

# THE HALL OF FAITH WHAT MATTERS

BY FAITH ... ABEL, ENOCH, NOAH, ABRAHAM,  
SARAH, ISAAC, JACOB, JOSEPH, MOSES, RAHAB,  
GIDEON, BARAK, SAMSON, JEPHTHAH, DAVID, SAMUEL,  
THE PROPHETS AND OTHERS ...



WE BELIEVED GOD

WE WALKED WORTHY

WE DIED IN FAITH

... WE ARE NOT OF THOSE WHO SHRINK BACK TO DESTRUCTION, BUT OF THOSE WHO HAVE FAITH ...

(HEBREWS 10:39 LSB)

## 1. By faith we do not shrink back but continue to believe God to the very end and forever, 10:39.

A. True faith believes God in everything and does not shrink back but continues believing God forever.

This is the conundrum ... the life of faith is not just a this-worldly phenomenon. It stretches beyond our earthly existence into the next. [Osborne, G. R., & Guthrie, G. H. (2021). *Hebrews: Verse by Verse* (p. 263). Lexham Press.]

- (Hebrews 10:39 LSB) But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.
- (1 John 3:23 ESV) And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

B. True faith assures us of our hope in God's unseen purpose and his approval of our lives.

- (Hebrews 11:1–2 LSB) 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.

C. By faith we please God and draw near to him.

- (Hebrews 11:6 LSB) And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who draws near to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

D. By faith we die in faith while joyfully welcoming and embracing the promises even though having yet to receive them.

- (Hebrews 11:13 LSB) 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.

**11:13 welcome ... [aspazomai]** ... to draw to one's self; to greet, wish well to; to receive joyfully; greeting one another not merely by a slight gesture and a few words, but generally by embracing and kissing.

## 2. The writer of Hebrews uses the phrase "by faith" eighteen times in Hebrews eleven stressing its relevance, importance and significance to us.

A. Faith ... [pistis] ... is belief, trust, strong confidence in and reliance upon; conviction of the truth; believe to a complete trust.

B. The people mentioned in Hebrews 11 had entered God's rest by faith in Jesus Christ.

- (Hebrews 4:2–3a ESV) For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. 3 For we who have believed enter that rest.

C. And they continued by faith, not shrinking back.

- (Hebrews 10:38–39 LSB) 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.

D. By faith ... Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, the prophets and others ... believed, trusted, relied upon and had strong confidence in God.

## 3. By faith we trust in and rely upon God for impossible victories, 11:30.

A. The people believed that Yahweh would give the city into their hand and obeyed his instructions, 11:30.

- (Hebrews 11:30 LSB) By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. [c. 1400 BC]
- (Joshua 6:1–2 LSB) Now Jericho was tightly shut because of the sons of Israel; no one went out, and no one came in. 2 And Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and the valiant warriors."

B. Yahweh promised victory and Israel believed and obeyed and the walls of Jericho fell.

## 4. By faith Rahab knew and believed Yahweh, 11:31.

A. From our very limited human perspective Rahab, being a prostitute and a pagan, was a very unlikely candidate to become a person of faith.

- (James 2:25 LSB) And in the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?
- (Matthew 21:32a LSB) ... John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him.

B. Possibly even more unlikely was Rahab becoming part of the family ancestry of the Lord Jesus Christ as observed in Matthew's genealogy.

- (Matthew 1:5 LSB) And Salmon was the father

of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed was the father of Jesse.

That her [Rahab's] faith was genuine is confirmed by Matthew when he lists her as one of the ancestors of Jesus. She went on to marry Salmon and became the mother of Boaz, and thus the great-grandmother of David. [Stedman, R. C. (1992). *Hebrews* (Heb 11:30-31). IVP Academic.]

C. Rahab obeyed the truth that was revealed to her, much as Abram did when he was called as a pagan from Ur of the Chaldeans.

- (Hebrews 11:31 LSB) By faith **Rahab the harlot** did not perish **along with those who were disobedient**, after welcoming the spies in peace.

By describing the other citizens of Jericho as “those who were disobedient” the pastor indicates that Rahab’s accepting the spies was an act of obedience to God’s word. [Cockerill, G. L. (2012). *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (pp. 584-585). William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.]

