

People of Faith Heb. 11

1. What is faith? v1-3
2. Abel v4
3. Enoch v5-6
4. Noah v7
5. Abraham and Sarah v8-19
6. Isaac, Jacob, Joseph v20-22
7. Moses' family v23
8. Moses v24-28
9. Israel & Rahab v29-31
10. Who Through Faith ____ v32-38
11. Therefore . . . v39-12:4

A typical lesson will involve analyzing a few verses from Hebrews 11, thinking about the individual(s) in those verses, and using some tools of Bible study --

1. Define a word.
2. Read a commentary and comment on what you read (note good points or bad points).
3. List passages in the Bible where ____ (word, name) appears.
4. Read from a Bible dictionary/encyclopedia on some assigned subject.

Lesson #1 Faith
Faith Hebrews 11:1-3

Analyze the text

v1 faith is:

A. substance (assurance NASB, ASV) of things hoped for

Either word leads to the same, consistent conclusion-- with faith, we have a certainty about things for which we hope, see v13. Thus, as this chapter will show, faith drastically affects how we act. When we are certain that something for which we hope will someday be a reality, we live a certain way until either it occurs or we lose hope. Part of the purpose of Hebrews 11 is to encourage Christians not to lose hope (Heb. 10:35-39).

B. evidence (conviction NASB, ASV) of things not seen

Faith itself is not evidence but is the result of examining and being convinced by evidence (Rom. 10:17). Faith is the conviction of things not seen.

v2

by faith a good report is obtained Rom. 15:4; Gal. 3:24

These elders, having the faith of verse 1, believed in many promises: flood, child, inheritance, Israel's departure from Egypt, the reward, conquer Jericho, . . .

v3 faith:

A. allows us to understand that what is seen came from what is unseen Rom. 1:20

* "the worlds," and "all that is in them" are visible (Acts 4:24)

* God's power and the words that He spoke, by which all was created, are not visible.

B. in God's work in creation

The importance of the Genesis record of creation can hardly be overemphasized-- it is here used as one of the most fundamental examples of faith in God's word. The Hebrew author uses the language of Genesis 1 in described how God made the world. Compare--

"Then God said 'Let there be light' and there was light." (Gen. 1:3), and

". . . the worlds were framed by the word of God." (Heb. 11:3)

The faith which the Hebrews author describes finds its most basic application in the account of creation recorded in the book of Genesis. When men question the account of creation in Genesis, they are striking at the foundation of faith. Genesis 1 is not a fable or parable. Jesus based some fundamental concepts upon the events recorded in Genesis, as did Paul (Matt.19:4-6; 1 Tim. 2:12-14). Any teaching which undermines the record of Genesis, will consequently undermine the saving faith being discussed in Hebrews 11 (see verse 6).

Conclusion- The essence of faith has never changed, as a study of Hebrews 11 will show. Faith has always existed in the minds of men who sought God and dedicated their life fully to His service.

Questions for Lesson 1- Heb. 11:1-3

I. (a) For what unseen thing(s) did these people hope?

(b) What lesson does each teach us concerning faith and hope?

1. Eve Gen. 3:6 (a) _____
(b) _____
2. The woman Mt. 9:21 (a) _____
(b) _____
3. The jailor Acts 16:30 (a) _____
(b) _____
4. The prophets of old 1 Pet. 1:10-12 (a) _____
(b) _____
5. The slaughtered saints Rev. 6:9-10 (a) _____
(b) _____

II. Romans 1:20 “His invisible attributes are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made.”

1. What attributes of God may be identified by the things that are made?

2. Name some attributes of God that are not learned through the things that are made.

3. If we can't learn of these through nature, how can we know them? (1 Cor. 1:10-11)

4. When we have heard and are convinced of the truth of the attributes of God, what will lead us to serve the God of whom we have learned? _____

III. Note the following excerpt from a news report:

“The Catholic bishops of England, Wales and Scotland are warning their five million worshippers, as well as any others drawn to the study of scripture, that they should not expect 'total accuracy' from the Bible.

