**Hanout: Hebrews 11 – The Faith Hall of Fame**

1. **Introduction:**
   1. This chapter addresses the nature of saving faith and illustrates it with well-chosen examples.
   2. The purpose of these examples of old covenant faith is to…
      1. Encourage all to renew their loyalty to Christ and hold fast to their faith to receive the prize.
      2. Present these ancient champions as though they are looking down from the stands watching us in our race of salvation to see if we will reach the finish line (12:1).
      3. Show saving faith involves a strong trust in God coupled with obedience.
2. **(11:1-3)** **Faith defined:**
   1. (1) How is faith defined?
      1. The Christian faith is a *reasonable* faith produced by examining and reasoning from evidence to come to a proper and confident conclusion that God is, etc. (Rom. 1:18-20).
      2. Because faith based on *evidence* produces confident trust in God, that same faith allows us to accept matters beyond our reason and observance as true (i.e., resurrection, eternity, etc.).
   2. (2) By *this faith* men of old obtained a good testimony, or approval, from God and by it we know that God created the universe from nothing by speaking it into existence.
3. **(11:4-7) Early examples of faith:**
   1. (4) By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice (lit. a *more* sacrifice) than Cain (Gen. 4:4).
      1. Acting by faith, or trust, in God is difficult to comprehend separate from God giving instructions in the matter, seeing faith comes by hearing God’s word (Rom. 10:17).
      2. That Abel though dead still speaks likely means his example of faith has continuing force. Our faith and obedience is what we want to speak of our lives after we are gone.
   2. (5) While Hebrews says Enoch was taken away by faith, Gen. 5:24 says he *walked with God* so *God took him*, indicating true faith walks with God, or lives according to what God says.
   3. (6) What does faith that pleases God require?
   4. (7) What had to be a part of Noah faith to save himself and his household?
4. **(11:8-12) The faith of Abraham and Sarah:**
   1. It is important to understand the nature of Abraham’s faith because he is the classic example of faith (Neh. 9:7-8; Rom. 4:15) and his kind of faith produces righteousness (Gen. 15:6).
   2. (8) Faith caused them to obey and follow God despite *not knowing where they were going*.
   3. (9-10) Abraham’s faith required of him to dwell with his family as strangers in this world without a permanent dwelling.
      1. Even when Abraham entered Canaan, he did not receive it but lived the rest of his life knowing it was *his by promise*.
      2. The mention of Isaac and Jacob indicates the long years in which he wandered while looking for a city not of this creation whose builder is God.
      3. Such is our lot here in this world though we get confused and think otherwise.
   4. (11-12) By faith Sarah bore a son and Abraham became the father of an innumerable nation.
      1. (11) By faith in judging God faithful when He promised to give her a son, she conceived.
      2. (12) So, through Abraham, a man way beyond his years of fathering children, God made a great and innumerable nation of people. Faith in God’s promises overcame the obstacles!
5. **(11:13-16) The hope of the faithful:**
   1. (13) Though all these lived their lives out in faith, what was true of their lives?
   2. (14-16) Their acknowledgement of their pilgrim status admitted that they were seeking a homeland that was heavenly in nature. So God was not ashamed to be called their God.
6. **(11:17-22) The faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph:** 
   1. (17-19) How did God test Abraham and why was this such a difficult test?
      1. By faith Abraham obeyed God trusting that God that would fulfill His previous promises and raise Isaac from the dead, which proved he truly feared God (Gen. 22:12).
   2. (20-21) The faith of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph are singled out to show that as each approached death they looked in faith to things yet unseen.
7. **(11:23-29) The faith of Moses:**
   1. (23) Faith in God caused Moses’ parent to hide him against the king’s command, seeing in his beauty as a token of God’s distinctive purpose for Moses concerning Israel.
   2. (24-28) List the things Moses’s faith in God cause him to do?

* + 1. (24-25) Like Moses who couldn’t be an Israelite (God’s people) and an Egyptian (worldly, sinful) at the same time, we cannot serve God and riches at the same time (Matt. 6:24).
    2. (28) Without faith strong enough to obey God and sprinkle the blood on their doorposts, etc., Moses and Israel would not have been saved.

1. **(29-32) Faith displayed in the Exodus:**
   1. Three examples are given of impossible things achieved by faith.
   2. (29) Though the shift is made to the faith of the *people*, their faith would have been little without Moses who inspired them to wait on God’s salvation (Ex. 14:13) and to cross through the sea.
      1. Yet, the people showed faith by their willingness to walk across the Sea floor with water walled up around them, while the Egyptians died who followed.
   3. (30) According to Joshua 5:2-3, Jericho was a gift (a matter of grace) from God. What does Hebrews 11:30 teach us about the kind of faith needed to receive a gift of God’s grace?

* + 1. I wish our friends could see the above truth in relationship to faith and obedience in baptism, both of which are said to save (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:11-12).
  1. (31) By faith Rahab the harlot didn’t perish with those of unbelief because she received the spies declaring, “the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath” (Josh. 2:11).
     1. Her faith was shown in the work of receiving the spies which *justified* her (Jas. 2:25-26).

1. **(11:33-40) Examples of faith and their significance**
   1. (33-38) Many examples of faith such as Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jepthah, David, and Samuel, are given for the purpose of instilling courage to endure until the end.
      1. (33-37) A list of the victories, trials, and hardships God’s people have endured by faith are given to encourage those facing such things to endure to receive the victory.
         1. (33-34) Who are some of the individuals likely referred to in these two verses?
   2. (39-40) Though they faced much hardship, pain, and death, their faith drove them onward until the very end despite not receiving the promise in this life that we so richly enjoy now in Christ.