



**By Faith**

A Students International Devotional Study  
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Layout by Andrea Shirley

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All Scripture passages are taken from the NLT unless otherwise noted.

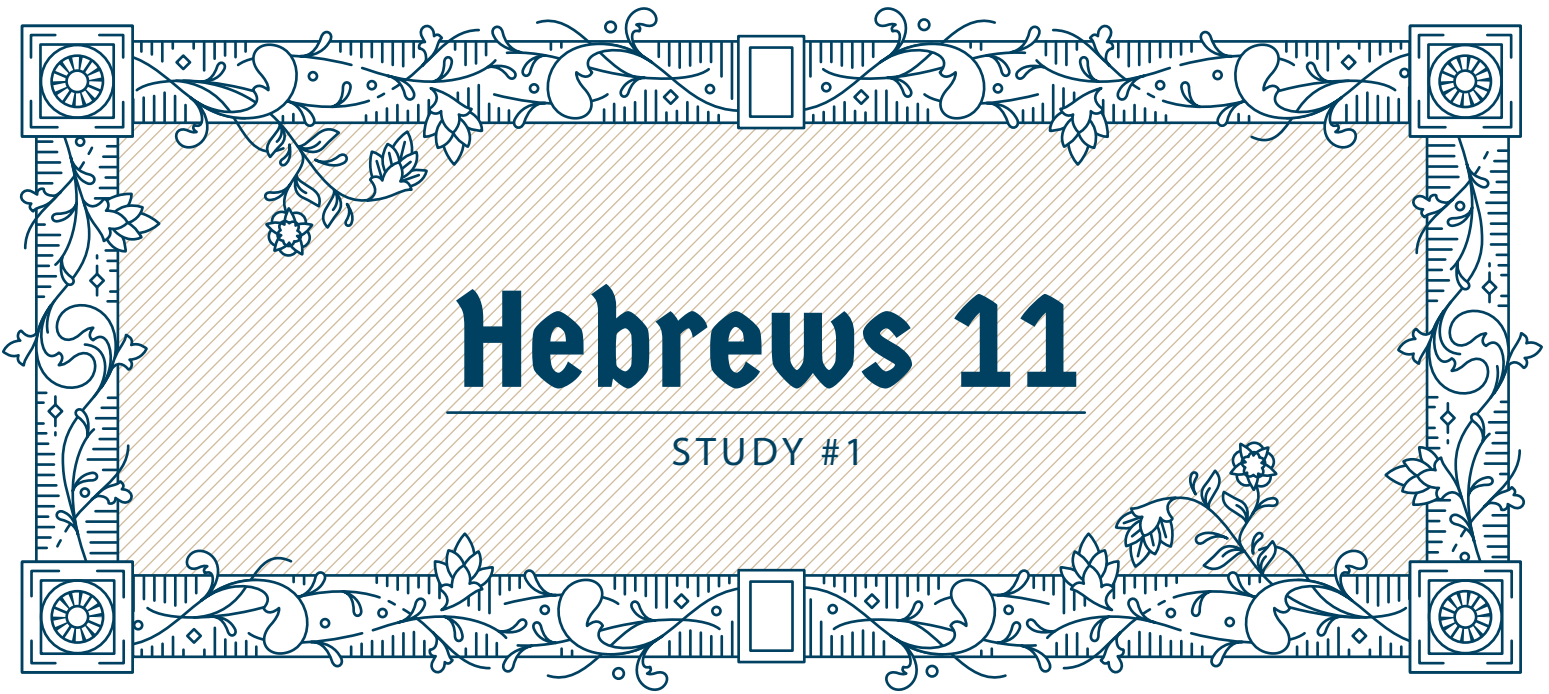
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# By Faith

**A Study of Hebrews 11**



# Hebrews 11

## STUDY #1

**T**he book of Hebrews was written to believers who had begun to question their faith. It had been thirty-five years since the death and resurrection of Jesus. They had suffered severe, prolonged persecution. Jesus had promised that he would return, but it still hadn't happened.

Had their decision to put their faith in Jesus been a mistake? Maybe Jesus was actually an angel. Or could it be that he was a strong leader and prophet like Moses but not the Messiah? Were they wrong in believing that Jesus was the only way to God instead of coming to God through a Jewish high priest and offering animal sacrifices?

Have you or someone you know had a time when you questioned your faith? What happened that triggered doubts? **Briefly write the story.**

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God, through the book of Hebrews, addresses their questions.

- Jesus is far greater than the angels. He is God's Son. Through Jesus, God created the entire universe and everything is under his authority and is sustained by his mighty power. (Chapter 1 and 2)
- Jesus is greater than Moses. Moses was put in charge of the people of Israel, but Jesus, God's Son, is in charge of the entire kingdom of God. (Chapter 3)
- Jesus is the Great High Priest. He gave himself as the perfect sacrifice. He offers forgiveness for sin and sets us free from the penalty of death. He is the Mediator, the one who brings peace between God and man. (Chapter 5-10)

### Read the words leading up to Hebrews 11.

Hebrews 10:23, 32-39

*<sup>23</sup> Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.*





# What is faith?

## STUDY #2

**T**he question on the table today as you open your Bible and begin your devotional time is this: “What is faith?” We will begin by reading Hebrews 11:1-3.