'We should not expect to find in Scripture full scientific accuracy or complete historical precision,' they say in *The Gift of Scripture*. . . 'As examples of passages not to be taken literally, the bishops cite the early chapters of Genesis, comparing them with early creation legends from other cultures, especially from the ancient East. The bishops say it is clear that the primary purpose of these chapters was to provide religious teaching and that they could not be described as historical writing.'"¹

-- What did Paul say in 2 Timothy 3:16 which shows that he expected “total accuracy’ from the Bible”?

-- How does 1 Timothy 2:13-14 show that Paul DID believe that “the early chapters of Genesis” could be described as historical writing?

¹ <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,13509-1811332,00.html> Gledhill, The [London] **Times** Online, October 5, 2005

Lesson #2 Abel's Faithful Worship (Heb. 11:4)
also read Gen. 4:3-8; Mt. 23:35; Heb. 12:24; 1 Jn. 3:12

Faith works toward a specific goal (hope)-- we'll see that theme throughout these series of studies What was the purpose of Abel's sacrifice? All worship is intended to please and praise God, and this sacrifice was likely an appeal to God for forgiveness of sin.

Man cannot see the face of God so as to know that He is pleased; neither can man have an x-ray done in order see whether or not sin has been forgiven. Whatever the purpose of Abel's sacrifice, he would have to have faith that his sacrifice would accomplish whatever God said that it would accomplish.

Analyze the text

1. Abel's "more excellent sacrifice."

A. Abel offered a sacrifice by faith, therefore God must have revealed it, Rom. 10:17.

B. The idea behind a blood sacrifice has always been the recognition of sin by the one offering the sacrifice (Heb. 9:12-14).

2. Abel obtained witness that he was righteous.

A. Then and now, Gen. 4:4; Mt. 23:35; 1 Jn. 3:12.

B. We can also obtain that witness now and "then," Rom. 8:16; 1 Jn. 5:9-10; 2:28.

3. Through his more excellent sacrifice, he still speaks.

A. Example of acceptable worship

B. Consider others who still speak, due to their worship:

i. Cain 1 Jn. 3:12 wicked works

ii. Nadab & Abihu Lev. 10:1-2 offered unauthorized worship

iii. Saul 1 Sam. 13:9, 12 felt compelled to offer unacceptable worship

iv. Jeroboam 1 Kg. 12:31-33 he devised worship in his heart

v. Jews Mal. 1:8, 13 grew weary of worship

vi. Christians in Jerusalem Acts 2:42 studied, Lord's supper, prayer

vii. Macedonian Christians 2 Cor. 8:1-3 sacrificial giving

Character Analysis of Abel

1. What do we know of this person's religious background- either themselves or of those who would have influenced them (parents, siblings, friends, culture, . . .)?

2. Describe one of the experiences in the life of this person which was a test of faith.

3. How did they respond to this experience?

4. When do we face a similar test today? How should we respond?

5. Taking the examples of worship in the past, show how these lessons may apply (positively or negatively) today. (see point 3 from the lesson)
 - i. _____
 - ii. _____
 - iii. _____
 - iv. _____
 - v. _____
 - vi. _____
 - vii. _____

Using Study Tools (none for this lesson)

Lesson #3 Enoch Walked With God Heb. 11:5-6

also read Genesis 5:21-24; Jude 14-15

- Great grandfather of Noah. Adam still alive.
- Whenever you read of faith, remember that it is the result of believing God's revelation (Rom. 10:17).
- Abel died because of his faith. Enoch did *not* die because of his faith.

Analyze the text

v5 *Enoch was translated.* Gen. 5:24b

He pleased God. God also sorrows and grieves over man's sins (Gen. 6:6)

v6 *Impossible to please Him without faith.* Col. 3:17; Mt. 7:21-23

Believe that He is. Man who rejects God's existence is without excuse (Rom. 1:20)

Believe that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him. 1 Chron.28:9; Is. 58:2

Thus we learn that Enoch's faith:

1) . . . preserved him from the influence of evil. Genesis 5:21-24a

He “walked with God” Gen. 17:1; 24:40 Abraham walked with God also. This is in reference to his faithful life, not to his translation.

