a builder in this book. What did we learn previously? See Heb. 3:4; 8:2; 9:11, 24.

Hebrews 3:4 For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.

Hebrews 8:2 a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

Hebrews 9:11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

God is the builder of all things. The Lord made the true tabernacle in heaven, not man. The true tabernacle was not made with hands. The true tabernacle, which God built, is in heaven and is where Christ entered.

6. What did God do for Sarah according to verse 11? Just how far past the “proper time of life” was Sarah? See Gen. 11:30; 17:17; 18:1-15.

She received the ability to conceive beyond the proper time of life when that’s even possible.

She was 90 years old. The text says she and Abraham were old and advanced in age.

Genesis 11:30 Sarai was barren; she had no child.

Genesis 17:17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”

Genesis 18:1–15 Now the Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth, and said, “My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by. “Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant.” And they said, “So do, as you have said.” So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes.” Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf and gave it to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it. He took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate. Then they said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” He said, “I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife will have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?” And the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?’ “Is anything too difficult for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.” Sarah denied it however, saying, “I did not laugh”; for she was afraid. And He said, “No, but you did laugh.”

7. What was Sarah’s original response to God’s promise for her? See Gen. 18:10-15.

Genesis 18:10–15 He said, “I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife will have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?” And the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?’ “Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.” Sarah denied it however, saying, “I did not laugh”; for she was afraid. And He said, “No, but you did laugh.”

She laughed, probably more scoffed at the idea. She couldn’t even conceive that

it was possible which is why God rebuked her and exhorted her with the truth that nothing is too difficult for the Lord.

8. What does verse 11 say about how Sarah responded to God's promise? She considered God faithful. Once the Lord rebuked her, she reordered her heart and believed God.

9. The Bible is silent about what happened between Sarah's response in Gen. 18:10-15 and her reaction in Heb. 11:11. What do you think happened to her? How can that be an encouragement to you if you discover your first response to a situation is not of faith?

Once the Lord rebuked her, she reordered her heart and believed God. She repented of her unbelief, reviewed the promises of God and God's past faithfulness and put her trust in Him. Oh, wouldn't it be wonderful to read her journal of her moving from that unbelieving response to one of faith and trust so that it is forever memorialized in Hebrews 11!

My first response doesn't have to be my last response. My first response doesn't have to become what I am characterized by. My first response can turn quickly to a second believing one.

10. Sarah's initial response to God was one of unbelief, yet she is listed here among the faithful. What does this teach you about God?

He is forgiving. Patient. Ministers to us in our weakness and understands how weak we are to believe Him. It would be just of Him to kill us immediately for our unbelief, but He actually gets more glory when we apply faith *out of* our unbelief. The process of moving from unbelief to belief means our hearts are fastened on Him!

11. What is the result of Sarah believing God's faithfulness to honor His word (verse 12)?

She and Abraham were the parents of descendants that numbered as many as the stars of heaven and the sand on the seashore. They saw God's faithfulness. And yet, they died in faith without fully receiving the completely fulfilled promise. They too died in hope in God's faithfulness.

12. From verse 13, what do you learn about the promises made to the "by faith" people?

Hebrews 11:13 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

13. What promises did they see at a distance? See Gen. 22:18; Luke 2:25-32; Jn. 8:56; Acts 3:19-22; Gal. 3:6-9; 1 Pet. 1:10-12.

Genesis 22:18 “In your seed *all the nations of the earth shall be blessed*, because you have obeyed My voice.”

Luke 2:25–32 And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for *the consolation of Israel*; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen *the Lord’s Christ*. And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, “Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes *have seen Your salvation, Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Your people Israel.*”

John 8:56 “Your father *Abraham rejoiced to see My day*, and he saw it and was glad.”

Acts 3:19–22 “Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that *He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you*, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. “Moses said, ‘*THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you.*”

Galatians 3:6–9 Even so Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. The Scripture, foreseeing that *God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU.*” So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.

1 Peter 1:10–12 As to *this salvation*, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as *He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you*, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

14. What are some promises we see at a distance *now*? See Rom. 8:18-25; 1 Cor. 13:8-13; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 5:6-8; 1 Jn. 3:2.

Romans 8:18–25 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with *the glory that is to be revealed to us*. For the anxious longing of the creation *waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God*. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will *be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God*. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we

ourselves groan within ourselves, *waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body*. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance *we wait eagerly for it*.

1 Corinthians 13:8–13 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. *For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away*. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, *but then face to face*; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, *yet our inner man is being renewed day by day*. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us *an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison*, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are *eternal*.

2 Corinthians 5:6–8 Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight— we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and *to be at home with the Lord*.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that *when He appears, we will be like Him*, because we will see Him just as He is.

15. What did the “by faith” people say so clearly in verses 13-14?

Hebrews 11:13–14 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.

They said, that is, they confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. Those who say things like that make it clear that they are seeking a different country to call home. This world is not our home. I am a stranger here. I have been exiled here, but one day I will be set free from my exile and taken back to my true country and home.

16. Why is this the response of all true believers? See Eph. 2:19; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1-3.

Ephesians 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household,

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

Colossians 3:1–3 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Because all true believers are citizens of God’s country and household. Our citizenship is not here, it’s there in heaven, where Jesus is. Our lives are hidden there in that heavenly country with God.

17. Sometimes that clear-eyed view of heaven grows dim with the distractions of this world. How can you maintain a gaze on that heavenly country?