*<sup>1</sup>Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see. <sup>2</sup>Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation. <sup>3</sup>By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God’s command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.*

Faith is not based on fantasy. It is based on factual evidence that Jesus is the Son of God – born of a virgin, his miracles, his supernatural control over nature, his death and resurrection. Men and women who were with Jesus gave credible testimony to what they heard and saw. His life fulfilled prophesies given by Old Testament prophets. Faith is not contradictory to reason, it goes beyond reason. If we believe that Jesus is truly the Son of God, then it moves us to believe that what he says about our sin, his love and forgiveness, and the abundant life that he offers is true. We commit our lives to that truth. It moves us to believe that heaven, angels, the powers of darkness, and the Day of Judgment are real even though we cannot see them.

**Read the following verses** written by Luke as a prelude to the story of Jesus.

### Luke 1:1-4

*<sup>1</sup> Many people have set out to write accounts about the events that have been fulfilled among us. <sup>2</sup> They use eye-witness reports circulating among us from the early disciples. <sup>3</sup> Having carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I also have decided to write a careful account for you, most honorable Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> so you can be certain of the truth of everything you were taught.*

**Read words written by Peter**, a man who was with Jesus from the time he began his ministry until his death and resurrection.

### II Peter 1:16-19

*<sup>16</sup> For we were not making up clever stories when we told you about the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We saw his majestic splendor with our own eyes <sup>17</sup>when he received honor and glory from God the Father. The voice from the majestic glory of God said to him, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.” <sup>18</sup> We ourselves heard that voice from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.*

*<sup>19</sup> Because of that experience, we have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets. You must pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a lamp shining in a dark place – until the Day dawns, and Christ the Morning Star shines in your hearts.*







# Abel & Enoch

## STUDY #3

**J**ames 2:17 says, “faith by itself isn’t enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.” Genuine faith is belief that moves us to action. As we continue with our study, we will be learning from men and women of the Bible who not only professed to have faith in God, but actually lived it.

We will start with Adam and Eve’s son, Abel.

### Hebrews 11:4

*It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel’s offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed his approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith.*

The story about Cain and Abel is recorded in Genesis. **Read Genesis 4:1-8.**

Cain grew up to be a farmer. When harvest time came, he brought a grain offering to God. Abel became a shepherd. He brought God an offering of his best first-born lambs. God gave his smile of approval and accepted Abel’s offering, but the offering brought by his older brother, Cain, he rejected.

What made Abel’s offering more acceptable than Cain’s offering? It seems that God had already spoken to Adam and Eve’s family and told them that they had sinned, but mercy and forgiveness were available. If they would repent of their sin and sacrifice a perfect, first-born lamb, their sin would be forgiven. The lamb represented Jesus who would give his life for the sins of the world (John 1:29-30). Faith moved Abel to believe God, and he offered his lamb sacrifice. God declared him forgiven and righteous. Cain might have said he believed God, but his decision to come to God on his own terms proved his lack of faith.

The most important act of faith we can make in life is when we choose to follow Jesus, fully believing that his death paid for our sin and asking for his forgiveness. At that moment, we are made right in God’s sight and his power that brings change and transformation in us is unleashed.

Paul says this in his letter to the believers in Rome.

### Romans 1:16-17

*For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes – the Jew first and also the Gentile. This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, “It is through faith that a righteous person has life.”*



**Take a few minutes to close your eyes and remember back to when you made a decision to put your faith in Jesus.** Where were you? Was someone with you or were you alone? What were you feeling in your heart, and what did you pray? Take a few minutes to thank God for his undeserved mercy and forgiveness.

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Enoch was another example of what it means to live out faith.

**Hebrews 11:5-6**

*<sup>5</sup> It was by faith that Enoch was taken up into heaven without dying – “he disappeared, because God took him.” For before he was taken up, he was known as a person who pleased God. <sup>6</sup> And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.*

Enoch lived in the period of time between God’s creation of the world and the Flood. In Genesis we are given a brief summary of his life. **Read Genesis 5:18-24.**

When Enoch was 65 years old he had his first son, Methuselah, after which he had other sons and daughters. In those days, most people lived to be around 900 years old, but Enoch only lived 365 years. We are not told how tall he was, the name of his wife, or what he did for a living. However, this brief seven-verse synopsis of his life states and restates that he was a man who lived and walked in close fellowship with God. The story ends with these words, “Then one day he disappeared, because God took him”. He didn’t experience death, but was taken directly to heaven.

Faith moved Enoch to pursue God with sincerity of heart. What did walking in close fellowship with God mean for Enoch? He made it a priority to spend time with him. Enoch talked to God about his life challenges and struggles and asked for strength and divine power. He asked God for specific direction when he needed to make decisions, and God would respond. Enoch embraced and followed God’s instructions for living – instructions that brought life and blessing. Enoch would express gratitude and praise to God as he reflected on the God’s greatness, mercy, and love. Enoch would sometimes simply sit with God, and God would tell him about his plans for the future (Jude 1:14-15). This was exactly what had been lost when Adam and Eve sinned. Having this fellowship with Enoch pleased God.

**Think about how much God desires for you to walk in close fellowship with him.**

What thoughts and emotions does this stir in you?

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**Read Luke 10:38-42 and John 15:4-5.**

In what ways do the parable of the vine and branches and Mary’s example inspire you to make living in fellowship with God a priority?

