

## Hebrews 11:1-40 **Faith Defined & Illustrated – Scriptural Examples of Faith**

### Faith Defined and Illustrated

<sup>1</sup> Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. <sup>2</sup> For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

### Examples of Faith being Exercised in Scriptures

<sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

<sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

<sup>6</sup> But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

<sup>7</sup> By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

<sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; <sup>10</sup> for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

<sup>11</sup> By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. <sup>12</sup> Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude--innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

<sup>13</sup> These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. <sup>14</sup> For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. <sup>15</sup> And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

<sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, <sup>18</sup> of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," <sup>19</sup> concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

<sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

<sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

22 By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

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

24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

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

28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.

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

31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: 33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented-- 38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, 40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

NKJV

Facts Revealed:

**Faith Defined and Illustrated** [[Hebrews 11:1-3](#)]

✚ Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

✧ When a promise is given, it provides the basis for expectation of the fulfillment of the promise in recognizable form.

✧ A promise is only as good as the character of the one making the promise.

✧ The Lord God is totally trustworthy, so any promise He makes is valid and has a certainty about it on which the recipient can fully rely.

✧ We can build our hope on the materialization of God's promises, knowing that all He promised for the times past came true, we can also expect all promises of future events will just as certainly happen as He said.

✧ By faith in God's Word, we believe that the worlds were created by the spoken Word of God as recorded in Scriptures. [[Genesis 1:1-31](#)]

- ✧ We believe that the things which we see are made up of things that are invisible.
- ✧ The atomic structure that makes up all things is invisible to the naked eye but has been proven by scientific technology.

### Examples of Faith being Exercised in Scriptures [\[Hebrews 11:4-40\]](#)

- ✧ The persons of Scriptures mentioned by the writer of Hebrews all serve as examples of people who believed the Word and acted on their faith, thus their faith prompted their works.
  - ✧ The writer expressed earlier that works without faith is dead. [\[Hebrews 4:1-3\]](#)
  - ✧ Now he demonstrates that works are a result of faith at work in us producing righteous works.
  
- ✧ **Abel's** offering was acceptable to God whereas Cain's offering was unacceptable. [\[Genesis 4:2-4\]](#)
  - ✧ Abel understood that the only way for sinful man to approach the Holy God is through the blood of an acceptable substitute, as God had demonstrated in the Garden of Eden by killing a lamb as a covering for the sin of disobedience. Human effort was not acceptable. [\[Genesis 3:1-20\]](#)
- ✧ **Enoch** was the first example of the Rapture of Saints, when God demonstrated His approval by taking Enoch to glory, and the testimony that he pleased God. [\[Genesis 5:21-24\]](#)
  - ✧ **Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.** [\[Hebrews 11:6\]](#)
- ✧ **Noah** believed that God would destroy the world by a flood and save those with Noah in the Ark, because he believed the Word of God who gave him the command. [\[Genesis 6:5 through 8:19\]](#)
  - ✧ Moved by faith, Noah demonstrated his faith by building the Ark over a period of 100 years, in the face of ridicule from the unrighteous people who were to perish in the water.
- ✧ Abraham demonstrated his faith by obeying the command of God and going to the land of Canaan as instructed. [\[Genesis 11:31-32, 12:1-7\]](#)
  - ✧ Here we learn that Abraham and the writer of Hebrews had knowledge and faith to expect from God the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. [\[Hebrews 11:10\]](#)
  - ✧ We today still look forward to the same city known as New Jerusalem as described in the New Covenant for the Saints. [\[Revelation 3:12, 21:1-27, 22:1-5\]](#)
  - ✧ Old Covenant and New Covenant writers also knew about the coming New Heaven and New Earth before the book of Revelation was written. [\[Isaiah 65:17, 66:22, 2 Peter 3:13\]](#)
  - ✧ Sarah was also a person of faith, believing the promise of God to perform a miraculous birth after the age of child-bearing had long passed. The result was an innumerable multitude of descendants. [\[Genesis 18:9-15\]](#)
- ✧ All of these people of example saw the reward in the future, believing the promise of God they held on to their faith to the death, confident that what God had promised, He would be faithful to fulfill.
  - ✧ By their obedience, they demonstrated that they were seeking a homeland not of this world.
  - ✧ If they wanted to return to their native homeland, they had plenty of opportunity to do so.
  - ✧ Their persistence in faith to the end, proved that they desired a better homeland in Heaven.
  - ✧ Because of their faithfulness in trusting God to fulfill His promise, God is not ashamed to be called their God.
  - ✧ God has indeed prepared a city for them and for us.
- ✧ The writer of Hebrews revealed by inspiration, the faith of Abraham, when God commanded him to offer Isaac as a burnt sacrifice on one of the mountains of Moriah. [\[Hebrews 11:17-19, Genesis 22:1-19\]](#)
  - ✧ The Lord God had said of Isaac, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." [\[Genesis 17:19, 21, 21:12\]](#)