Be in the world. Meditate on these truths. Actually speak the truth about my true status. Remind others of these truths. Develop an attitude of looking toward heaven and not looking around here. Learn to disdain earthly comforts that are destined to perish and instead seek comfort in the eternal.

- a. Think about this week. Has your view of heaven been clear, hazy, or entirely obscured? Why? Do you need to make any adjustments so you can see heaven clearly?

There have been times of super clarity and then haziness...like a partly cloudy day where the clouds periodically cover the sun’s brightness. I need to be more intentional in how I’m thinking. Truly, I think I need to fill my mind with more of the Word, more memorizing, and more worship of my great God in prayer. To breathe more of heaven’s joys while living here.

18. Explain what the author of Hebrews means in verse 15.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob didn’t want to go back to Ur. They pressed on toward and then lived in the promised land, believing in God’s faithfulness to deliver the land over to them and their descendants. Neither Abraham nor his descendants returned to Ur or as verse 15 says, “that country from which they went out.” Instead, they remained in the land, living with the partially fulfilled promise and looking forward by faith to the day when their descendants would possess the land.

- a. How does that clarify the meaning of verse 14?

Literally, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived in a land that was not theirs. They resided in the promised land as aliens and strangers. They wanted to have their own country—but they were also willing to wait patiently until God gave the land to them. They didn’t move out ahead of God, nor did they grow impatient in their spirit, but waited in trust and hope for God’s timing in bringing it to pass. *It is the Lord; let Him do what seems good to Him. 1 Samuel 3:18.*

19. When we declare we are waiting for our better, heavenly country, what is the result (verse 16)?

God is not ashamed to be called our God! God is not ashamed of the “by faith”

people.

20. What kind of people does God prepare a city for? What kind of people does God claim as His own? See Mark 8:38; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Heb. 2:11; 8:10.

Those who look to Him to provide; those who hope in Him; those who put all their trust in Him for rescue in this life and in the eternal; those who believe Him.

Who does God claim as His? Those who aren't ashamed of Him, those who die to self and endure, those who even though they are weak and deny Him or are faithless, He still claims us as His own! Those are sanctified, those who have God's law in their minds and written on their hearts, who belong to God.

Mark 8:38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

2 Timothy 2:11–13 It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

Hebrews 2:11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Hebrews 8:10 "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 into their minds, And I will write them on their hearts. And I will be their God, And they shall be My people.

21. What do you learn about the city God has prepared for us? See Matt. 25:34; Heb. 12:22; 13:14; Rev. 21:2, 10-27; 22:1-5.

Matthew 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom *prepared* for you from the foundation of the world.

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and *to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,*

Hebrews 13:14 For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are *seeking the city which is to come.*

Revelation 21:2 And I saw the *holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.*

Revelation 21:10–27 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the *holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.* Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The one who spoke

with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. I saw no temple in it, for *the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.* The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and *nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

Revelation 22:1–5 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There will *no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.* And there will *no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.*

22. God is not ashamed of you. He has prepared a city for you. All the promises we live on by faith will be fulfilled in that heavenly realm when we see our dear Lord Jesus face to face. How do those truths inspire greater faith, diligence, and determination to finish the race and receive the promises?

It makes me want to live more by faith. To be one of those ones so pleasing to the Lord (Hebrews 11:16) who counts this world nothing and of little value compared to what waits for us.

Far Off I See the Goal

by Robert Roberts

Far off I see the goal—O Savior, guide me;
I feel my strength is small—be Thou beside me;
With vision ever clear, with love that conquers fear,
And grace to persevere, O Lord, provide me.

Whene'er Thy way seems strange, go Thou before me;
And, lest my heart should change, O Lord, watch o'er me;
But, should my faith prove frail, and I through blindness fail,
O let Thy grace prevail, and still restore me.

Should earthly pleasures wane, and joy forsake me;
And lonely hours of pain at length o'ertake me,
My hand in Thine hold fast till sorrow be o'erpast,
And gentle death at last for Heav'n awake me.

There, with the ransomed throng who praise forever
The love that made them strong to serve forever,
I, too, would seek Thy face, Thy finished work retrace,
And magnify Thy grace, redeemed forever.

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #18, Chapter 11:17-31

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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.

He offered up Isaac, his long awaited, precious son.

Genesis 22:1–12 Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance. Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you." Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together. Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

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

3. Define *testing* (KJV *tried* [Strong's #3985]).
Prove, examine, test to see if it is genuine. Test its depth and quality.

The word "tried" is the translation of peirazo (πειραζο) which means "to put to the test." Here it refers to the act of God putting Abraham to the test in order to prove his character and the steadfastness of his faith. The construction in the Greek makes it clear that while the testing of Abraham was still in progress, he had

already offered up his son, that is, before the trial had come to an issue, by the act of his obedient will, through faith in God. Abraham met the test through faith before there was any visible evidence of God's intervening hand. [Kenneth S. Wuest, [Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader](#), vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 204.]

- 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.

Exodus 16:4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, *that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction.*

Exodus 20:20 Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and *in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin.*"

Deuteronomy 8:2-5 "You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, *that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.* "He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, *that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.* "Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. *"Thus you are to know in your heart that the LORD your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son.*

Deuteronomy 8:11-18 "Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. "He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint. "In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, *that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end.* "Otherwise, you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' *"But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.*

Deuteronomy 13:3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; *for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Proverbs 17:3 The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, *But the LORD tests hearts.*

James 1:12–14 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, *he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.* Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

1 Peter 1:6–9 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, *so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.*

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

Yes, absolutely. Each time has been hard. sometimes, I learned new depths to my understanding of Him; sometimes, my faith was strengthened; sometimes, I was brought low so that I might repent and live in holy fear of Him more fully. God’s testing is always for my good. “Yet all discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful, yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

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.