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Walking in fellowship with God takes intentionality. How might you be able to schedule each day to make sure your time with God doesn’t get crowded out by distractions, work and study, and the demands of life? What are things you want to make sure you include in your daily time with God? **Write out a strategic plan.**

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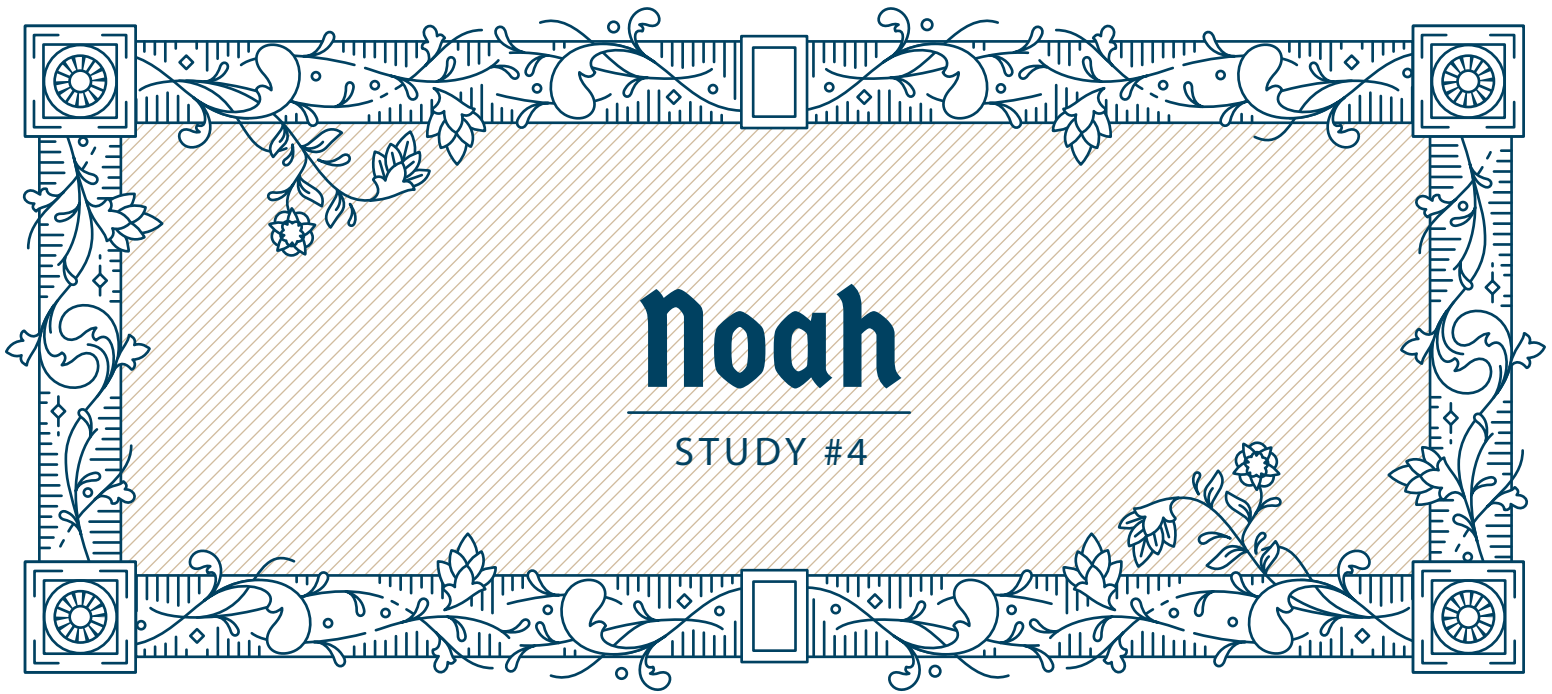
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# Noah

## STUDY #4

**O**ur study now takes us to an amazing example of a person who lived out faith - a man named Noah. We are introduced to him in Hebrews 11:7.

*It was by faith that Noah built a large boat to save his family from the flood. He obeyed God, who warned him about things that had never happened before. By his faith Noah condemned the rest of the world, and he received the righteousness that comes from faith.*

Let's dive back into the book of Genesis where we are introduced to a seventy-four verse historical record of the Noah story. As we read, we will ask important questions and pull out key information. Reading and dissecting seventy-four verses will be challenging but so rewarding.

**Read Genesis 5:28- 8:22.**

At this point in the history of the world, what was the condition of the human race?

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How did this make God feel?

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In response to the human wickedness, evil, and corruption that God saw, what did he say he would do?

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What do we learn about Noah in chapter 6:8-10?

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What were God's specific instructions to Noah? Chapter 6:14-21.

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God had created the earth to be full of life and its inhabitants to be blessed as they lived in obedience to his perfect laws and commands. But at this point in history, the people of the earth had rebelled against God and had become depraved, corrupt, and filled with violence. This broke God's heart. In his righteous justice, he said that he would not put up with this forever and would wipe out humanity and all living creatures. He also said that in his mercy and goodness, he would give 120 years for people to repent and return back to him.

There was one man on the earth that was different than the rest, a man named Noah. He was blameless and lived in close fellowship with God. God talked with Noah about the condition of the human race and that he would destroy mankind and all breathing creatures with a flood, something that had never happened before. He told Noah to build a boat that would save him, his family, and pairs of each kind of animal and bird.

Building this boat would be a huge construction project. The boat would be designed, not to sail, but to float and be very stable even in rough water. The boat would have three decks with a combined floor space equal to twenty NBA basketball courts. The cubic foot dimensions of the boat would be equal to 250 fifty-foot railroad cars. This project would require an incredible investment of time, labor, and resources.

Even though there had never been a worldwide flood and the boat building project seemed completely crazy, how did Noah respond? (Genesis 6:22)

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We are not told exactly how long it took for Noah and his sons to build the ark. Bible scholars believe that it could have taken anywhere from 40–75 years.

