

Jan 07, 2024



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Faith and Righteousness Heb 11:1-4, 7-8, 17-18, 20-23, 32, 39-40

Lesson Background and Introduction

When reading a text, it's always a good idea to know the purpose for which it was written. The natural approach is to look for a clear purpose statement, such as in Luke 1:3-4 and John 20:30-31. The book of Hebrews, however, has no such statement. So the book's purpose must be inferred from its contents. The extended comparisons and contrasts of Jesus with Old Testament personalities, the Levitical priesthood, angels, etc., signify the purpose being to encourage wavering and persecuted Christians of Jewish background to stand firm in Christ and not retreat into Judaism. Beyond this relatively certain conclusion, there is no consensus about who wrote this book or when. Regarding the date of writing, we have some certainty that the book cannot have been written after AD 96 because Clement of Rome seems to quote from it up to four times while writing his epistle to the Corinthian church. The book of Hebrews also discusses the worship within the temple as though such a structure were still in existence, so a date prior to the temple's destruction in AD 70 is likely. Questions of authorship, date, and provenance aside, what is clear from the contents of Hebrews is that the addressees were in danger of giving up due to their suffering for having faith in Christ (Hebrews 10:32-39). Today's study begins immediately after that danger is addressed.

The writer of Hebrews selected some very faithful people as examples, people who also had some significant imperfections. We are to walk faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7), and this should be easier for us than for the Old Testament luminaries. They lived with only a promise and a hope, while we live with the cross and resurrection as accomplished facts (1 Peter 1:12). But although we are privileged to see much more of God's plan fulfilled, some promises remain to be fulfilled—a resurrection body, a new heavens, a new earth, etc. Many times we must make decisions without being able to see their results. A faith-based decision is based on believing the promises of God and determining to do what God has called you to do, regardless of how it might look in your eyes or the eyes of others. May the Holy Spirit empower us to do so!

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

May God help us cultivate a hunger for His righteousness here on earth. As we seek justice His way and in His power, the Bible says we'll be satisfied

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Give me a hunger for justice, God. Help me be a part of Your work in doing what's right

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled

(Matt 5:6 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Jan 16, 2023)

Series: Faith that Pleases God

UNIT 2: Learning About Faith

NEXT WEEK

Faith and Trust
(Prov 3:1-8)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Faith Defined (Heb 11:1-3)

Elements of Faith (1-2)

- Belief (Heb 10:39)
- Confidence (Heb 3:14)
- Hopefulness (Heb 10:23)
- Love (Gal 5:6)
- Assurance of forgiveness (Heb 10:22)
- Genuineness (1 Peter 1:7)
- Trust in God's faithfulness (Heb 6:18-20)

Faith and understanding (3)

- Understanding through the creation of the universe (Rom 1:20)
- Understanding that salvation near (Rom 13:11)
- Understanding through God's Word (Rom 15:21)
- Understanding through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:12)
- Understanding that now is in part, but in full when Jesus comes (2 Cor 1:13-14)
- Understanding of God's Will (Eph 5:17)
- Understanding of and through Jesus (1 John 5:20)

Faith Lived Out (Heb 11:4, 7-8, 17-18, 20-23, 32)

Abel (4)

- His acceptable offering (Gen 4:4)
- His blood compared to Jesus (Heb 12:24)

Noah (7)

- His obedience (Gen 6:22)
- His righteousness (Gen 7:1)

Abraham (8, 17)

- His faithfulness (Neh 9:7-8)
- His Seed will bless all the nations (Gen 22:15-18)

Isaac (18, 20)

- His promised birth (Gen 21:1-4)
- His blessing of Jacob instead of Esau (Gen 27:26-29)

Jacob (21)

- His destiny to be over Esau (Gen 25:21-26)
- His blessing of Joseph's sons (Gen 48:3-5)

Joseph (22)

- His proclamation of God's plan (Gen 45:3-7)
- His dying request (Gen 50:24-25)

Moses (23)

- His preservation (Exodus 2:1-5)
- His body disputed over (Jude 9)

Promises Because of Faith (Heb 11:39-40)

Promises not revealed or fulfilled until Jesus (39)

- Promises that would be seen and heard (Luke 10:23-24)
- Promises concerning salvation (1 Peter 1:10-12)
- Promises fulfilled through Jesus (2 Cor 1:20)
- Promises to Abraham (Gal 3:16-18)

Promises of perfection (40)

- Perfection through a better hope (Heb 7:19)
- Perfection through a superior covenant (Heb 8:6)
- Perfection through Jesus blood (Rom 3:25-26)
- Perfection through imputed righteousness (Heb 12:22-23)
- Perfection through justification (Gal 3:23-25)