Hebrews 11:19 He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

Romans 4:16–21 For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to *those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (as it is written, “A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU”) in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, “SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE.” Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.*

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.
 He received Isaac back from the dead, in a figurative sense, because Abraham fully intended to follow through and kill his own son. He trusted that God would raise him from the dead since Abraham fully trusted that God would use Isaac to become the father of many nations.
 My, the scope and grandeur of his faith is magnificent. Oh, Lord, may I be like Abraham and trust you like that.

Genesis 22:13–14 Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son. Abraham called the name of that place The Lord Will Provide, as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the Lord it will be provided.”

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?

Always, always I need to embrace the testing, to “kiss the rod” as the old puritan said. I want to more readily believe the best about God, rejoicing in His good plan for me instead of shrinking from it. I want to believe Him and trust Him fully, even when all hope seems lost.

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.

As yet, Isaac had not seen his sons turn into the great nations that had been promised. When Isaac lay dying, he had not yet received what was promised. Yet he blessed his sons as though it were true.

Genesis 25:23 The Lord said to her, “Two *nations* are in your womb; And two peoples will be separated from your body; And one people shall be stronger than the other; And the older shall serve the younger.”

Genesis 27:1–10 Now it came about, when Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, that he called his older son Esau and said to him, “My son.” And he said to him, “Here I am.” Isaac said, “Behold now, I am old and I do not know the day of my death. “Now then, please take your gear, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me; and prepare a savory dish for me such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die.” Rebekah was listening while Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game to bring home, Rebekah said to her son

Jacob, "Behold, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, saying, 'Bring me some game and prepare a savory dish for me, that I may eat, and bless you in the presence of the Lord before my death.' "Now therefore, my son, listen to me as I command you. "Go now to the flock and bring me two choice young goats from there, that I may prepare them as a savory dish for your father, such as he loves. "Then you shall bring it to your father, that he may eat, so that he may bless you before his death."

Genesis 27:18–29 Then he came to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done as you told me. Get up, please, sit and eat of my game, that you may bless me." Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have it so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the Lord your God caused it to happen to me." Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come close, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not." So Jacob came close to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. And he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" And he said, "I am." So he said, "Bring it to me, and I will eat of my son's game, that I may bless you." And he brought it to him, and he ate; he also brought him wine and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, "Please come close and kiss me, my son." So he came close and kissed him; and when he smelled the smell of his garments, he blessed him and said, "See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed; Now may God give you of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And an abundance of grain and new wine; May peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you; Be master of your brothers, And may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be those who curse you, And blessed be those who bless you."

Genesis 27:30–37 Now it came about, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had hardly gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. Then he also made savory food, and brought it to his father; and he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me." Isaac his father said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau." Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who was he then that hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate of all of it before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed." When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" And he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing." Then he said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" But Isaac replied to Esau, "Behold, I have made him your master, and all his relatives I have given to him as servants; and with grain and new wine I have sustained him. Now as for you then, what can I do, my son?"

8. What did Jacob do by faith according to verse 21?

Hebrews 11:21 By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

Like Isaac, Jacob blessed his sons as though the promises had come to pass and they were mighty nations.

- 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?

Genesis 48:1–22 Now it came about after these things that Joseph was told, “Behold, your father is sick.” So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. When it was told to Jacob, “Behold, your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel collected his strength and sat up in the bed. Then Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, and He said to me, ‘Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession.’ “Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. “But your offspring that have been born after them shall be yours; they shall be called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance. “Now as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died, to my sorrow, in the land of Canaan on the journey, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).” When Israel saw Joseph’s sons, he said, “Who are these?” Joseph said to his father, “They are my sons, whom God has given me here.” So he said, “Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them.” Now the eyes of Israel were so dim from age that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. Israel said to Joseph, “I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well.” Then Joseph took them from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground. Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel’s left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel’s right, and brought them close to him. But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh’s head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn. He blessed Joseph, and said, ***“The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; And may my name live on in them, And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.”*** When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim’s head, it displeased him; and he grasped his father’s hand to remove it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn. Place your right hand on his head.” But his father refused and said, ***“I know, my son, I know; he also will become a***

people and he also will be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.”

He blessed them that day, saying, **“By you Israel will pronounce blessing, saying, ‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!’ ”** Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh. Then Israel said to Joseph, “Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. “I give you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.”

Jacob, in giving the blessing, trusted in God’s promises to be fulfilled in the future though he would not live to see that day.

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.

Hebrews 11:22 By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

Genesis 50:24–26 Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die, **but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.**” Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “God will surely take care of you, and **you shall carry my bones up from here.**” So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

Exodus 12:40–41 Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. **And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.**

Exodus 13:18–19 Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt. **Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, “God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones from here with you.”**

Joshua 24:31–32 Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known all the deeds of the Lord which He had done for Israel. **Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem, in the piece of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred pieces of money;** and they became the inheritance of Joseph’s sons.

Joseph made them promise that they would take his bones to the promised land. The sons of Israel should be commended for their faith for they kept those bones and cared for them for 430 years, through the wilderness wanderings, and finally upon entering the land, they buried the bones in that place of promise. All that points to the belief in and trust in God’s promises—that they would come to pass.