Building the ark was not a project that could be hidden in Noah's backyard. As the ark slowly began to take shape, people must have come from everywhere to see it. II Peter 2:5 says, "Noah warned the world of God's righteous judgment," and in the NIV "Noah, a preacher of righteousness." When people came, Noah would tell them that God was grieved by their rebellion and wickedness and that he would bring judgment and destroy every living thing that breathes with a flood. He also told them that the ark he was building was for the salvation of his family and the animals. If they believed what God said, repented, and built an ark, they could also be saved. Even though he was probably ridiculed and told that he had psychological issues, faith coupled with love moved him to believe that what God said about the coming judgment was true and to boldly tell others that God, in his amazing mercy, was offering a way to be saved.

**Explore comparisons between Noah's day and our day.** How does God feel about the condition of present humanity? In righteous justice, how does he say he will respond to depravity, corruption, and violence? In his goodness, mercy, and love what did he do to make a way for us to be saved from the coming judgment? (You might find II Peter 3:3-15 to be a helpful reference.)

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In what ways does Noah's example of being moved by faith to believe what God says about the coming judgment and to courageously tell others about God's mercy and forgiveness inspire you?

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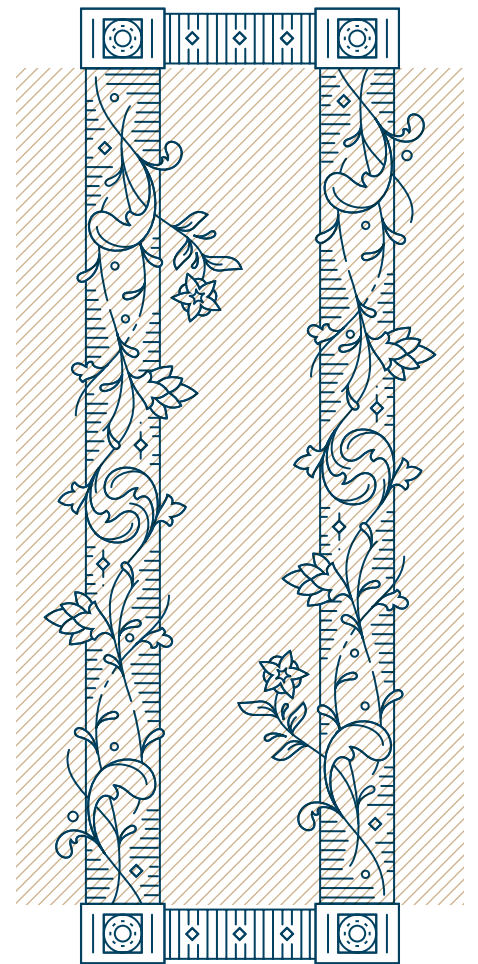
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# Abraham

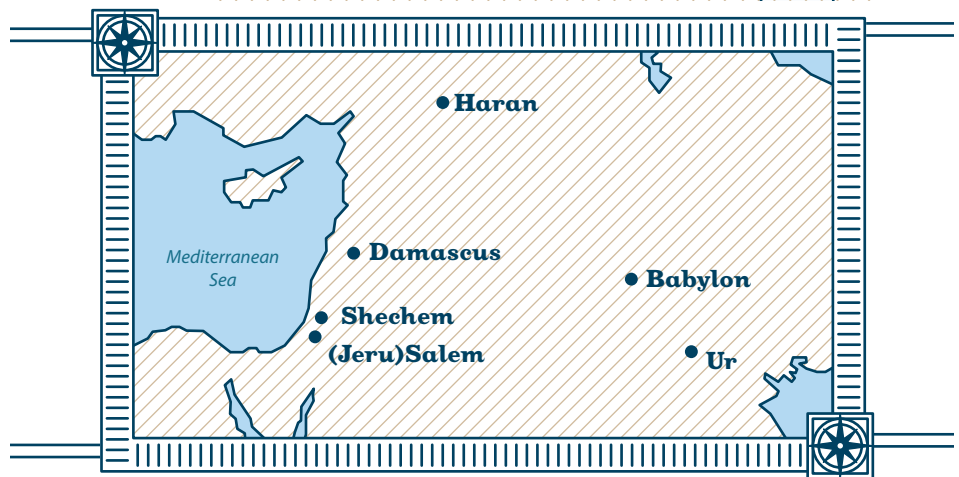
## STUDY #5

**N**ext in the line of the Hebrews 11 faith heroes we find Abraham, the father of the nation of Israel.

### Hebrews 11:8-10

*<sup>8</sup> It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith - for he was like a foreigner, living in tents. And so did Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the same promise. <sup>10</sup> Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God.*

Twelve Old Testament chapters are dedicated to Abraham's life story. We don't have time to read them all, but we'll focus on several key passages.



**Read Genesis 11:27 – 12:7.** On the map, draw a line from Ur (present day Iraq), Abraham's birthplace, to Haran where Abraham moved with his father, nephew and their families. Next find the Canaanite city called Shechem. In the space between Haran and Shechem, write "400 miles".

Abraham and his family had uprooted from Ur and now were settled in Haran, a flourishing trade center. Abraham had become wealthy, and life was good. He had herds of livestock and a number of servants. Then his father passed away. After his father died, what did God tell Abraham to do? (Genesis 12:1)

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# Sarah

## STUDY #6

**A**s the writer of Hebrews continues to instruct us on what it means to live out our faith, he introduces us to Abraham's wife, Sarah. Sarah's story line is interwoven with Abraham's story. Before reading the two verses dedicated to Sarah in Hebrews 11, let's take a few minutes to get to know her.

Where was Abraham living when he fell in love with Sarah\* and they got married?  
**(Read Genesis 11:27-29)**

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What do we learn about Sarah in Genesis 12:11-15?

