HEBREWS CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. **The Description of Faith**
   1. **Introduction**:

Hebrews Chapter Eleven is one of the great chapters in the Bible. It is known as *God's Great Hall of Fame*. Men and women who have *believed* God down through the ages are listed as being great men and women of God. The Master key to greatness with God is faith; the person who truly believes God is *great* in the eyes of God. The key to any of us being great in the eyes of God is faith, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ God’s Son. The first part of this great chapter gives us an overall study of faith. It is the *description of faith*.

* + 1. What does faith mean? An absolute trust in God’s Word.

pistiv pis'-tis **Persuasion**, credence; moral conviction (of truth, or the truthfulness of God, especially reliance upon Christ for salvation; constancy in profession; (Gospel) truth; **saying what God says**. assurance, belief, fidelity.

The Bible defines faith as substance and evidence. Time and time again, the Bible discusses faith and the great importance of faith. The Bible tells us that we must have faith—we must believe God—and it tells us the great things that happen to those who do believe God. The Bible also gives example after example of men and women who have and have not believed God and shows in clear terms what happened to them because of their unbelief. It is important that we clearly see just what faith means.

Hebrews 11:1—*Now faith is the* ***substance*** *of things hoped for, the* ***evidence*** *of things not seen.*

Romans 4:19—*And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:*

20 *–He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*

21*—And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

* Faith appropriates the Promise, makes the unseen seen.
* Faith trusts in God’s Word that is revealed in the Spirit even though unseen. It is not trust in the unknown, for we know by faith what we cannot see with the eye.
* Faith apprehends as a real fact what is not revealed to the senses. It rests on the fact, acts upon it, and is upheld by it in the face of all that seems to contradict it.
* Faith is a real seeing in the Spirit of that which not seen by the physical eye.
* Faith is substance, evidence, the foundation, title deed, the assurance of things hoped for.
* Faith and hope go together; and the same things that are the object of our hope are the object of our faith.
* Faith is persuasion and expectation that God will perform all that He has promised to us in Christ; and persuasion is so strong that it gives the soul the possession of those things.

1Peter 1:8—*Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:*

Eph 3:17—*That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,*

18*—May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;*

19*—And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

**"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"**

The word "substance" (*hupostasis*) means the foundation, assurance, title-deed, and guarantee of things hoped for. The word "evidence" (*elegchos*) means conviction.

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

Faith is described as an act of the mind and heart to believe with assurance and conviction that the promise is true.

"substance" (*hupostasis*) to mean *real being, substantial nature, the real nature of a thing*.

Faith is more than an act. Faith is the *actual possession* of reality. It is the "title-deed"

The person who holds the title-deed to property actually *possesses* the property.

Faith possesses the promises; He has already seated us in heavenly places, and we already possess eternal life. It is not that we are going to possess it; we already possess it.

Holding the title-deed to property and possessing something is more than assurance and conviction. It is possessing reality, actually holding something that is substantial and real.

Faith is possessing the substance of the promises of God, the evidence of things not seen.

If I possess them, the substance is there; the evidence is there.

The fact that I already possess them, are my assurance and conviction.

The fact that I already possess eternal life, is the basis of my assurance, conviction and understanding that I don’t have to taste or experience death.

Faith is the substance, the actual possession, of things hoped for, the evidence and reality of things not seen. It is *both an act and a possession* of the thing believed.

It is believing and trusting in that which actually exists—in that which we can possess.

We can possess it now; we can actually possess the very substance of it by believing and entrusting our lives to it.

Faith is *trusting and possessing* all that God is and says.

Faith is *believing and possessing* all that God is and says.

Faith is *having confidence in and possessing* all that God is and says.

Faith is *hoping for something and possessing it* because God is (He exists) and has promised it.

