

**The Book of Hebrews
Session Ten
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Recommended reading: Great Cloud of Witnesses, by E.W. Bullinger

Chapter 11

This great chapter sums up the Old Testament from Abel to Jesus Christ. It shows the relationship of hope and believing. Verses 1-3 define believing. Verses 4-40 show the efficacy of believing as demonstrated by the examples of Old Testament believers. 12:1, 2 exhort to believe.

Verse 1 – “Now” – believing pertains to what is available now. “faith” – *pistis* – receiving information as true and correct, and if action is instructed, doing it. “substance” – title deed; proof of ownership. “hoped for” – the word hope is used in all texts. Hope is for future realities not available now. The great “things hoped for” pertain to the comings of Christ. “evidence” – proof, test that brings a satisfying conviction to one’s mind. “things not seen” – II Corinthians 5:7. Romans 10:17 – God informs us by His Word what to believe. As we believe it, God brings His promise(s) to pass. We prove to ourselves that God is faithful to His Word and that “things hoped for” will, in the future, come to pass.

Verse 2 – “obtained a good report” is the verb form of “witnesses” in 12:1. Also used in verse 39. By believing, the elders had witness borne to them by God and became witnesses for Him.

Verse 3 – “worlds” – ages, periods of time administered by God. “framed” – prepared, fully equipped as used in Ephesians 4:12 “perfecting.” Each of the seven biblical administrations in human history is prepared by the Word of God. By believing the Word we have heard, we understand this. That which we see did not come out of that which is visible.

**Verse 4 – both Cain and Able offered sacrifices to God. Genesis 4:1-15. Cain’s was of the “fruit of the ground.” Abel’s was of “his flock” ... the firstlings and fat thereof”signifying the best. God had respect unto Abel’s sacrifice. God had instructed both Cain and Abel about what to offer and how to offer it. (Romans 10:17)
Genesis 3:21 – The “coats of skins” would have included the shedding of animals’ blood.
Genesis 4:7 – “sin” – sin offering. God offers forgiveness to Cain, a way back to Him, with a blood sacrifice. Hebrews 12:24 – The blood of Jesus Christ is superior to the animal blood offering that Abel made.**

Verse 5 – Enoch walked with God (Genesis 5:22-24) in the midst of a very dark, ungodly time and prophesied of coming judgement (Jude 14, 15).

Verse 6 – believing God is how we please Him. Romans 14:23 – if not of believing, it is sin. “that he is” God and “is” – becomes. “diligently seek” our part is to seek His will. Find the promise, get the guidance needed.

Verse 7 – Noah: “things not seen yet” – rain! Genesis 2:5,6. “a preacher of righteousness” in ungodly times (II Peter 2:5) “saved” – physically the human race, like Jesus Christ has saved mankind spiritually and eternally (I Peter 3:20, 21).

Verse 8 – Abraham “obeyed” – to hear under, to receive instructions from a superior by listening attentively and then carrying them out. He didn’t understand everything, but that which he heard from God, he obeyed.

Verse 9 – “tabernacles” – tents, temporary moveable dwellings. A tent has no foundation.

Verse 10 – “city” – first of four uses in Hebrews (here, 11:16, 12:22, 13:14), which all refer to the hope. Abraham and other Old Testament believers looked to Christ’s first and second comings.

Verse 11 – Sarah judged God to be faithful to His promises.

Verse 12 – God fulfilled His promise to Abraham “against hope” of the senses. He made Abe and Sarah alive reproductively. Romans 4:16-21.

Verses 13-16 – “the promises” – concerning Christ, the hope. They lived in light of the hope and did not get entangled with the affairs of this life. Second use of “city” in 11:13.

Verses 17-19 – Abraham had heard from God. He obeyed God. What was the profit? Great teaching and learning about the coming Messiah: - Abraham offered his only begotten son, foreshadowing God offering His only begotten son. – God provided a substitute sacrifice in the ram. – This occurred on Mount Moriah, which is Jerusalem, the place of Christ’s crucifixion. – Most notably, Abraham believed concerning the resurrection!

Verse 20 – Isaac heard from God to bless Jacob, the younger, though he, according to the flesh, wanted to bless the elder, Esau. Esau sold his birthright for a “mess of pottage.” Isaac wanted to bless Esau for a mess of “venison.” He overcame the flesh by believing.

Verse 21 – Joseph desired Jacob to bless his first born, Manasseh, so he positioned him so that Jacob’s right hand would be placed on Manasseh’s head. Jacob could not see well, but saw by revelation and crossed his hands. He blessed both, and each became a separate tribe. His believing overcame the will of man, that of his beloved son, Joseph.

Verse 22 – After his long and most eventful life, look what is mentioned of Joseph! “departing” – the exodus, which was originally spoken to Abraham in Genesis 15:13, 14. Genesis 50:24, 25 – these things will surely occur. This exodus happened approximately a hundred years after Joseph’s death. Genesis 48:21, 22- spoken by Israel to Joseph. “his bones” – buried in hope of the resurrection.

Verse 23 – the believing of Moses’ parents. “not afraid” – fear is the enemy of believing.

Verse 24-29 - Moses did this in the light of the coming Christ. “not fearing the king” (Pharaoh) – no fear in believing.

Verse 30 – Jericho – the children of Israel marched around the city seven days and blew horns! What a battle plan!! Joshua 6.

Verse 33 - “stopped” lions’ mouths – Daniel 6.

Verse 34 – “quenched the violence of fire”– Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Daniel 3. Recommended children’s book: The King’s Degree and The Brave Three, available at jaceyverdicchio.com

Verse 35 – the “better resurrection” is of the justified Old Testament believers unto life. John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; Revelation 20:11-15.

Verses 35-38 - endured persecution, believing God in light of the future promises of the coming Messiah. These Hebrew Christians were experiencing persecution. Hebrews 10:32-34.

Verse 39 – “good report” – same as verse 2. These all died prior to Christ’s coming and the New Covenant being available.

Verse 40 – “some better thing” – the New Covenant of the spirit, resulting from Christ’s accomplishments. “perfect” – complete, total, the full end to which it is intended

Believing concerning Jesus Christ is how we have entered into the New Covenant. It is not by works of righteousness. We walk by the spirit by believing God’s Word. Our eternal rewards are earned by believing.

Consider the awesome things that come from believing God!