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How old was Sarah when she and Abraham left Haran in obedience to God's direction - not knowing exactly where they would be going and what life would be like once they got to their destination? **(Read Genesis 12:4 and 17:17)** For the next sixty-two years, she and her family did not have a house. They lived in tents and continually moved from place to place to find pasture land for their herds of sheep, goats, and cows. What does this tell you about Sarah?

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Not long after arriving to Canaan, a severe famine struck the land. To survive, Abraham and Sarah, along with everything they owned, traveled south to Egypt. As they neared the border, Abraham made a foolish, faithless decision based on fear. **Read Genesis 12:10-20 and I Peter 3:6.** How did Sarah manage the situation? How does this give us another glimpse into who she was?

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\*known as Sarai at the beginning of the story



In Sarah's day, being able to have children was an honor and meant you were blessed. Infertility was seen as a disgrace and a curse. Childbirth was central to a woman's identity. **Read Genesis 11:30.** What might have been Sarah's greatest desire? What emotions must Sarah have felt as, year-after-year, her desire was not fulfilled?

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Now let's go to **Hebrews 11. (vs. 11-12)**

*<sup>11</sup> It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep his promise. <sup>12</sup> And so a whole nation came from this one man who was as good as dead – a nation with so many people that, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore, there is no way to count them.*

Not only was Sarah was beautiful, courageous, and resilient, God also called her a woman of faith. God told Abraham to leave Haran and promised that from him and Sarah would come a great nation that would bless the world. What emotions must have exploded in Sarah's heart when Abraham came home and told her what God had said? How does faith move one to respond to a promise that humanly seems impossible?

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Time passed, and Sarah didn't get pregnant. **Read Genesis 13:16 and 15:5-6.** How did God renew and strengthen her faith?

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Ten years after having received God's promise that he would give them a child, it still hadn't happened. **Read Genesis 16:1-6.** In a time of frustration, how did Sarah try to come up with her own reasonable solution? How did that work for her?

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Another 14 years passed. Each year, Sarah got older, and the promise of having a child seemed even more impossible. What happened next? **Read Genesis 18:1-15.**

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**Read Genesis 21:1-7.** How does the story end?

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Faith moved Sarah to believe God's promise even when it seemed humanly impossible. What is God speaking to you personally as you reflect on Sarah's example?

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**Write the following verses on a piece of paper.** Take them with you when you go to your ministry site with the goal of having them memorized by the end of the day. Practice when you have a break, during lunch, and when you are taking transportation to and from the ministry site. Tonight, before going to bed, recite it to one of your team members.

**Genesis 18:14**

*Is anything too hard for the Lord?  
I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.*

**Genesis 21:1-2**

*The Lord kept his word and did for Sarah exactly what he had promised. She became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. This happened at just the time God said it would.*





# Abraham, Pt.2

STUDY #7

**W**e've been introduced to Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah and have been learning from their faith examples. Now it's like the writer of Hebrews is saying, "Oh, wait, let's go back to Abraham. He has something else to teach us about a life of faith."

After waiting for twenty-five years, God had miraculously caused Sarah, Abraham's ninety year old wife, to become pregnant, and his son, Isaac, was born. Imagine the joy Abraham felt as he watched Isaac go from being a newborn, to being a toddler who was learning to walk and form words, to being an energetic adolescent who loved to ride donkeys and chase sheep. Abraham had a deep love for Isaac and often remembered how God had promised that from his descendants would come a great nation that will bless the world.

**Now read Genesis 22:1-19**, which takes us to an earth shattering event in Abraham's life. What did God ask Abraham to do?

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Rather than arguing or questioning God, how did Abraham respond?

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The very next day, Abraham chopped wood, loaded his donkey, and along with Isaac and two servants, began a three day trip into the wilderness. Describe the grief, loss, and deep, gut-wrenching emotions Abraham must have felt as he traveled. How must he have felt when, after building an altar out of stones and arranging the firewood, he tied Isaac's hands and laid him on the altar?

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Let's see what the writer of Hebrews 11 tells us about this time in Abraham's life.

### Hebrews 11:17-19

*17 It was by faith that Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice when God was testing him. Abraham, who had received God's promises, was ready to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, 18 even though God had told him, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted." 19 Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again. And in a sense, Abraham did receive his son back from the dead.*

When Abraham was going through the hardest, most confusing time of his life, what happened to his level of faith?

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Faith moved Abraham to not lose his confident trust in God when life wasn't making sense, and he was drowning in feelings of grief and loss. He could have yelled, "God, if you are good and you really love me, why is this happening?" Instead, he fully believed that God would fulfill his promise even if it meant that he would bring Isaac back to life. And at the end of the story, God did keep his promise.

In both Genesis 22 and Hebrews 11, it is stated that when God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, his faith was being tested. What does God do in us as he tests our faith by allowing us to experience times of hardship or adversity? **Read the following verses and write down your thoughts.**

### I Peter 1:6-7

*6 So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while, 7 These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold – though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.*

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### James 1:2-4

*2 Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. 3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. 4 So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.*

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How must Abraham's example have been an encouragement to the people who the writer addressed in Hebrews 10:32-36?

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In what ways is Abraham's example an encouragement to you personally?

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Wrap up your devotional time by soaking in the lyrics of the following song. If you have access to wifi, you can listen to it on YouTube.