* Biblical faith is not;
  + "I think so, I hope so."
  + "It may be so; it may not be so."
  + "It might be true; it might not be true."
* Biblical faith does not deal with what is unreal, imaginary, fanciful, visionary, superficial, or deceptive.
* Biblical faith is the knowledge, experience, and possession of things hoped for.
* Biblical faith deals only with truth and reality. It is...

•  knowing what is real.

•  experiencing what is real.

•  possessing what is real.

* + 1. The Reward of faith. What is the reward of faith? God's approval, God’s blessing.

God is pleased, when we believe Him and His promises.

The elders, great men of God who lived in the past, believed God and followed God. They turned away from the world and its possessions and pleasures and followed God.

They believed God had much more to offer and His promises of an eternal land and of eternal life were true. Therefore they staked their lives, all they were and had, upon that hope. And their faith in God pleased God to no end. Therefore, God accepted their faith and has honored them because of it. He has, of course, honored them by recording their faith in His Word and using their example as a challenge to believers of every generation. But God has also honored them by fulfilling their faith; God has taken them on home to be with Him.

The reward of faith is God's approval, He accepts us into His eternal presence.

This simply means that God looks after and cares for us, giving us victory over all the enemies of this world—including death—and He does it for eternity.

The approval of God means that God fulfills all His promises to us.

The promises of God become a living reality in our experiences, both daily and eternally.

* + 1. **Faith—Creation**: the basic understanding of faith is that God made the world. "understanding" (*noeō*).
* It means to perceive with the mind, to understand, to know a true fact. Faith is more than an assumption—it is an understanding, a true fact, the very basic fact that God created the world.

This understanding is based upon four things: 1. Looking, observing, and studying the world and thinking about its origin, purpose, and end. 2. Looking, observing, and studying The Bible, the Word of God, the written revelation of God. 3. Looking unto The Lord Jesus Christ, the living revelation of God. 4. The Holy Spirit bears witness that Jesus Christ and the Word of God are true. He guarantees, bears witness that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that the promises and teachings of God's Word are true.

The Christian has four strong sources that show the origin, purpose, and end of all things; and all four are undeniable. How can anyone say that these witnesses are undeniable?

* We can look and observe the world. The world is real; it is truth. The world does exist.
* We can look and observe the Bible, its teachings and promises at work in human lives, The Word of God is truth; it is absolutely true that it exists and works in human lives just as it claims.
* We can know the Lord Jesus Christ through a study of the records of His life. He lived, and the fact that He lived is truth. But we can also see that the very things He claimed are at work in human lives. Jesus Christ can be studied and known in the lives of those who truly believe and follow Him.
* We can know and see the work of the Holy Spirit in life of the obedient.

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| **When a believer looks at the facts of the origin of the world, he sees...** | **When an unbeliever looks at the theories of the origin of the world, he sees...** |
| 1.  God | 1.  Nothing—absolutely nothing |
| 2.  God's Word—God willed and spoke | 2.  Nothing—absolutely nothing |
| 3.  Matter appeared, the worlds were created by God's Word | 3.  Matter appeared; some gas or force formed out of absolutely nothing |
| 4.  The things seen were made by God | 4.  The things seen were made by just appearing out of absolutely nothing |

The Supreme God Himself, created the world. The heavens declare the glory of God. The Bible, the Word of God, says that God made the world. Jesus Christ says that God made the world. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the believer's heart that God is the Creator.

The believer understands God is; The Eternal God exists. and that He has created the world. God is the giver of life. God gave breath to man and life to His world. He made seen and unseen.

By faith we understand much more of the formation of the world than ever could be understood by the naked eye or natural reasoning that are so limited.

The world is not eternal, nor did it produce itself, but was made by God. He made the world with great exactness; it was framed by the Word of God. God made the world by his word, by his eternal wisdom, by His eternal Son, and by his active will, saying, Let it be done, and it was done.

Psalm 33:6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. 9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

It is an act of faith to believe that God made this world.

The things which are seen were made from the things which are not seen.

God did not work with existing material; God created the world from nothing.