He kept himself unspotted Rom. 12:1-2

Enoch, like Lot, must have been tormented in the wickedness which surrounded him (2 Pet. 2:8)

2) . . . caused him to oppose the influence of evil. Jude 14-15

Went “on the offensive” 2 Cor. 10:3-6 he took note of what the ungodly did, how they did it, and what they said. Does that make him a watchman?

He had no fellowship with evil and he reproved it Eph. 5:11

3) . . . led to his rewards. Gen. 5:24b; Heb. 11:5

He was spared the sorrows of physical suffering that often accompany physical death.

Privileged to “bypass” the Hadean world (Lk. 16:23)

-- “It is remarkable that the only two men who passed from this world without tasting of death were distinguished as prophets fearless in rebuking evil-doers and asserting the Divine claims, and each in an age of dominant wickedness.” *Pulpit Commentary*

Character Analysis of Enoch

1. What do we know of this person's religious background- either themselves or of those who would have influenced them (parents, siblings, friends, culture, . . .)?

2. Describe one of the experiences in the life of this person which was a test of faith.

3. How did they respond to this experience?

4. When do we face a similar test today? How should we respond?

*** Using Study Tools:

define the word "diligently" (Heb. 11:6) _____

Lesson #4 Noah Prepared An Ark (Heb. 11:7)
other included texts- Genesis 6; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5

Analyze the text

being divinely warned Gen. 6:5-7, 11-13
moved with godly fear Gen. 6:22
by faith Noah prepared an ark Gen. 6:14-16
for the saving of his house 2 Pet. 3:20
he condemned the world in word (2 Pet. 2:5) and deed (1 Pet. 2:12)
became an heir of righteousness 1 Jn. 3:7

Thus we learn from Noah:

1. To listen to God's warnings even when the danger is "unseen."
 - a. Sin Js. 1:14-15 (Prov. 7:6ff; 20:1)
 - b. False teachers 1 Cor. 15:33; Mt. 16:6, 12; 2 Tim. 2:17; 3:13
 - c. Day of Judgment 2 Pet. 3:9-10
2. How God communicates with man Gen. 6:14-16
 - a. Uses words which must be understood Heb. 1:1-2; Eph. 3:3-5
 - b. General instructions
 - Noah: how many rooms? get the wood from where?
 - Us: what format to teach? what time to pray?
 - c. Specific instructions
 - Noah: what type of wood? how many decks? window(s)?
 - Us: elements of LS? music? law which will judge us?
3. The effects of a godly example
 - a. Leads souls to salvation 1 Pet. 3:20; 1 Tim. 4:16; 1 Pet. 2:9; 3:1-2
 - b. Hardens some against the truth Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 4:4

Character Analysis of Noah

1. What do we know of this person's religious background- either themselves or of those who would have influenced them (parents, siblings, friends, culture, . . .)?
2. Describe one of the experiences in the life of this person which was a test of faith.
3. How did they respond to this experience?
4. When do we face a similar test today? How should we respond?

Using Study Tools:

Read a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia on the “ark of Noah.” Make a note of any interesting information you find to share with the class.

Lesson #5 Abraham & Sarah (Heb. 11:8-19)
other included texts- Genesis 12:1-4; 17:17; 21:2; 22:2,10

Analyze the text

I. What was accomplished by faith?

A. *Abraham went out* (vs 8) against “common sense.”

Sometimes what seems “naturally right” isn't always right (Jer. 10:23). Thus “listen to your heart, conscience” ought not be our primary motto (Acts 26:9). Many view the use of recreation, which draws men “to church” as being a good thing, based on common sense. (Does it draw them to God?!)

B. *Abraham sojourned* (vs 9) against feelings of comfort.

How comfortable to go to a place where you know no one? Not uncomfortable as in “morally questionable” but something that makes me a little nervous.

God doesn't simply ask us to do what we are comfortable with-- He asks us to do what we are able to do.

