Hebrews 11 - The Faith Chapter

Introduction to Faith

When we open our Bibles, we find that the Christian life is like a long walk. It is not a walk done by sight, which means we do not see every single step ahead of us with our natural eyes. Instead, the Bible says we walk by faith. Faith is the engine of the Christian life. Without it, a person cannot truly know God or follow Him. God has given us a whole chapter in the New Testament that is completely dedicated to showing us what faith looks like. That chapter is Hebrews chapter 11, and people often call it 'The Faith Chapter' or the 'Hall of Fame of Faith.'

In this book, we are going to look closely at what faith is, how it works, and why God cares about it so much. We will look at examples from the beginning of the Bible in the Old Testament, all the way to the teachings of Jesus and His followers in the New Testament. No matter who you are or how much school you have finished, God wants you to understand faith because faith is how you connect with Him.

The Direct Definition of Faith

Before we can live by faith, we need to know exactly what it means. Thankfully, the Bible does not leave us guessing. Right at the very beginning of the chapter, God gives us a clear, plain definition. Let us read what it says in the King James Version:

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

Let us break down these big words so they are very easy to understand. Look at the word 'substance.' Substance means something real that you can touch or hold. It is not a wish or a daydream. When you hope for something that God has promised you, faith makes that hope feel absolutely real inside your heart right now. It is like holding a legal document or a title deed to a house. You might not be sitting inside the house yet, but because you hold the paper, you know the house belongs to you.

Now look at the word 'evidence.' Evidence is proof. If you go to a court of law, you need proof to show that something happened. The Bible says faith is the proof of things we cannot see. We cannot see God with our human eyes, we cannot see heaven right now, and we cannot see the future. But faith acts like a pair of spiritual eyes. It gives our hearts total certainty that God's promises are true, even when everything around us looks different.

Faith in the Old Testament

Hebrews chapter 11 shows us a long line of ordinary people who lived thousands of years ago. They had flaws, they made mistakes, and they had hard days just like us. But they became heroes because they chose to take God at His word. Let us look at a few of these great examples to see how their faith worked in real life.

Abel: Offering a Better Sacrifice

The very first person mentioned in the list of faith heroes is Abel. He was one of Adam and Eve's sons. The Bible tells us that he brought an offering to God that pleased Him, while his brother Cain did not. Let us look at what Hebrews says:

> *"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."*
>
> **— Hebrews 11:4 (KJV)**

Abel's faith showed up in how he worshipped God. He did not just give God leftovers; he gave God his very best from his heart, believing that God is worthy of our finest obedience.

Noah: Building a Boat on Dry Land

Another amazing story is Noah. God told Noah that a massive flood was coming to wash away evil from the earth. At that time, it had never rained like that before. Noah had never seen a flood. People probably laughed at him and told him he was crazy. But look at what Noah did because he trusted God:

> *"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."*
>
> **— Hebrews 11:7 (KJV)**

Noah's faith was not just a feeling. It made him pick up a hammer and build a gigantic wooden ark on dry land for many years. Real faith always leads to action. If Noah had only said he believed God but never built the boat, he and his family would have drowned. He showed he believed God by doing exactly what God told him to do.

Abraham: Stepping Out Into the Unknown

Abraham is known as the father of faith. One day, God spoke to him and told him to pack up everything, leave his hometown, leave his relatives, and travel to a strange land that he had never seen before. God did not even give him a map! He just told him to go. Let us see how Abraham reacted:

> *"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."*
>
> **— Hebrews 11:8 (KJV)**

Imagine how scary that must have been. Abraham had to pack up his tents, his animals, and his family and start walking without knowing where he would sleep next. He did it simply because he trusted that God would guide him and take care of him. That is what faith does: it steps out even when it cannot see the destination.

What the Rest of the Bible Teaches About Faith

To truly understand faith, we must look at scriptures outside of Hebrews 11 as well. The whole Bible works together like a beautiful song, and every book adds a note about how we should trust God.

How Faith Grows: Hearing God's Word

Many people ask, 'How do I get more faith? I feel like my faith is too weak.' The Bible gives us a very easy answer to this problem in the book of Romans. It tells us exactly where faith comes from:

> *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*
>
> **— Romans 10:17 (KJV)**

If you want your faith to grow strong, you need to feed it with God's word. Just like your physical body grows weak if you do not eat food, your faith grows weak if you do not listen to or read the Bible. When you hear the stories of what God did in the past, your heart starts to believe that He can do great things for you today too.

Leaning on God, Not Yourself

Human beings love to try to figure everything out on their own. We try to solve all our problems with our own smart brains or our own strength. But the book of Proverbs warns us against this and tells us to put our weight on God instead:

> *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."*
>
> **— Proverbs 3:5-6 (KJV)**

When you lean on a cane or a walking stick, you trust it to hold your weight. This scripture is telling us to let God hold the weight of our whole life. Do not try to guess everything or worry about tomorrow. Talk to God about every decision you make, and He promises to show you the right path to walk on.

Faith and Works Work Together

The Apostle James wrote a very practical book in the New Testament. He explained that some people say they have faith, but they do not live like it. He warns us that words are not enough:

> *"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."*
>
> **— James 2:17 (KJV)**

If a person says, 'I believe it is going to rain cats and dogs today,' but they walk out the door without an umbrella and wear their best clothes, do they really believe it? No! Their actions prove they do not believe it. James is teaching us that if we truly have faith in Jesus, it will show up in the way we love others, the way we help the poor, and the way we keep away from bad things.

The Power and Necessity of Faith

Now that we have seen examples and definitions, we must ask ourselves: why is faith so important? Why does God demand it from us?

It is Impossible to Please God Without It

Later on in Hebrews 11, the Bible drops a very serious truth on us. It tells us that without faith, we cannot make God happy:

> *"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."*
>
> **— Hebrews 11:6 (KJV)**

God does not ask us to be the richest, smartest, or most beautiful people. He asks us to trust Him. When we do not trust God, we are basically saying that we think He is a liar or that He doesn't care about us. But when we come to Him believing that He is real and that He loves to bless those who search for Him with all their heart, it brings great joy to His heart.

The Mustard Seed Principle

Sometimes, the problems in front of us look like giant mountains. We might feel small, weak, and helpless. Jesus understood exactly how we feel, and He gave us an incredible promise about how much power even a little bit of faith can have:

> *"And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."*
>
> **— Matthew 17:20 (KJV)**

A mustard seed is one of the smallest seeds you can find. Jesus was telling His disciples that they do not need a mountain of faith to move a mountain of trouble. They just need a real, living trust in a mountain-sized God. If your faith is placed in the mighty power of God, even a tiny amount of it can change your entire situation.

Conclusion: Wearing Your Shield

Every single day when you wake up, you will face choices. The world will try to make you feel afraid, worried, and doubtful. The devil will try to throw thoughts of fear into your mind. That is why the Apostle Paul tells us to use our faith like a shield to block those bad thoughts:

> *"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."*
>
> **— Ephesians 6:16 (KJV)**

When fear says, 'You are not going to make it,' raise your shield of faith and say, 'God promised He will never leave me.' When doubt says, 'God doesn't hear your prayers,' lift your shield and say, 'Hebrews 11:1 tells me that my faith is the evidence of things not seen.'

Living by faith means trusting God one day at a time, one step at a time. It is a simple path open to anyone—no matter your background. Start reading God's word today, ask Him to help your trust grow, and join the long line of heroes who walked with God by faith.