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

Moses' parents acted in faith by preserving his life and dying the king's edict. They knew their act of defiance could result in great harm to them, even loss of their own lives, yet they preserved their baby boy's life, trusting that God would care for him and them. [I've always wondered if other families disobeyed Pharaoh's orders or not. It would have been a horrible and terrifying time to be a young parent.]

11. Moses' story is next in this chapter. Read Ex. 1:8-2:10 for the background details of his story.

Exodus 1:8–2:10 Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we. "Come, let us deal wisely with them, or else they will multiply and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us and depart from the land." So they appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with hard labor. And they built for Pharaoh storage cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they were in dread of the sons of Israel. The Egyptians compelled the sons of Israel to labor rigorously; and they made their lives bitter with hard labor in mortar and bricks and at all kinds of labor in the field, all their labors which they rigorously imposed on them. Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other was named Puah; and he said, "When you are helping the Hebrew women to give birth and see them upon the birthstool, if it is a son, then you shall put him to death; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live." But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live. So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and let the boys live?" The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife can get to them." So God was good to the midwives, and the people multiplied, and became very mighty. Because the midwives feared God, He established households for them. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "*Every son who is born you are to cast into the Nile, and every daughter you are to keep alive.*" Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was beautiful, *she hid him for three months. But when she could hide him no longer, she got him a wicker basket and covered it over with tar and pitch.* Then she put the child into it and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him. The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile, with her maidens walking alongside the Nile; and she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid, and she brought it to her. When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the boy was crying. And she had pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and

call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women that she may nurse the child for you?" Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go ahead." *So the girl went and called the child's mother. Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. The child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. And she named him Moses, and said, "Because I drew him out of the water."*

12. What did Moses do by faith in verse 24?

Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

Moses maintained his identity as a Hebrew, even though he grew up in Pharaoh's household.

13. What were the results of this choice as seen in verse 25?

Hebrews 11:25 choosing rather *to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,*

It appears that when he aligned himself with his birth family that he suffered for it. It also seems that he turned away from the sins of Pharaoh's court and sought to please God.

14. What did Moses understand about sin from verse 25? See also James 5:1-5; 1 Jn. 2:17.

Moses understood that sin only gives passing pleasure. It's temporary and doesn't give glory to God. Sin results in judgment.

James 5:1-5 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

1 John 2:17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

15. Why was Moses able to make this choice according to verse 26?

Hebrews 11:26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

a. What choices did other heroes of the faith make? See Ps. 84:10; ~~Rom.~~

5:18 [needs to be Romans 6:16-18]; 2 Tim. 2:8-10.

They made the choice to choose God over the world and indulging in sin, to obey God, rather than sin's insistent urgings. They chose hardship and suffering rather than give into the world's ways.

Psalm 84:10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Romans 6:16–18 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

2 Timothy 2:8–10 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

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.

Exodus 2:13–15 He went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, “Why are you striking your companion?” But he said, “Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” *Then Moses was afraid and said, “Surely the matter has become known.”* When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But *Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh* and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.

Like Sarah’s story, there’s the first flurry of unbelief and then there is the

determination to believe God, to live by faith. Though the first response is not by faith, the second one can be.

Further thoughts in support of first departure from Egypt: Probably is referencing the first time he fled to Midian. Apparent contradiction with Ex. 2:11-15 where it says Moses feared, here it says he did not fear. First, why the first time Moses left Egypt? Matches Pharaoh being angry, Exodus speaks of Moses leaving by himself not with 2 million people, and third, *everything else in Heb. 11 is in chronological order*. Moses was fearful at first but later grew strong in faith and did not fear. Yes, he had temporary fear but was characterized by faith.

“In support of the first option, Hughes suggested that the author’s statement concerning Moses not fearing the king’s anger can be reconciled with Exod 2:14 when one understands “that it was not personal fear of Pharaoh but the awareness of his destiny as the deliverer of the covenant people that caused him to take flight.” Hughes continued: “In other words, the governing impulse of his flight from Egypt was faith, not fear, as is neatly suggested by the NEB translation: ‘By faith he left Egypt, and not because he feared the king’s anger.’” [David L. Allen, [Hebrews](#), The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2010), 561.]

“This forsaking of Egypt must, because of the order in which it comes and of Moses alone being mentioned, be his flight related in Exod. 2:15, not the final Exodus. The only seeming difficulty is in the expression, “not fearing the wrath of the king,” whereas in the history Moses is represented as flying in fear from the face of Pharaoh, who sought to slay him. But the two views of his attitude of mind are reconcileable. The assertion of his fearlessness applies to his whole course of action from the time when he elected to brave the king in behalf of Israel. In pursuance of this course, it became necessary for him to leave Egypt for a time. In this, as well as in staying, there was danger; for the king might pursue him: he might, perhaps, have secured his own safety by returning to the court and giving up his project; but he persevered at all hazards. And thus the apprehension of immediate danger under which he fled the country with a view to final success, was in no contradiction to his general fearlessness.” [H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., [Hebrews](#), The Pulpit Commentary (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 304–305.]

“The day came when Moses, because of his intervention on behalf of his people, had to leave Egypt and go to Midian (Exodus 2:14–22). Because of the order in which it comes, that must be what verse 27 refers to. Some people have found difficulty here, because the Exodus narrative says that it was because Moses feared Pharaoh that he fled to Midian (Exodus 2:14), while Hebrews says that he went out not fearing the blazing wrath of the king. There is no real contradiction. It is simply that the writer of the letter to the Hebrews saw even more deeply into the story. For Moses to go to Midian was not an act of fear; it was an act of

courage. It showed the courage of the man who has learned to wait.” [William Barclay, [The Letter to the Hebrews](#), The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 186.]

