



# LIVING BY FAITH

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## Lesson 1

# THE PROMISES OF FAITH

## NOTE TO THE TEACHER

The letter to the Hebrews was written for two reasons:

1. To confirm Hebrew Christians in their faith in Christ—the One who is better than Old Testament people, things, and ceremonies.
2. To comfort them, by reminding them that the life of faith has always been a life of suffering.

Hebrews 11, which is the subject of our study in this volume, perfectly fits these two purposes of the Epistle. It teaches that all the men and women mentioned had faith. Therefore, they pleased God. Each believed what God said and acted upon it. So they accomplished great things for God. But all of them suffered

for their faith. They were often lonely. They were misunderstood. Some were hated. Some were hungry. Many were persecuted. Some were put to death. The way of faith was never easy. God never promised it would be.

Not all of those mentioned in the 11th chapter of Hebrews lived perfectly. They were human—just as we are. However God does not record their failures. He mentions only their faith. So as you teach these lessons, do not give the impression that these people were superhuman. They were special only because of their faith and trust in God. They believed God would keep His promises because He is faithful.

**Scripture to be studied:** Hebrews 10:38; 11:1-3, 8-19; Romans 4:1-5; Genesis 12:1-9; 15:1-6; 17:15-19; 18:1-22; 21:1-8; 22:1-17

**The aim of the lesson:** To teach that God is faithful to His promises, and He deserves all our trust.

**What your students should know:** Believers are in right standing with God when they trust in His Son.

**What your students should feel:** Confidence in the power of God to keep His promises.

**What your students should do:**

**Unsaved:** By faith, receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.

**Saved:** Be willing to do whatever God commands them to do this week.

**Lesson outline (for the teacher's and students' notebooks):**

1. By faith Abraham obeyed God's command (Hebrews 11:8-10; Genesis 12:1-9).
2. Abraham believed God's promises (Hebrews 11:11; Genesis 15:1-6; 17:15-19).
3. Abraham trusted God's power (Hebrews 11:12; Genesis 21:1-8).
4. Abraham passed the test of faith (Hebrews 11:17-19; Genesis 22:1-17).

**The verse to be memorized:**

*Without faith it is impossible to please [God].*  
(Hebrews 11:6a)

## THE LESSON

Let us suppose it is an extremely hot day. You have been mountain climbing. Your feet ache. Your heart is pounding. Your mouth and lips are so dry you can scarcely speak. You sink to the earth, wishing only for a sip of something cool. At that moment a friend hands you a glass of cold, sparkling water. "Have some water," he says. And you have your wish! You lift the glass to your lips, open your mouth—and immediately close it again.

Turning to your friend you ask, "Are you sure this is water?"

"Yes, I certainly am," he replies. "I brought it along in a canteen." (*Teacher:* Name the kind of container in which your people carry water.)

You drool and look at the water longingly, saying, "It looks like water. You say it really is water. Oh, if only I could feel it is water."

Before you will ever drink that water, what must you have? (*Teacher:* Try to lead your students to the correct answer: *faith*.)

Is it hard for you to understand what faith is? That is because faith is not something you can show to someone. You can show a ball or a bowl of rice. But you cannot say, "Here on the table is my faith." Faith is not a thing. It is believing what we cannot see.

Why is it necessary to understand what faith is? Because God says in Hebrews that to please Him, we must have faith. (See Hebrews 11:6.) God knew we would need help to have an understanding of faith. So He has recorded in His Word the experiences of those who had faith. Many of these people are mentioned in Hebrews 11. One of them, Abraham, lived long,