- ✧ Abraham reasoned that since God had promised a multitude of descendants through Isaac, then God would have to raise Isaac from the dead after the sacrifice was completed according to the command of God.
- ✧ We did not see this reasoning in the story in Genesis, but it is revealed fresh for us here as Paul writes by inspiration of God to enlighten us.
- † **Isaac, Jacob, Joseph**, all acted in faith, believing God. [Hebrews 11:20-22]
- † **Moses** made many major choices proving his faith:
  - ✧ His parents acted in faith entrusting him to God placing him in the ark among the reeds of the river.
  - ✧ Moses gave up his royal heritage as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin.
  - ✧ Moses looking for the reward from God, counted the reproach of Christ of greater value than the treasures of Egypt (God gave him insights into the coming Savior). [Deuteronomy 18:15-19, Acts 3:22-26, 7:37]
  - ✧ Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of Pharaoh, continued faithful in faith as seeing the invisible God of Creation. He literally saw God on the mountain. [Exodus 24:9-11]
  - ✧ In faith Moses kept the Passover sprinkling the blood according to God's command, to protect the firstborn from the destroyer sent to destroy the firstborn of Egypt. [Exodus 12:1-51]
  - ✧ By faith the Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea on dry ground, where the Egyptians were drowned attempting to follow them. [Exodus 14:1-31]
- † By faith the **Children of Israel** marched around the walls of Jericho according to the Word of God, and the walls fell down before them. [Joshua 6:1-21]
- † By faith **Rahab** the harlot protected the spies sent by Joshua and did not perish with Jericho when it was concurred. [Joshua 2:1-24, 6:22-25]
  
- † Then the writer of Hebrews grouped a multitude of Saints and mentioned their exploits and commitment to God. [Hebrews 11:32-39]
- † **Gideon** [Judges 6:11 through 8:21]
- † **Barak** [Judges 4:1-24]
- † **Samson** [Judges 13:1 through 16:31]
- † **Jephthah** [Judges 10:6 through 12:7]
- † **David** [1 Samuel 16:1 through 1 Kings 2:11]
- † **Samuel** [1 Samuel 1:1 through 28:25]
  - ✧ And the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.
  - ✧ Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.
  - ✧ Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.
  - ✧ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword.
  - ✧ They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented-- of whom the world was not worthy.
  - ✧ They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.
- † And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise.
- † God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. [Hebrews 11:40]

- ✠ They all demonstrated by their works the depth of their faith. Faith that is acceptable to God is faith that is made manifest by the lives of the believers possessing that faith.
- ✠ They were all strengthened by the knowledge of the reward laid up in store for them in Heaven to be received when the Lord returns and His rewards are with Him. [\[Isaiah 40:10, 62:11, Matthew 25:27, 31-46, Luke 19:23, 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 3:12-13, 1 John 2:28, Revelation 22:12\]](#)