## Do It Again

### Elevation Worship

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*Walking around these walls,  
I thought by now they'd fall.  
But you have never failed me yet.*

*Waiting for change to come.  
Knowing the battle's won.  
For you have never failed me yet.*

*I know the night won't last.  
Your word will come to pass.  
My heart will sing your praise again.*

*Jesus you're still enough.  
Keep me within your love.  
My heart will sing your praise again.*

*Your promise still stands;  
Great is your faithfulness  
I'm still in your hands  
This is my confidence  
You've never failed me yet.*





# Isaac, Jacob, & Joseph

## STUDY #8

**N**ext in the line of faith examples we find Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. They come from the second, third, and fourth generations of the lineage of Abraham. In Hebrews 11, only one verse is dedicated to each of them. They together teach us an amazing lesson about what it means to live out our faith.

**GENERATION 1:** Abraham and Sarah were promised by God that their descendants would possess the land of Canaan. They were foreigners in Canaan, lived in tents, and were constantly on the move with their large herds of livestock. As they aged and came to the end of their lives, they continued to believe that God's promise to them would be fulfilled even though it didn't happen in their lifetime.

**GENERATION 2:** Isaac, their son, married a beautiful woman named Rebekah, and they had two sons, Jacob and Esau. They inherited Abraham's possessions. They also wandered from place to place and never really belonged.

**GENERATION 3:** Jacob, a twin, was born to Isaac and Rebekah. As a young man, he migrated north to Haran where he stayed and worked for fourteen years. Jacob then returned to Canaan, now with a family, and lived as a nomad, just like the previous generations. Later in life, he and all his family moved to Egypt to escape a devastating famine where they lived as aliens in a foreign culture.

**GENERATION 4:** Joseph was one of Jacob's sons. Because of jealousy and conflict within the family, Joseph was sold as a slave and was taken from Canaan to Egypt. There God brought him out of slavery and promoted him to a position of second-in-command of the entire Egyptian Empire. It was through his authority that Jacob and the rest of the family were able to move to Egypt when the famine hit Canaan. Joseph married an Egyptian lady and lived in Egypt for the rest of his life. But in his heart, he was a foreigner displaced from the land in which he had been born.

As you analyze the four generations, what would you say they had in common?

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Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph lived their entire lives as foreigners. They never saw the fulfillment of God's promise – "Your descendants will possess the land of Canaan".

Hebrews 11:20-21

*It was by faith that Isaac promised blessings for the future to his sons, Jacob and Esau. It was by faith that Jacob, when he was old and dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons and bowed in worship as he leaned on his staff.*

**Read Genesis 28:1-4 and Genesis 48:1-4.** As Isaac and Jacob speak words of blessing over their sons and grandsons, what do they say that indicates that they still believed God's promise?

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**Hebrews 11:22**

*It was by faith that Joseph, when he was about to die, said confidently that the people of Israel would leave Egypt. He even commanded them to take his bones with them when they left.*

**Read Genesis 50:22-26.** Joseph is nearing the end of his life. He has a meeting with his family and gives specific instructions for his burial. How do his instructions clarify that he was convinced that God would keep his promise?

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**Hebrews 11:13-16**

*<sup>13</sup> All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it. They agreed that they were foreigners and nomads here on earth. <sup>14</sup> Obviously people who say such things are looking forward to a country they can call their own. <sup>15</sup> If they had longed for the country they came from, they could have gone back. <sup>16</sup> But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.*

Faith moved Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph to believe God's promise that their descendants would possess the land of Canaan, but their faith went even deeper. They believed that though they temporarily resided in this world, as children of God, their true citizenship was in heaven. That's where they really belonged.

Statistically the average life expectancy of people from nations across the world is 66 years.\* **Read the words of Jesus in John 17:14-16, what Peter wrote in I Peter 2:11, and what Paul stated in Philippians 3:20.** How is our life reality comparable to what was Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph's reality?

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**Read John 14:1-4.** As strangers and foreigners in this world, what is God's promise to us?

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Faith moves us to firmly believe that God will be faithful to his promise. **Read Revelation 21:1 – 22:6.** What things most excite you as you get a glimpse into what will be your future homeland?

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**Read Matthew 6:19-21.** In what ways do faith in God and his promise, and a strong conviction that this world is not home, influence our priorities and shape the way we invest our resources: time, energy, talents, money?