C. *Sarah received strength to give birth* (vs 11) against scientific wisdom and natural knowledge.

- note that faith not only means that we obey but also that we are blessed (Mt. 5:1-12).

What else does the Bible teach that is unimaginable without faith?

D. *Abraham offered up Isaac* (vss 17-19) against personal perception of God's plan.

During the controversy over the issue of whether the church should build and send money to homes for orphans and widows, many believed that a refusal to do this violated the plan of God for Christian's to show love. These failed to realize that God does have a plan for us to show love to these, but He did not teach us to express that love from the church's treasury.

II. Our faith is the means by which:

A. God accomplishes His will for us vs 10, 11, 16

- God uses our faith to bless us in ways that we could not foresee.

B. We accomplish God's will for ourselves v 8, 10, 12, 14; 1 Tim. 4:16

- There is good that we can see will be accomplished for and in us by living by faith.

C. God accomplishes His will for others vs 9, Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:16, 22, 29

- God has consistently used people of faith to accomplish things that they could not imagine would be accomplished (Abraham Heb. 11:12; Joseph, Moses, . . .). Also, we cannot know what God may accomplish or begin to accomplish by His wisdom and our faith, so we just “trust and obey.”

D. We accomplish God's will for others v9, 1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Cor. 8:5

- There is also good that we can know of that we can accomplish for others by living by faith.

Character Analysis of Abraham and Sarah

1. What do we know of this person's religious background- either themselves or of those who would have influenced them (parents, siblings, friends, culture, . . .)?
2. Describe one of the experiences in the life of this person which was a test of faith.
3. How did they respond to this experience?
4. When do we face a similar test today? How should we respond?

Using Study Tools: (none for this study)

Lesson #6- Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and the Coming Blessings (Heb. 11:20-22)
other included texts- Genesis 27:27-29, 38-40; Gen. 48:1-22; 50:24-25

Analyze the text

Isaac:

“*by faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau...*” When Isaac blessed his sons, he spoke by faith (Rom. 10:17). Being one of Abraham's offspring who lived by faith, Isaac is included as one who “died in faith, not having received the promises” (Heb. 11:12-14).

“... *concerning things to come.*” (Genesis 27:27-29, 38-40) Isaac was divinely-guided when he blessed his two sons. The authority was not in his words and hopes, it was God's wisdom directly involved. Daniel's words of praise would apply here also (Dan. 2:20-22).

Jacob

Blessed both the sons of Joseph These blessings also were given by faith (Rom. 10:17). What other explanation, could there be for Jacob conferring the greater blessing on the younger of the two boys?

Worshipped, leaning on his staff It is not difficult to picture an elderly man, weakened by age, sitting on the edge of his bed, holding on to something to steady him as he bows his head to worship God in faith. Even in his weakened condition, Jacob worshiped.

Joseph

Made mention of the people's departure from Egypt... Though we do not read of God affirming these promises specifically to Joseph, they are no secret. Joseph knows of the plan of God and that God is faithful to provide for His people. Joseph has trusted in God all of his life and though the outward man perished, the inward man was renewed.

The instructions concerning his bones is an expression of trust in God's promise that not only would the people leave Egypt, they would also possess the land.

Lessons to learn:

1. Trust in the promises of God.

Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph's faith is seen in that they were faithful to believe that God would accomplish His promises, even when for a time, they did not know when or how. That is a common circumstance- Abraham (Heb. 11:17-20), Peter (Acts 2:21 & 10:34-35; 1 Pet. 1:10). All of these were faithful to do and say what God instructed them. Later, they came to more fully appreciate and understand what God had said and done through their own words and deeds. Even when we can't see the 'why or how,' we must learn to trust God's promises (1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 13:5-6; Phil. 4:6-7; 2 Tim. 3:12)

2. God rules in this world.

While the events referred in Heb. 11:20-22 are meaningless to those without faith, it speaks volumes to those who believe in the historicity of the Bible. These occasions shows us that God's will is accomplished in spite of man's imperfections and ignorance. Despite Isaac's improper favor toward Esau and his desire to bless Esau, Isaac's willingness to speak the words which were delivered to him accomplished God's will. Isaac's own words contradicted his intentions but accomplished God's purposes.

