



Knowing what the Hebrews knew

Old Testament background for Hebrews 11:1-40



Understanding creation

The Bible begins with a description of God bringing our world into existence through His spoken commands.



Read Genesis 1:1-2:3. *This awesome act is referred to in Hebrews 11:3.*

Faith stories from our family history

The Old Testament is packed with stories about God and people. The people who have the central focus in these stories are the nation of Israel (i.e. the descendants of Jacob), as well as their ancestors - all the way back to Adam, the first human.

However, some stories of non-Israelites are included too. This foreshadows God's ultimate plan to bring salvation to not just one nation, but all nations. This would fulfil the promise made to Abram in Genesis 12:3 (see more about this in the *Faith that He brews 5* hand-out).



Read the following passages for a variety of faith stories from the Old Testament. *Each of these stories is referred to in Hebrews 11 (specific verses below).*

Genesis 4:1-16
Abel
Hebrews 11:4

Genesis 5:18-24
Enoch
Hebrews 11:5

Genesis 6:5-9:17
Noah
Hebrews 11:7

Genesis 12:1-9
Abram
Hebrews 11:8-10

Genesis 17:15-22; 18:1-15; 21:1-7
Abraham/Sarah
Hebrews 11:11-12

Genesis 22:1-19
Abraham
Hebrews 11:17-19

Genesis 27:1-40
Isaac
Hebrews 11:20

Genesis 27:29-48:20
Jacob
Hebrews 11:21

Genesis 50:24-25
Joseph
Hebrews 11:22

Exodus 1:15-2:2
Moses' parents
Hebrews 11:23

Exodus 2:11-15
Moses
Hebrews 11:24-27

Exodus 12:1-30
Moses
Hebrews 11:28

Exodus 14:21-31
Nation of Israel
Hebrews 11:29

Joshua 6:1-20
Nation of Israel
Hebrews 11:30

Joshua 2:1-24; 6:22-25
Rahab
Hebrews 11:31



Read Judges 6-8 (Gideon), 4-5 (Barak), 13-16 (Samson), 11:1-12:7 (Jephthah); 1 Samuel 16:1-1 Kings 2:12 (David); 1 Samuel 1:1-25:1 (Samuel); Daniel 3 (Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego), 6 (Daniel) for more stories. *The first six of these people are referred to in Hebrews 11:32. Many more faith stories (probably including the Daniel 3 & 6 stories above) are alluded to in Hebrews 11:33-38.*



Engaging with the message

Questions & answers for Hebrews 11:1-40



Hot spots

- 1) What's alive for you in this passage? (Things that stand out, "aha" moments, questions you have, etc)



Digging into the passage

- 2) This passage gives many examples of people acting "by faith". What do some/all of these examples have in common?
- 3) According to this passage, how does our faith affect our relationship with God?
- 4) How do verses 33-35a fit with verses 35b-38? What does this teach us about faith?



Connecting life and faith

- 5) What is one of the "faith examples" that inspires/encourages/surprises you – and why?
- 6) Think about three specific things that you do (or have done in the past) "by faith".
 - a. List the three "by faith" actions.
 - b. Briefly explain why each action is (or was) "by faith".