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?

It just does! God is so gracious to record the overall trajectory of weak men and women, who trusted Him, yet so imperfectly. There is hope that my own life can bring Him glory yet! How kind the Lord is!

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

He endured, as seeing Him who is unseen. He persevered and focused on the Lord and not his circumstances.

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.

2 Corinthians 4:18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:13–16 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

Hebrews 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

Hebrews 12:2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

1 Peter 1:8–9 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

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.

Hebrews 11:28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them.

He obeyed God’s instruction exactly, but the most important part was trusting that the blood on the lintel and doorposts would be sufficient to protect them. I mean, who does that? It’s not a normal thing, yet, Moses believed God and responded in faith and obedience.

Exodus 12:1–13 Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. “Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household. ‘Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. ‘Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ‘You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. ‘Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ‘They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ‘Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails. ‘And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. ‘Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the Lord’s Passover. ‘For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the Lord. ‘The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

Exodus 12:23–27 “For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you. “And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children

forever. “When you enter the land which the Lord will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite. “And when your children say to you, ‘What does this rite mean to you?’ you shall say, ‘It is a Passover sacrifice to the Lord who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.’ ” And the people bowed low and worshiped.

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.

Hebrews 11:29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.

Moses and the nation trusted God to hold back the walls of water so that they could pass through safely. It must have been quite scary and yet they stepped onto the seabed floor and walked in faith.

Exodus 14:13–31 But *Moses said to the people, “Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. “The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent.”* Then the Lord said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward. “As for you, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land. “As for Me, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. “Then the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord, when I am honored through Pharaoh, through his chariots and his horsemen.” The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. So it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night. Thus the one did not come near the other all night. **Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea**; and the Lord swept the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, so the waters were divided. The sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit, and all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. At the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion. He caused their chariot wheels to swerve, and He made them drive with difficulty; so the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from Israel, for the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians.” Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen.” **So Moses**

stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, even Pharaoh's entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained. But the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. When Israel saw the great power which the Lord had used against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in His servant Moses.

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?

The walls of Jericho fell down after they obediently marched around the city for 7 days.

The people of Israel's faith is put on display. They marched and did the crazy thing, but trusted in the Lord.

Joshua 6:1–21 Now Jericho was tightly shut because of the sons of Israel; no one went out and no one came in. The Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and the valiant warriors. "You shall march around the city, all the men of war circling the city once. You shall do so for six days. "Also seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark; then on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. "It shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people will go up every man straight ahead." So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord." Then he said to the people, "Go forward, and march around the city, and let the armed men go on before the ark of the Lord." And it was so, that when Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the Lord went forward and blew the trumpets; and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard came after the ark, while they continued to blow the trumpets. But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "You shall not shout nor let your voice be heard nor let a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I tell you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout!" So he had the ark of the Lord taken around the city, circling it once; then they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp. Now Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew the trumpets; and the armed men went before them and the rear guard came after the ark of the Lord, while

they continued to blow the trumpets. Thus the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp; they did so for six days. Then on the seventh day they rose early at the dawning of the day and marched around the city in the same manner seven times; only on that day they marched around the city seven times. At the seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the city. "The city shall be under the ban, it and all that is in it belongs to the Lord; only Rahab the harlot and all who are with her in the house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. "But as for you, only keep yourselves from the things under the ban, so that you do not covet them and take some of the things under the ban, and make the camp of Israel accursed and bring trouble on it. "But all the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron are holy to the Lord; they shall go into the treasury of the Lord." So the people shouted, and priests blew the trumpets; and when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight ahead, and they took the city. They utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.

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.

She welcomed the spies—in peace.

All she knew is what they had heard from other travelers, from gossip. Yet, it was enough and she threw in her lot with the true God and the people of Israel.

Joshua 2:1–21 Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lodged there. It was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land." And the king of Jericho sent word to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land." But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. "It came about when it was time to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof. So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate. Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, and said to the men, "I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. "For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out

of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. “When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. “Now therefore, please swear to me by the Lord, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father’s household, and give me a pledge of truth, and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.” So the men said to her, “Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the Lord gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.” Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall. She said to them, “Go to the hill country, so that the pursuers will not happen upon you, and hide yourselves there for three days until the pursuers return. Then afterward you may go on your way.” The men said to her, “We shall be free from this oath to you which you have made us swear, unless, when we come into the land, you tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father’s household. “It shall come about that anyone who goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be free; but anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him. “But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be free from the oath which you have made us swear.” She said, “According to your words, so be it.” So she sent them away, and they departed; and she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

Joshua 6:22–25 Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, “Go into the harlot’s house and bring the woman and all she has out of there, as you have sworn to her.” So the young men who were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all she had; they also brought out all her relatives and placed them outside the camp of Israel. They burned the city with fire, and all that was in it. Only the silver and gold, and articles of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. However, Rahab the harlot and her father’s household and all she had, Joshua spared; and she has lived in the midst of Israel to this day, for she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

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.

Psalm 16:8–9 I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely.

Psalm 62:5–8 My soul, wait in silence for God only, For my hope is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be shaken. On God my salvation and my glory rest; The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Proverbs 3:5–6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.

Matthew 6:30 “But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith!

Matthew 17:20 And He said to them, “Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.