God is in control. We believe that God is the creator of this world then comes the faith and the hope which enable us to do the most difficult things in the world.

**4.** Faith is the message of the glorious gospel, the glorious hope that God has given from the beginning of time. The power of faith is twofold and is given in the most meaningful way possible, by showing how the power takes effect in the lives of believers.

Heb 11:4 “**By faith Abel** offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain”

1.  Faith has the power, the glorious privilege of being counted righteous by God

a. Abel believed and was counted righteous by approaching and worshipping God

exactly like He says, by a blood sacrifice.

When Adam and Eve sinned, they became aware of their nakedness. Nakedness is a symbol of being aware and conscious of sin. God made for them clothing to cover their nakedness. It was coats of skins from animals, a symbol that sin had to be covered by the shedding of blood.

This symbol pointed to the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son that had to be shed in order to cover the sins of men.

God laid it down that sin and guilt of man had to be borne by a substitute. Man had to die for his own sins or else a substitute had to be sacrificed for his sins. Adam and Eve taught this to their children.

Abel believed God and approached and worshipped God exactly as God said: through a blood sacrifice. But Cain did not believe God. He did not accept God's Word; he did not approach God through a blood sacrifice. He made an earthly sacrifice and bloodless offering to God: he approached God through the efforts and fruits of human works, the fruit borne of the earth, the fruit borne by his own hands.

Abel recognized that he was sinful and imperfect and that he could never be acceptable to God who is perfect and holy, not until his sins and their guilt had been paid for and removed. Abel knew that his sins had to be removed and that he had to be counted righteous before he could ever be accepted by God. Therefore, he believed God would count him righteous if he let another bear his sins for him.

This is the power of faith: faith gives us the power to be counted righteous.

Cain thought to approach God; he was religious. But his religion was a formal religion of ritual, form, and ceremony of personal sacrifice and works, of doing good and even of sacrificing in order to do right, a religion of man, of his own choosing, of his own ideas and imaginations as to how he was to approach God.

Make sure you worship God through His own Son who died for our sins.

Heb 11:5 “**By faith Enoch** was translated…he had this testimony, that he pleased God”

2.  Faith has the power to give us a day by day walk with God and to deliver us from death. These are glorious gifts given; the presence and power of God as we walk with God and eternal deliverance from death.

Enoch believed God, He believed that if he walked and fellowshipped with God day by day then God would look after and care for him. Therefore Enoch walked with God and God looked after and cared for him. God even conquered death for Enoch. When Enoch was ready to go home to God, God translated him right into heaven, right into God's very own presence. Enoch experienced the promise that is made to every obedient believer that we should never taste death.

It is the person who truly lives righteous and believes to diligently seek God who grows in faith.

Faith must be exercised, as faith is in operation God is working.

**5.** **Faith in the Existence of God**: This is one of the great verses of Scripture, a verse that should be memorized and held within the heart of every believer,

Hebrews 11:6—*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*.

1. It is impossible to please God without faith. By a living, active faith, a faith that knows and follows God, communes and fellowships with God

The person will never be acceptable to God nor accepted by God. Without faith, a person has to plow through this life all alone and handle all the trials, temptations, sufferings, accidents, diseases, and death by himself. Without faith, a person stands all alone in this world—utterly without God. It is impossible for him to please God.

b. He that comes to God must believe two things.

1. He *must believe* that God is. The words "must believe" (*pisteusai dei*) mean absolutely necessary and essential.

2. He must believe that God rewards those who diligently seek Him. "diligently" (*ekzētousin*). It means to *seek God*; diligently seek to know Him and to obey Him.

God does not reward the lukewarm, complacent, uninterested, worldly-minded, pleasure seeker. God rewards those who diligently seek to know and follow Him. We must be diligent and endure to the end. The very same reward given to Enoch can be ours. Righteousness unto Holiness in this life and deliverance from death unto eternal life.

 Heb 11:7 **By faith Noah**, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. {moved...: or, being wary}