D. Rahab helped the spies escape because she knew that God had given them the land.

Rahab received and acted upon the truth that was revealed to her regarding the nature and character of Yahweh and as a consequence she came to know him as God in heaven above and on earth below.

E. Rahab had such faith regarding the power and purpose of Yahweh that she “knew” that Yahweh had given them the land.

- (Joshua 2:8-14 LSB) Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof 9 and said to the men, “**I know that Yahweh 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. 10 For we have heard how Yahweh 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 devoted to destruction. 11 Indeed we heard it, and our hearts melted, and a courageous spirit no longer rose up in any man because of you; **for Yahweh your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath**. 12 So now, please swear to me by Yahweh, since I have shown

lovingkindness to you, **that you also will show lovingkindness to my father’s household and give me a pledge of truth**, 13 and preserve my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters alive, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.” 14 So the men said to her, “Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it will be when Yahweh gives us the land that we will show lovingkindness and truth to you.”

F. Rahab knew that Yahweh is God in heaven above and on earth below and so threw herself and the fate of her family on the lovingkindness of God.

- (Deuteronomy 4:39 LSB) **Know therefore today, and take it to your heart**, that Yahweh, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other.

### 5. By faith we fight temporal battles in view of eternal outcomes, 11:32-38.

A. The writer of Hebrews states that time would be insufficient to recount the daring feats and heroic acts of those who prevailed over this world by faith—by believing God.

B. All our battles of faith are to be fought, not in view of what is seen, but in view of the unseen—the eternal.

- (2 Corinthians 4:17-18 LSB) For **our momentary, light affliction is working out for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison**, 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**.

C. Some deeds of faith are perceptible (outward and visible) in the seen, temporal realm.

Historical context ... The period of the judges was approximately 1350-1050 BC.

- (Hebrews 11:32-35a LSB) And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I recount Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, as well as David and Samuel and the prophets, 33 **who through faith** conquered kingdoms, performed righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the power of fire, **escaped the edge of the sword**, were made strong from weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35 Women received back their dead by resurrection.

**D. Other deeds of faith are perceptible and understood only in the context of eternity.**

- (Hebrews 11:35b–38 LSB) **And others** were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; 36 **and others** experienced mockings and floggings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. 37 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, mistreated 38 **(of whom the world was not worthy)**, wandering in desolate places and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

**E. What matters is not the visible, temporal effect or perception but the eternal result.**

**F. The world is not worthy of those who by faith walk worthy of God and the kingdom of God.**

**G. It is by God's providence that some "escaped the edge of the sword" (11:34) and others "were put to death with the sword" (11:37).**

**H. The person of faith walks worthy of his calling.**

- (Ephesians 4:1 LSB) Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, **exhort you to walk worthy of the calling with which you have been called**.

**I. The person of faith walks worthy of the gospel.**

- (Philippians 1:27 LSB) **Only live your lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ**, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear about your circumstances, **that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind contending together for the faith of the gospel**.

**J. The person of faith walks worthy of the Lord.**

- (Colossians 1:9–10a LSB) For this reason also, since the day we heard, **we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding**, 10 **so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord**.

**K. The person of faith walks worthy of God and his kingdom and glory.**

- (1 Thessalonians 2:11–12 LSB) Just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and bearing witness to each one of you as a father would his own children, 12 **so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory**.

**6. By faith we wait together with the faithful men and women of old for something better, 11:39-40.**

- (Hebrews 11:39–40 ESV) And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, 40 **since God had provided something better for us**, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.
- A. The saints of all ages—both old and new testaments—will one day will receive everything God has promised to us.**
- (Hebrews 11:6 LSB) **And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who draws near to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him**.
- B. ... And even more if we were to think on the incomparable, abundant nature of the spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ.**
- (Ephesians 1:3 LSB) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ**.
- C. What is promised is more than worth the wait—the glory that will be revealed to us.**
- (Romans 8:18 LSB) 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**.
  - (2 Corinthians 4:17 LSB) For our momentary, light affliction is working out **for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison**.
  - (1 Peter 4:13 ESV) But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, **that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed**.