And what greater evidence is there that God rules in the kingdoms of men than to read the life of Joseph?!!

God is always in control, seeking to provide opportunities for the lost to come to Him (Acts 17:26-27; 1 Tim. 2:4)

Character Analysis of Isaac, Jacob, or Joseph
(choose any **one** of these men to consider in answering the questions below)

1. What do we know of this person's religious background- either themselves or of those who would have influenced them (parents, siblings, friends, culture, . . .)?

2. Describe one of the experiences in the life of this person which was a test of faith.

3. How did they respond to this experience?

4. When do we face a similar test today? How should we respond?

Using Study Tools: Read a commentary on verse 20, 21, or 22 from Hebrews 11 and comment on what you read (note good points or bad points . . .).

#7 Amram and Jochebed Were Not Afraid (Heb. 11:23)

Ex. 2:1-10; 6:20; Acts 7:19-20

Analyze the text

Moses was hidden by faith. As always, faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom.10:17). Though we do not know what specific word from God was the source of this faith, we can be sure that some word from God was at the heart of Moses' parents' actions.

Moses was hidden for 3 months. Imagine living in these circumstances for three months. Fear that someone will hear the baby cry and report it, fear of what would happen to Miriam and Aaron, unable to talk about your baby to anyone else,... What, except faith in God, could allow a household to survive this time of terror, tension, and anxiety? Phil. 6:7

Moses was a beautiful child. In God's providence, the bond between parent-child was strengthened by his beauty. Whatever this marked beauty involved, it contributed to Moses' parents' determination to preserve his life. This may also have played a role in Pharaoh's daughter taking a special interest in him.

Do we not also sometimes have “mixed reasonings” for doing good-- a boy tries to teach a girl the gospel out of genuine concern for her soul but also because he is strongly attracted to her? Jacob chose a wife from Laban's family in accordance with God's will (Gen. 28:1-4). But that was not *the only* reason why he desired Rachel (Gen. 29:10, 17).

Moses' parents were not afraid of the king's command. Fear did not exist in the mind of the Jews solely because of the terrible nature of the command. No doubt the consequences of disobedience was a part of the fear of many. The penalty for disobedience is unstated but a slave's rebellion is never taken lightly, with death being the common penalty. Many people of faith have had to take such a stand.

Lessons to learn

1. Pray “that we may live a quiet and peaceable life” 1 Tim. 2:1-2
- the hope is that this will allow more to come to a knowledge of the truth v3-4
2. Who should I fear? Ps. 23:4; Mt. 10:28; Acts 4:17-18; 5:40
- In times when the gospel was persecuted, and even outlawed, Christians spread the truth (Acts 8:3-4). If the day comes that our government, or even our jobs or schools, tell us or our children “not to talk religion with others,” will we agree? Not by faith. The apostles were told exactly that-- notice their answer (Acts 4:18-19; 5:27-29, 40-43).

Character Analysis of Amram and Jochebed

1. What do we know of this person's religious background- either themselves or of those who would have influenced them (parents, siblings, friends, culture, . . .)?
2. Describe one of the experiences in the life of this person which was a test of faith.
3. How did they respond to this experience?
4. When do we face a similar test today? How should we respond?

Using Study Tools: none for this lesson

#8 Moses Looked to the Reward Heb. 11:24-28

Ex. 2-12; Acts 7:22-36

Here we learn of the faith of Moses, whose faith, like all men's faith, resulted from hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17).