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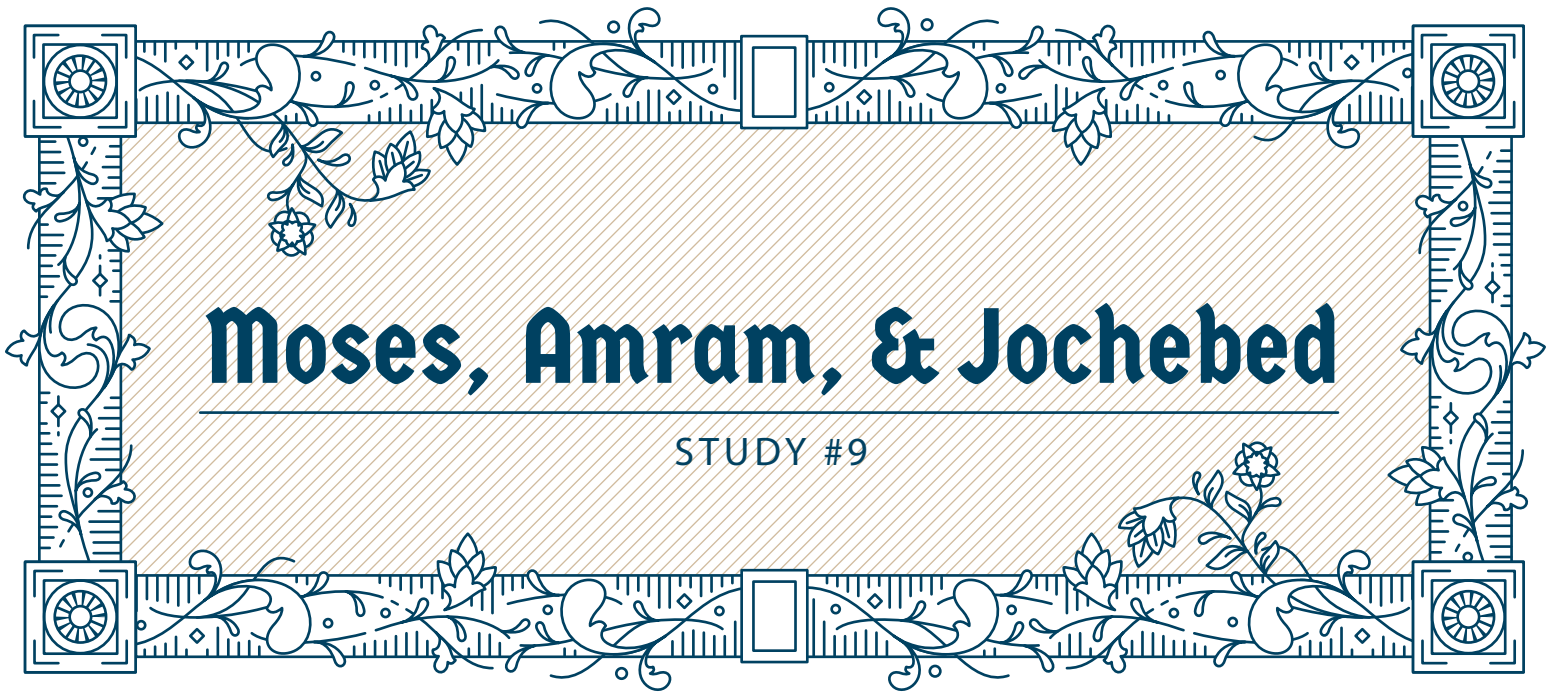
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\*disabled-world.com/calculators-charts/life-expectancy-statistics.php



# Moses, Amram, & Jochebed

STUDY #9

**M**any years had passed since the death of Joseph. The seventy members of Abraham's clan that had migrated to Egypt had grown to more than a million. A new Pharaoh, who knew nothing about Joseph and how he had saved Egypt from starvation, now came into power. As he established his control, he became concerned about the Israelite population. He said, "They outnumber us and continue to multiply. They are a threat to our national security." So, to combat this perceived threat, he changed the Israelite people's status from legal residents to slaves. Cruel slave drivers were appointed over them, and they were submitted to hard labor. The people were forced to make bricks, construct two new treasure cities, and work in the fields. Though the Israelites were being brutally oppressed, they continued to multiply.

Realizing that his strategy to reduce the Israelite population through brutality wasn't working, the Pharaoh issued an order to the Hebrew midwives who were assisting the Israelite mothers as they gave birth. This was the order, "When baby girls are delivered, allow them to live, but cause the baby boys to die." Because the midwives feared God, they did not comply with the order, and the Israelites continued to multiply and grow more powerful. Pharaoh's second strategy failed.

Finally in frustration, Pharaoh ordered infanticide. "When you see a newborn Hebrew boy, take him from the parents and throw him into the Nile River." Each day baby boys were forcefully taken from weeping parents and drowned.

Hebrews 11 now takes us to Amram and Jochebed (Num. 26:59), a couple who lived in Egypt during the time of oppression and infanticide.

Hebrews 11:23

*It was by faith that Moses' parents hid him for three months when he was born. They saw that God had given them an unusual child, and they were not afraid to disobey the king's command."*

**Read Exodus 2:1-10.** How did faith move Amram and Jochebed to respond when man's law demanded them to do something that contradicted God's law?

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**Read Acts 5:26-29.** The apostles in the book of Acts found themselves in a similar dilemma. What was their faith-motivated response?

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In what ways does a firm belief in God and the truth of his Word move us to not be intimidated and give in to social or governmental pressure and hostility?

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Moses, who as a baby was saved from infanticide, grew up to be another one of the Hebrews 11 faith heroes.

**Hebrews 11:24-28**

*24 It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. 26 He thought it was better to suffer for the sake of Christ than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his great reward. 27 It was by faith that Moses left the land of Egypt, not fearing the king's anger. He kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible.*

Stephen, a Spirit-filled New Testament church leader, referred to this stage of Moses' life in one of his powerful sermons. **Read Acts 7:17-29.**

What must Moses' life have been like as an adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter?

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How would you compare Moses' life reality to the life reality of his blood relatives, the Israelites?

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What motivated Moses to walk away from royalty and identify himself with the Israelites, an oppressed and suffering people? **Read Hebrews 11:24-27.**

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**Read Matthew 4:18-22, 19:27-30.** In what ways did Peter, Andrew, James and John follow the example of Moses? What did Jesus promise in response to their faith-motivated actions?

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**Hebrews 11:28-29**

*28 It was by faith that Moses commanded the people of Israel to keep the Passover and to sprinkle blood on the doorposts so that the angel of death would not kill their firstborn sons. 29 It was by faith that the people of Israel went right through the Red Sea as though they were on dry ground. But when the Egyptians tried to follow, they were all drowned.*

Faith moved Moses to give up temporal fame, privilege and comfort to pursue a treasure that is eternal. After fleeing Egypt, Moses spent the next forty years in the wilderness where God developed in him the qualities of a great leader. God then brought him back to Egypt to lead the people of Israel out of bondage. God proved his power and faithfulness as he brought judgment on Egypt and miraculously lead them through the Red Sea.

As you reflect on the faith examples of Amram, Jochebed, and Moses, what is God speaking to you? Record it below.