John 11:39–40 Jesus said, “Remove the stone.” Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

John 14:1 “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 Corinthians 4:7–13 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death works in us, but life in you. But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE,” we also believe, therefore we also speak,

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)”

By faith, Lisa chose to live by faith over her feelings, though she did this imperfectly, she sought to apply faith and right thinking in difficulty. By faith, Lisa lived upon and believed that God’s priorities in Titus 2:3-5 would bring Him glory.... nothing fancy. But little acts of faith are seen by God as much as the big ones.

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.

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #19, Chapter 11:32-40

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Read Chapter 11 as you prepare to study this final section of the Hebrews Chapter of Faith. Ask the Lord for wisdom and grace to study.

1. After rehearsing the “by faith” deeds of the early heroes of Israel, the author of Hebrews realizes he is going to run out of time if he begins to write about the rest of the heroes of faith. Let’s do a quick study on these men who lived “by faith” upon the promises of God. Summarize each person’s story. Be sure to include how they put their faith in God.

- a. Gideon—Judges 6:11-8:35.

Gideon was the youngest in his household, yet was called to be a judge in Israel. Gideon is known for his tentative faith (as with the fleece and the water) yet God accomplished much through him. When the angel of the Lord approached him and called him into service, Gideon offered sacrifice by faith. Gideon was a fearful man, yet although he was fearful, he still obeyed the Lord and tore down the altar of Baal. Gideon was also known for being the leader of the small band, whose size was winnowed down by how the men drank the water. Again, the Scriptures show he was afraid, but God compassionately shores him up by letting him hear how the enemy viewed him. He mightily fought for Israel against her enemies, yet declined their requests to have him rule the nation by reminding them that the Lord was to rule over them.

- b. Barak—Judges 4:4-22.

Barak led Israel’s army and fought against Sisera, yet even here, Deborah and Jael showed themselves more valiant for the Lord than he did.

- c. Samson—Judges 13:24-16:31.

Samson was raised up to judge Israel, yet he did nothing for God’s honor, only for his fleshly lusts. It wasn’t until he lost his sight that he vanquished the God of Israel upon the Philistines.

- d. Jephthah—Judges 11:1-12:7.

Jephthah was a valiant warrior, but he was despised by his brothers because he was the son of a harlot. When the people of Gilead were oppressed by the Ammonites, they called upon Jephthah to lead them and fight for them. Jephthah is also well known for his zealous but foolish vow, which appears to have caused the life of his precious daughter.

- e. We will look at just one episode in the life of David—1 Samuel 17:12-54. (Feel free to search for more episodes of faith from David’s life if you want to study him further.)

David's epic faith when he fought against Goliath is well-known. David stood up to his brother's, his king, all who knew him, and appealed to all to believe that God would fight for Israel. David was so mighty in his zeal and love for God. It's such an incredible testimony.

- f. As with David, we will only look at one episode from Samuel's life—1 Samuel 3:1-21, though you can search for other episodes as well.

By faith, Samuel, as young boy, responded to God's call by faith. When the Lord tells Samuel about His intended judgment upon Israel and Eli and his son, Samuel is obedient to the Lord though he doesn't want to tell Eli the bad news.

2. What were some of the things these men did "by faith" as they put their trust in God? See verses 33-34.

Hebrews 11:33–34 who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.

3. What do you learn about the resurrection and Old Testament believers in verse 35?

Hebrews 11:35 Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection;

The prophets raised people from the dead, who then died physically once again. But those who were tortured for their faith and adherence to the Lord, stood firm, not giving in to the "plea deals" for an early release. Instead, they remained faithful, so that they might attain to the better resurrection where our mortality is exchanged for immortality.

4. In verses 35-36, the writer switches from the victorious acts of faith to the acts of faith, which in the world's eyes, were folly. The not-so-happy-ending descriptions reveal another side to the "by faith" people. What do you learn about them? See also 11:1, 13-16, 25.

Hebrews 11:35–36 Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment.

The people of the not so happy endings to faith had an assurance in the things hoped for and a belief in that which is not seen. They believed in the future promises and looked forward to their future fulfillment. They looked forward to their heavenly country. They chose ill treatment rather than giving into sin.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of

things not seen.

Hebrews 11:13–16 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

Hebrews 11:25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

5. In verses 37-38, we read more ways the “by faith” people responded to their circumstances. How are they described in verse 38?

Hebrews 11:37–38 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

They are described as men of whom the world was not worthy. Of course, the world didn’t see it that way—and never will, but God’s people, and more importantly, God Himself, sees it.

6. What set these men apart to such a degree that it would be said of them that they were *men of whom the world was not worthy*?

Their suffering for God, His name and ways, for His righteousness. This was to bolster the Hebrews, who were also suffering, so it would have been so soul bracing to read this section and see the true assessment about those beleaguered and suffering saints.

7. What do you learn about another of whom the world was not worthy? Read Is. 53:1-9 to see what the world saw and how it responded.

Isaiah 53:1–9 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to

slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

The world saw nothing of importance, nothing noble or noteworthy in Jesus. He was despised and forsaken, and not respected at all. He bore our griefs, sins, and sorrows, yet, even we did not esteem Him. He was oppressed, afflicted, and died for us without being worshiped and revered as He was due.

- a. How does heaven respond to the same man? See Is. 9:6-7 and Rev. 5:12-14; 19:11-16.

Heaven sees Him for who He really is—wonderful counselor, mighty God, eternal Father, Prince of Peace, worthy to be worshiped, the Lamb of God, who should receive power, riches, wisdom, might, honor, glory, blessing, and dominion forever and ever. How glorious it will be to see Jesus get the worship and honor He so rightly deserves.