Analyze the text

v24-25

when he became of age. . . From the time that he “went out to his brethren,” Moses was choosing to not be aligned with the Egyptians (Ex. 2:11; Acts 7:23). Joshua made a similar decision (Josh. 24:15). We may be called on to do the same (Mt. 11:36-37).

refused to be called. . . His choice resulted not only in the loss of wealth, but also resulted in the loss of any reputation he had earned (Acts 7:22). He must have been viewed as a traitor by those among the Egyptians with whom he had been raised.

choosing godly affliction over passing pleasure Moses could not have “the best of both worlds.” He had to choose. The rich young ruler had to make a similar decision (Mt. 19:21). Sometimes decisions force us to choose either right or wrong (Mt. 6:24).

v26

the reproach of Christ What did Moses know of the Messiah to come? We don't know exactly, yet expressions such as this are not unique for the Israelites ate and drank of Christ and the prophets of old spoke of Him (1 Cor. 10:1-4; 1 Pet. 1:10-12). Their knowledge was incomplete, yet they saw Him, to some degree, by faith.

he looked to the reward Moses was focused on his goal and did not allow himself to be distracted.

v27

he forsook Egypt Moses did this several times, beginning with forsaking Egypt mentally (v24).

seeing Him who is invisible Men today may also see Him who is invisible, thus none have an acceptable excuse as to why they do not serve God (Rom. 1:19-20; 2 Thess. 1:8).

v28

kept the Passover and sprinkling of blood Exodus 12 lists the instructions that God gave concerning the Passover. Could the Passover have been kept if part of these instructions were neglected?

Character Analysis of Moses

1. What do we know of this person's religious background- either themselves or of those who would have influenced them (parents, siblings, friends, culture, . . .)?
2. Describe one of the experiences in the life of this person which was a test of faith.
3. How did they respond to this experience?
4. When do we face a similar test today? How should we respond?

Using Study Tools (choose 1):

1. Define "looking" (v27) using 2 different sources.
2. Read a commentary on any single verse and comment on what you read (note good points or bad points).
3. Choose 3 versions of the Bible and compare the differences of how they word verse 27.

#9 Israel's Faith (Hebrews 11:29-31)

v29 *passed through the Red Sea*

So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. (Exodus 14:22). There was danger behind and, without faith, uncertainty ahead. In v10-12, Israel was ready to abandon faith, but in part by circumstances and in part by faith, they pressed ahead and were rewarded. Seeing the water roll back required no faith from Israel—walking into it with walls of water on both sides did!

Israel never established itself as a nation of great faith, but on this occasion, their faith sent a strong message throughout that part of the world. We do not know if any Egyptian witnessed what happened and survived (all in the army died), but they must have somehow learned what happened just like other nations did (Josh. 2:10; 9:9).

whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned. (Hebrews 11:29; Ex. 14:28). The Egyptians entered the Red Sea without faith and for a time, it seemed that faith didn't matter. They were also crossing on dry ground! But in time, faith proved to be the key to success.

- What caused Israel to want to return to Egypt, before they crossed? (Ex. 14:10-12)

v30 *the walls of Jericho fell*

The parents, and some of the siblings, of those who stood at the walls of Jericho died in the wilderness because of unbelief (Heb. 3:17-19). When the younger generation grew up and crossed over, God brought them to Jericho and said "See! I have given Jericho into your hand... You shall march around the city..." (Josh. 6:2-3). If the walls of Jericho fell by Israel's faith, how can it be that God gave the city to them? This shows the nature of faith. God makes an offer (a promise), but He only gives it to those who respond in faith.

- Though the word "grace" is not mentioned in Josh. 6 or Heb. 11, where is God's grace evident in the events at Jericho?

v31 *Rahab...received the spies with peace*

Rahab received the spies because she heard about what happened at the Red Sea and refused to resist the obvious conclusion---her gods and her city could not resist Israel because God was with them. The evidence was overwhelming, so by faith she was saved *because she hid the messengers that we sent* (Josh. 6:17).

If her neighbors knew of this, she might have been called unpatriotic, a traitor, etc., but she was fully persuaded by what she knew. Her faith was not blind but was built on truth.

- What else did Rahab do by faith, besides hiding the spies?

Character Analysis of Israel

1. What do we know of Israel's religious background at this point- either themselves or of those who would have influenced them (parents, siblings, friends, culture, . . .)?
2. Describe one of the experiences in the history of Israel which was a test of faith (either something from this chapter or another event)
3. How did they respond to this experience?
4. When do we face a similar test today? How should we respond?