**Wrap up your devotional time by sharing your thoughts with another member of your team.**

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# Joshua, Israelites, & Rahab

## STUDY #10

**A**fter being delivered from oppression in Egypt, the Israelites returned to living a nomadic life in the wilderness. They had been heavily influenced by the pagan Egyptian culture. Although God had so clearly revealed himself to them, they often wrestled with unbelief when they were confronted with difficult circumstances. Instead of being thankful for God's amazing provision and protection, their default was to grumble and complain. When God would give them instructions, they wanted to rebel. They wandered in the wilderness for forty years during which God taught them, corrected them, and prepared them to receive the promise he had made to their ancestor, Abraham.

At age 120, Moses passed away and his assistant, Joshua, became the leader. Joshua was a man of faith and courage. After more than 400 years, the time had come for the fulfillment of the promise, "I will give the entire land of Canaan, where you now live as a foreigner, to you and your descendants."

Hebrews 11 now brings us to this time in history and introduces us to two more examples of what it means to live out our faith: Joshua, along with the people of Israel, and a woman named Rahab. Two stories that are intricately connected.

### Hebrews 11:30-31

*<sup>30</sup> It was by faith that the people of Israel marched around Jericho for seven days, and the walls came crashing down. <sup>31</sup> It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute was not destroyed with her people in her city who refused to obey God. For she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.*

We find the full narrative in the book of Joshua. As you read, imagine that you are with the spies as they stealthily enter Canaan, with Rahab as she interacts with the spies, and with the people of Israel as they march around Jericho.

### Read Joshua 1:1-9, 2:1-24, 6:1-25.

#### Facts about Jericho\*:

- A fortress town built on a hill and surrounded by two walls with a combined height of 41 feet.
- Inside the walls, a spring provided water for its 3000 inhabitants.
- The people of Jericho worshiped the Moon God which brought with it child sacrifice and religious prostitution.
- Jericho's culture was known for unrestrained sexual immorality.

As Joshua courageously led the Israelites in their conquest of Canaan, what was his first step of action? (Joshua 2:1)

\*[answersingenesis.org/archaeology/the-walls-of-gericho/](http://answersingenesis.org/archaeology/the-walls-of-gericho/)

\*[apologeticpress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&article=988](http://apologeticpress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&article=988)

Upon entering Jericho, the spies needed lodging for the night. They rented a room at a hostel located in a rougher part of town, and there, who did they encounter? What do we know about her? (Joshua 2:1) About her marital status and family? (Joshua 2:13)

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When Rahab learned that the spies were in danger, what did she do to protect them?

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All of Jericho had heard the story of how God had delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and how he had miraculously taken them through the Red Sea. They had seen how God had given them supernatural victory over two powerful kings east of the Jordan River. What did Rahab say and do that indicates that she was turning from the Moon God and was placing her faith in the true Living God? (Joshua 2:11-13) How was her response to what God had done different than everyone else in Jericho? (Hebrews 11:31)

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The spies returned to Joshua and gave their report. Jericho had insurmountable walls, water and food supplies sufficient to outlast a prolonged siege, and locked gates. What might have been a rational military battle plan for conquering Jericho? What was God's battle plan?

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After the fighting men of Israel, along with seven priests and the Ark of the Covenant, marched around Jericho just as God had directed, what happened? At the end, who got the credit for the victory over Jericho?

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Faith moved Joshua and the Israelites to follow God's direction, even when, from a military perspective, it didn't make sense. When the walls came crashing down, there was no way that they could pat themselves on the back and take the credit. It was God who was glorified.



Faith moved Rahab to place her trust in the true Living God and reject the false Moon God. She separated herself from a culture drowning in depravity and became an Israelite. Even though she had a dark past, because of her faith, God forgave her and completely transformed her life. She married Salmon and gave birth to Boaz who was in the lineage of King David and Jesus (Matt. 1:5). She went from being a prostitute to being a faithful wife and mother, from impacting those around her negatively to having a positive impact, from shame to honor. By faith, Rahab made a radical life decision that changed her destiny forever.

What is a Jericho that you are currently facing in your life? What war strategy might God be directing you to use, even when it seems ridiculous to the world? Examples: James 5:16-18, Romans 12:19-21

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As you think about Rahab's faith example, what is a radical life choice you need to make that could forever change your destiny?

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# My Faith Story

## STUDY #11

### Hebrews 11:32 – 12:3

<sup>32</sup> How much more do I need to say? It would take too long to recount the stories of the faith of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the prophets. <sup>33</sup> By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight. <sup>35</sup> Women received their loved ones back again from death.

But others were tortured, refusing to turn from God in order to be set free. They placed their hope in a better life after the resurrection. <sup>36</sup> Some were jeered at, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in prisons. <sup>37</sup> Some died by stoning, some were sawed in half, and others were killed with the sword. Some went about wearing skins of sheep and goats, destitute and oppressed and mistreated. <sup>38</sup> They were too good for this world, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground.

<sup>39</sup> All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith, yet none of them received all that God had promised. <sup>40</sup> For God had something better in mind for us, so that they would not reach perfection without us.

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. <sup>2</sup> We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. <sup>3</sup> Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up.

Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Amram and Jochebed, Moses, Joshua and the Israelites, and Rahab are just a few of the countless many who through the centuries lived by faith. By faith, some won battles and courageously stood for justice. Some miraculously escaped danger, received what seemed impossible, and witnessed God's healing power. By faith, others maintained a confident hope in God, even when they suffered ridicule, discrimination, rejection, abuse, incarceration, and martyrdom. They all left a legacy of faith.



