

## HEROES OF FAITH

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see” are the opening words of **Hebrews chapter 11**, often referred to as the *faith* chapter. The narrative proceeds to highlight a long list of faithful Old Testament characters, including **Abraham**, Abel, Enoch, **Noah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses**, Moses’ parents, the Israelites during the exodus, and Rahab the harlot. **Highlighted** articles on some of these faithful people can be found in **Resources**.

Toward the end of **Hebrews 11**, the writer of Hebrews says, “I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, **David**, Samuel, and the prophets, who through faith . . .” (**Hebrews 11:32**) did mighty things. Everyone mentioned in **Hebrews 11** had faith in God to accomplish what would have been impossible in human strength. Here is how faith was exhibited in the lives of these people of God:

People of Faith	How They Trusted God	Biblical References
<b>Abel</b>	By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead ( <b>Hebrews 11:4</b> ).	<b>Genesis 4:1-5</b>
<b>Enoch</b>	By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him ( <b>Hebrews 11:5-6</b> ).	<b>Genesis 5:21-24</b>
<b>Moses’ parents</b>	By faith Moses’ parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king’s edict ( <b>Hebrews 11:23</b> ).	<b>Exodus 1:22-2:10</b>

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Israelites	In their exodus from Egypt at the mighty hand of God, the Hebrew people by faith “passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned” (Hebrews 11:29).	Exodus 14:10-31
Rahab	By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient (Hebrews 11:31).	Joshua 2:1-24
Gideon	When the Israelites did evil things, God allowed the Midianites to conquer and oppress them. When they cried to the Lord, an angel appeared to Gideon and said the Lord would use him to lead the Israelites to victory over the Midianites. Despite testing God, Gideon did believe and found freedom for the Israelites.	Judges 6:1-8:35
Barak	In another time when the Israelites did evil, they fell to a Canaanite king. The ruling judge of the Israelites at the time, Deborah the only female judge of Israel, gave instruction for Barak to lead 10,000 against their oppressors. Barak believed God and was victorious.	Judges 4:1-24
Samson	During yet another time of evil among the Israelites, a man by the name of Samson was born and anointed by the Spirit of God to bring down the Philistines, their oppressors. Samson was spiritually strong and very physically strong. He was involved in numerous feats of bravery requiring his strength, the last of which was to collapse the pagan temple of the Philistines, killing their rulers and ending their tyranny over the Israelites.	Judges 13:1-16:31
Jephthah	When Ammonites made war with Israel, elders persuaded Jephthah, who was a judge, to return, after being forced to leave his roots, and lead the battle against the Ammonites. Jephthah trusted the Lord, was filled by the Spirit of God, and kept all his vows faithfully.	Judges 11:1-12:7

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Samuel	At a time when prophets and visions from the Lord were rare, Samuel shared with Eli the priest, in faith and at great personal risk, judgments declared by the Lord. As a result of his faith, his credibility as a prophet grew among the people.	<b>1 Samuel 3:11-21</b>
The prophets	The prophets of Israel are cited as persons of great faith since they proclaimed the will and purposes of God despite great personal danger to themselves and their families. Often sharing difficult messages to hear and doing so using unusual techniques, they spoke for God, warned of peril for evildoing, and proclaimed what was to come in the will of God.	All of <b>Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.</b>

The faithful of Hebrews 11 were really not heroes. They were ordinary people who exercised extraordinary faith years ago. They are cited as good examples for us. Even greater things can be done when we exercise our faith *today*. The closing words of Hebrews 11 indicate our connection with those people and how God longs for all of us to be perfected in Jesus Christ . . .

“These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together, with us, would they be made perfect” **(Hebrews 11:39-40)**.

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Here are some other resources you may wish to explore:

[Who was Abel in the Bible? \(compellingtruth.org\)](http://compellingtruth.org)

[Who was Enoch in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

[Moses' Parents Acting Courageously, by Faith by Bob Hoekstra \(blueletterbible.org\)](http://blueletterbible.org)

[Rahab - Her Life & Story in the Bible \(crosswalk.com\)](#)

[Who was Gideon in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[What is the story of Deborah and Barak? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[Who was Samson in the Bible? His Story and Significance \(christianity.com\)](#)

[Who was Jephthah? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[Who was Samuel in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[Introduction to the Prophets | Bible Commentary | Theology of Work](#)