Using Study Tools

Name two other events which the Bible says happened at Jericho.

#10 “Of Whom the World Was Not Worthy” (Hebrews 11:32-38)

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4) The key to the patience, comfort, and hope of the people of Hebrews 11, who did not live easy or comfortable lives when compared to ours, was faith. That is the key part of our life too (Heb. 11:6).

Analyze the text

v32

Name one occasion when these individuals had great faith (If you do not know an answer from memory, look up the name in a Bible dictionary. It will summarize that person’s life and give you the Scriptures where you can read about that person)

Gideon

Barak

Samson

Jephthah

David

Samuel

v33-38 *who through faith...*

All people who live on earth have problems and suffer. Many people, who cared little or nothing for God, have shown great courage and strength by which they overcame many trials and accomplished amazing things. Even today, people who have severe physical handicaps, by determination and courage, have accomplished more than anyone thought was possible. Through patience and medicine, many people have surprised doctors and overcome illnesses. Soldiers, past and present, have done some amazing things by courage, determination, and strength. We are all amazed by what man can do.

What makes the suffering, endurance, and accomplishments of the people of this chapter unique is that they did them through faith that was based on truth and reality, not man-made religions or human causes. We too will suffer, overcome, and accomplish many things. The key question is---will it be by faith?

From these verses, select THREE things that happened and name someone in the Old Testament who did or experienced it. (for example, from v36 “chains and imprisonment,” Jeremiah endured them in Jer. 20:1-2)

Character Analysis of These of Whom the World Was Not Worthy

Choose any individual that is either named or referred to in verses 32-37 and answer the following questions---

1. What do we know of this person's religious background- either themselves or of those who would have influenced them (parents, siblings, friends, culture, . . .)?

2. Describe one of the experiences in their life which was a test of faith (either something from this chapter or another event)

3. How did they respond to this experience?

4. When do we face a similar test today? How should we respond?

Using Study Tools

Read a commentary on these verses and prepare to tell the class one thing that the commentary pointed out that you found interesting. (When reading a commentary, remember these are simply the words of men, so always compare what you read with what Scripture says)

Hebrews 11:39-12:4 Therefore, We Also . . .

Analyze the text

Chapter 11

v39 *did not receive the promise* What promise?

What is one of the most prominent promises of the Bible, referred to in all these Scriptures? (Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Acts 3:25; 13:23; Rom. 4:13; Gal. 3:8, 29)

Considering the people of Heb. 11, which answer (all, some, none) accurately represents the general number of people who received the promises of Gen. 12:1-3,7 in their lifetime?

- | | | | |
|--|-----|------|------|
| * <i>I will make you a great nation</i> | ALL | SOME | NONE |
| * <i>To your descendants I will give this land</i> | ALL | SOME | NONE |
| * <i>And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed</i> | ALL | SOME | NONE |

v40

What is something the book of Hebrews says is “better” which God has prepared for us?

Through what were the people of the first covenant redeemed? (see Heb. 9:15)

What does the word “perfect” mean in this verse? (use Strong’s Dictionary)

Who has received “the promise” today?

Chapter 12

v1 Who is the “great cloud of witnesses” and who do they surround? _____

lay aside every weight Is it against the rules to wear a heavy backpack while running a race? Of course not, but it would hinder you in the race. Some things, though not sinful, hold us back from growing in the love and knowledge of God. For that reason, they should be set aside.

lay aside... the sin
run with endurance

What does the need for “endurance” tell us about the race we are running?

These witnesses also had to lay aside weights and sins. Choose one of the individuals from Hebrews 11 and name a few specific things they had to lay aside in order to run the race of faith.

v2

looking unto Jesus Use a Bible dictionary (Strong’s, for example), define the word “looking,” and then describe how we can “look unto Jesus” since we cannot see Him.

How did Jesus endure the cross? _____

v3-4

How will *considering Him who endured such hostility from sinners* keep us from being weary and discouraged? _____