Isaiah 9:6–7 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

Revelation 5:12–14 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.” And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.” And the four living creatures kept saying, “Amen.” And the elders fell down and worshiped.

Revelation 19:11–16 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

8. Paul was a man of whom the world was not worthy. What mindset did he maintain? See 2 Cor. 4:7-10, 16-18; 5:1-10.

2 Corinthians 4:7–10 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. *Paul understood the power of God that works through weak, suffering, and persecuted believers. He trusted the Lord in his difficulties and suffering.*

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. *He didn't lose heart in his afflictions because he counted them temporary and of far less value than the eternal weight of glory waiting for him in heaven.*

2 Corinthians 5:1–10 For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge. Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight— we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. *Paul knew that even if he died, he would gain a new body in heaven. He longed for that heavenly tent because the purpose of his life was to please the Lord in all things.*

9. What do you need to know about God if you are going to persevere in these kinds of afflictions? See Deut. 4:32-39; 10:12-21; Ps. 30:5; 145:1-21; Lam. 3:19-33, 39-40.

Deuteronomy 4:32–39 “Indeed, ask now concerning the former days which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and inquire from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything been done like this great thing, or has anything been heard like it? “Has any people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard it, and survived? “Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm

and by great terrors, as the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? “To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him. “Out of the heavens He let you hear His voice to discipline you; and on earth He let you see His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire. “Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power, driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in and to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is today. “Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other. *He is mighty, personal, loving, and involved in the lives of His children. He is unique, avenging, and advocating.*

Deuteronomy 10:12–21 “Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the LORD’S commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good? “Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it. “Yet on your fathers did the LORD set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day. “So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer. “For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe. “He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing. “So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. “You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name. “He is your praise and He is your God, who has done these great and awesome things for you which your eyes have seen. *He loves His children. He acts in justice. He watches over the needy and afflicted. He desires that we love Him.*

Psalm 30:5 For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy comes in the morning. *He is soooooo gracious!*

Psalm 145:1–21 I will extol You, my God, O King, And I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You, And I will praise Your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised, And His greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of Your majesty And on Your wonderful works, I will meditate. Men shall speak of the power of Your awesome acts, And I will tell of Your greatness. They shall eagerly utter the memory of Your abundant goodness And will shout joyfully of Your righteousness. The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness. The LORD is good to all, And His mercies are over all His works. All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD, And Your godly ones shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom And talk of Your power; To make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts And the glory of the majesty of Your kingdom. Your

kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And Your dominion endures throughout all generations. The LORD sustains all who fall And raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to You, And You give them their food in due time. You open Your hand And satisfy the desire of every living thing. The LORD is righteous in all His ways And kind in all His deeds. The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them. The LORD keeps all who love Him, But all the wicked He will destroy. My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, And all flesh will bless His holy name forever and ever. *He is mighty and worthy of all praise. He always does what is good. He sustains those who are bowed down in trial and personally raises them up. He is intimately involved in the lives of His children.*

Lamentations 3:19–33 Remember my affliction and my wandering, the wormwood and bitterness. Surely my soul remembers And is bowed down within me. This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. The LORD'S lovingkindness indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him." The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the person who seeks Him. It is good that he waits silently For the salvation of the LORD. It is good for a man that he should bear The yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone and be silent Since He has laid it on him. Let him put his mouth in the dust, Perhaps there is hope. Let him give his cheek to the smiter, Let him be filled with reproach. For the Lord will not reject forever, For if He causes grief, Then He will have compassion According to His abundant lovingkindness. For He does not afflict willingly Or grieve the sons of men. *His compassions never fail. His lovingkindness is new every morning. He is good!*

Lamentations 3:39–40 Why should any living mortal, or any man, Offer complaint in view of his sins? Let us examine and probe our ways, And let us return to the LORD. *He is good though we don't deserve His kindness.*

What wonderful truths to meditate upon when we are hurting from sorrows and trial. These truths will help us persevere with hope and trust.

10. How would knowing those character traits about God help you to continue in faith when you find yourself facing *extreme circumstances* like the ones listed here? In those times, those are exactly the kinds of attributes I would need to know.
11. How would knowing those character traits about God help you to continue in faith when you find yourself facing *circumstances much smaller* in scope? Even in smaller trials, when my soul is tested, I still need to think on those same attributes. They still bring comfort.
12. Think about some difficulties you have faced recently or even some inconveniences or unmet expectations you have recently experienced. How did what you know about God's character and His ways help you to persevere with

faith? Try to recall the specific ways you were encouraged and comforted. I've been encouraged remembering that God ordains my path, so if I am experiencing it, it is because He will use my circumstances as a means to build holiness in me. Maybe not comfort. Maybe not happiness. But most definitely, holiness. So encouraged by His compassion in my weakness.

13. Who does “and all these” refer to (verse 39)? What two things happened to “all these?”

In the near context, it's referring to those whom the world was not worthy in verses 32-38. All these most naturally refers to all the “by faith” people in the chapter. The great cloud of witnesses in 12:1.

Two things happened to them: they gained approval and they didn't receive what was promised.

14. Why did those things happen to them according to verse 40?

Hebrews 11:40 because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

15. What is unusual about the pronouns used in verse 40 compared with the previous verses?

The previous verses are all they, their, those, them, yet in verse 40 “us” is introduced. It pulls together the people of the past with the believers the author is writing to and their specific time period to help them see how connected they are to God's plan for history.

