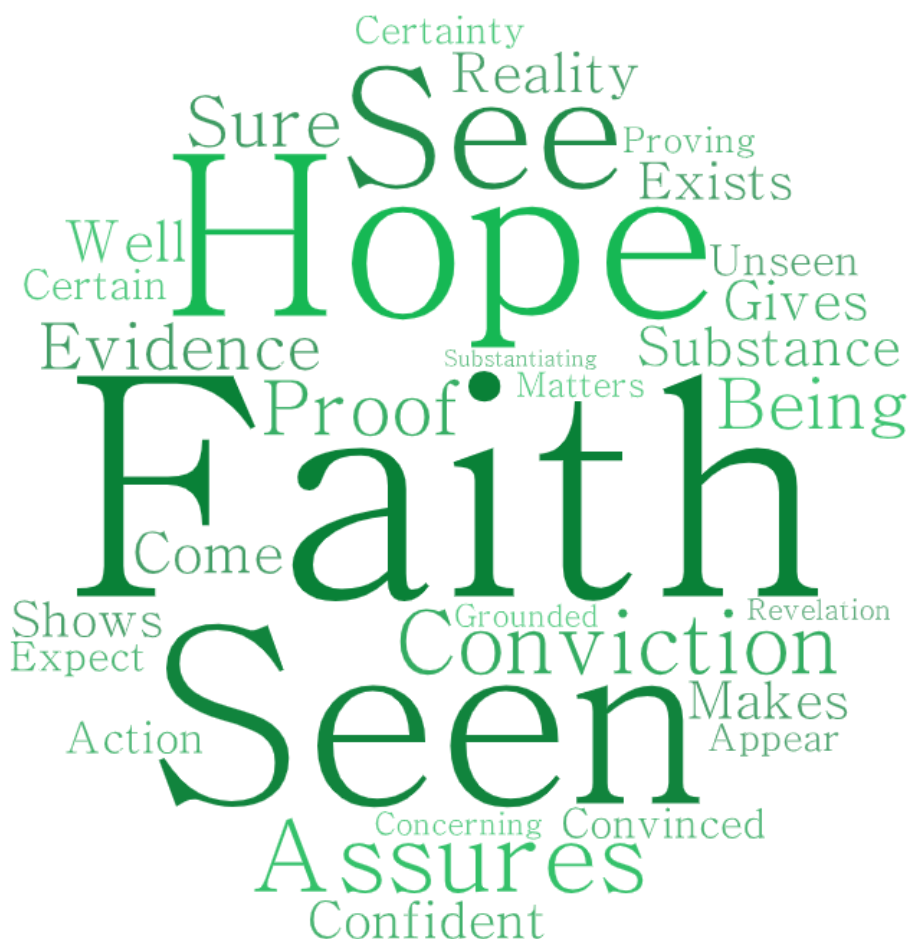


The Promises of God: session 1 – faith and hope

'God is the God of promise. Faith involves trusting the promises of God. God makes a promise; faith believes it, hope anticipates it, patience quietly waits for it.'

1. Begin by reading the whole of Hebrews chapter 11.
2. Read verse 1 in as many versions as you can.
3. Every translation mentions 'hope' in relation to 'faith'. What do you think each of the following had been hoping for?
 - a. Noah
 - b. Abraham
 - c. Jacob
 - d. Joseph
 - e. Moses
4. What was the basis for their hope? (particularly Abraham and Jacob)
5. Reflect on verses 39-40: what do you think the writer is trying to explain? (It may help to read Hebrews chapter 12 verses 18-24.)
6. This word cloud was compiled from 29 translations of chapter 11 verse 1. Use the word 'promise(s)' and as many of the words in this cloud as possible to describe your own idea of what 'faith' is.



New Revised Standard Version

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

New International Version

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

New Living Translation

Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.

English Standard Version

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Berean Study Bible

Now faith is the assurance of what we hope for and the certainty of what we do not see.

Berean Literal Bible

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not being seen.

New American Standard Bible

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

New King James Version

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

King James Bible

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Christian Standard Bible

Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.

Contemporary English Version

Faith makes us sure of what we hope for and gives us proof of what we cannot see.

Good News Translation

To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see.

Holman Christian Standard Bible

Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.

International Standard Version

Now faith is the assurance that what we hope for will come about and the certainty that what we cannot see exists.

NET Bible

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, being convinced of what we do not see.

New Heart English Bible

Now faith is being confident of what we hope for, convinced about things we do not see.

A Faithful Version

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the conviction of things not seen.

Aramaic Bible in Plain English

Now faith is the conviction concerning those things that are in hope, as if it were these things in action, and the revelation of those things that are unseen;

GOD'S WORD® Translation

Faith assures us of things we expect and convinces us of the existence of things we cannot see.

New American Standard 1977

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

King James 2000 Bible

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

American King James Version

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

American Standard Version

Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.

Douay-Rheims Bible

Now faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not.

Darby Bible Translation

Now faith is [the] substantiating of things hoped for, [the] conviction of things not seen.

English Revised Version

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen.

Webster's Bible Translation

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Weymouth New Testament

Now faith is a well-grounded assurance of that for which we hope, and a conviction of the reality of things which we do not see.

World English Bible

Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, proof of things not seen.

Young's Literal Translation

And faith is of things hoped for a confidence, of matters not seen a conviction,

Hebrews 11: The Meaning of Faith

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ²Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. ³By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

The Examples of Abel, Enoch, and Noah

⁴By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain's. Through this he received approval as righteous, God himself giving approval to his gifts; he died, but through his faith he still speaks. ⁵By faith Enoch was taken so that he did not experience death; and 'he was not found, because God had taken him.' For it was attested before he was taken away that 'he had pleased God.' ⁶And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. ⁷By faith Noah, warned by God about events as yet unseen, respected the warning and built an ark to save his household; by this he condemned the world and became an heir to the righteousness that is in accordance with faith.

The Faith of Abraham

⁸By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised. ¹²Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, 'as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.'

¹³All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, ¹⁴for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷By faith Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, ¹⁸of whom he had been told, 'It is through Isaac that descendants shall be named after you.' ¹⁹He considered the fact that God is able even to raise someone from the dead—and figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. ²⁰By faith Isaac invoked blessings for the future on Jacob and Esau. ²¹By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, 'bowing in worship over the top of his staff.' ²²By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave instructions about his burial.

The Faith of Moses

²³By faith Moses was hidden by his parents for three months after his birth, because they saw that the child was beautiful; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. ²⁴By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶He considered abuse suffered for the Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the reward. ²⁷By faith he left Egypt, unafraid of the king's anger; for he persevered as though he saw him who is invisible. ²⁸By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

The Faith of Other Israelite Heroes

²⁹ By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. ³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

³² And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— ³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented— ³⁸of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰since God had provided something better so that they would not, without us, be made perfect.

Hebrews 12

¹⁸ You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. ²⁰(For they could not endure the order that was given, 'If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.') ²¹Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, 'I tremble with fear.' ²²But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.