16. What is the *better thing* that God has provided for us? See Heb. 1:1-4; 7:18-22, 25; 8:6; 9:23-28; 12:24.

Hebrews 1:1–4 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in **His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. **When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.**

Hebrews 7:18–22 For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is **a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God**. And inasmuch as it was not without an oath (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, “THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, ‘YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER’ ”); so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore ***He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him***, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Hebrews 8:6 But now ***He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.***

Hebrews 9:23–28 Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For ***Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own.*** Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Hebrews 12:24 and to ***Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant***, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

The “better thing” that God has provided is Jesus, who is the mediator of a new covenant that is enacted on better promises and ushers in a better hope.

17. The second part of verse 40 might present a problem for us to understand, *unless* we remember what God provided for us. First, let’s take a look at these verses and record what you learn: Acts 3:18; Rom. 5:6; Gal. 4:4-5; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Titus 1:1-3.

Acts 3:18 “But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

Romans 5:6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

Galatians 4:4–5 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

1 Timothy 2:5–6 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

Titus 1:1–3 Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, but at the proper time manifested, even His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior,

The prophets prophesied that the Messiah, who is Jesus, would suffer and die and fulfill the promises already given. God appointed the time that Jesus would appear in human history. He appeared to redeem mankind in all times—for those

who looked forward to His appearing and for those who look backward to His appearing. Only Jesus can save mankind from their sins. God promised a Savior and then appointed the perfect time for Jesus to appear to bring salvation to pass.

- a. Who makes it possible for anyone to be made perfect? See Heb. 10:11-14.

Hebrews 10:11–14 Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Only Jesus.

- b. On the timeline of history, with Christ as the center, when did “all these” and “us” live?

“These” lived before Jesus appeared on earth as a man and “us” lived after His death and resurrection.

- c. How is anyone ever able to please God? See 11:6.

Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

- d. Based on what you have learned, explain what verse 40 means.

The end of verse 40 cannot be figured out without remembering the context, especially the near context of verse 39.

The Old Testament saints gained approval through their faith, but the promises of God had not yet been fulfilled. It wasn't until the New Testament, and the ushering in of the church age, that their faith in the Messiah/Savior was completed.

In verses 39-40, the author of Hebrews is providing a bridge between those Old Testament saints and “us” and our lives as addressed in Hebrews 12:1-2.

John MacArthur says it very well, “God has provided this “something better” **for us**, that is for those under the New Covenant, which is why **apart from us they should not be made perfect**. That is, not until our time, the time of Christianity, could their salvation be completed, made perfect. Until Jesus' atoning work on the cross was accomplished, no salvation was complete, no matter how great the faith a believer may have had. Their salvation was based on what Christ would do; ours is based on what Christ has done. Their faith looked forward to promise; ours looks back to historical fact.

Yet, though their salvation was not completed in their lifetimes, these were not second-rate believers. They were believers of the highest order. They courageously struggled, suffered, and counted on salvation. They believed all of God's Word that they had, which is what counts with Him. How much less faith

do we often have, in spite of our much greater light. “Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed” (John 20:29).”¹

18. What is the clever way the author connects “us” to “all these” in verse 40? Why would he make that connection between the two groups? For a clue, look ahead to 12:1.

In verses 39-40, the author of Hebrews is providing a bridge between those Old Testament saints and “us” and our lives as addressed in Hebrews 12:1-2.

19. What is the point of Hebrews 11 and the description of persevering faith? See 10:35-39; 11:1-2, 6, 13-16, 39-40; 12:1-2.

Verses 39-40 reveals the main point of this chapter and it’s the reason why the author of Hebrews wrote as he did. He wants to remind the people he’s writing to that many, many others have gone through difficulty and persecution, yet they were still found pleasing to God. The people in chapter 11 were found to be pleasing to God, but many did not receive the fulfillment of the promises of God in their lives, but they still trusted the Lord—and looked to the unseen, considering it more “real” than what is seen.

The author’s point is not so much being able to have the promises of God “in hand” so to speak, but to know the God who makes the promises, and then in faith to trust Him to bring all things to completion.

Hebrews 10:35–39 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay. But My righteous one shall live by faith; And if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

Hebrews 11:1–2 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval.

Hebrews 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.

Hebrews 11:13–16 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

¹ John F. MacArthur Jr., *Hebrews*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 369–370.

Hebrews 11:39–40 And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

Hebrews 12:1–2 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

20. What have you learned about faith—persevering faith, looking ahead faith, faith which sees that which is unseen? How has this chapter impacted your thinking about how you live your life during this short stay on earth?

Faith is content looking forward to the promises, yet to be fulfilled. Faith doesn't need to receive the promises because faith considers the promises of God as already fulfilled. Timing doesn't matter. Instead, there is an enduring for the day when all things will be made right and come to completion.

Men call the righteous, fools: but one day they shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. They hounded them to death, as not being fit to live. In early ages they laid to the Christians charges of the most terrible character, which I should count it shame to mention. But then they will all be cleared; and those of whom the world was not worthy, who were driven and hunted about and made to dwell in the caves of the earth, they shall come forth as worthy ones, and the world shall know her true aristocracy, earth shall own her true nobility. The men whose names she cast out as evil, shall then be held in great repute, for they shall stand out clear and transparent without spot or blemish. It is well that there should be a trial for the righteous, for the clearing of them, the vindication of them, and that it should be public, defying the cavil and criticism of all mankind. ~Charles Spurgeon²

²Charles H. Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Sermons: Volume 18*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Spurgeon's Sermons (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998).