

65 In the midst of their belief, these men all died, not having received the promises—having rather seen and greeted them while they were still a long way off—and having confessed that they were strangers and sojourners on the land of promise. 2•Now those who say such things make it evident that they long for their homeland. 3•But, if they were reminiscing about that homeland from which they had come out, they had the opportunity to return. 4•Now, in fact, they want a better one, that is, one given by heaven. 5•Therefore, as for them, God is not ashamed to be called their God. 6•Indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

11:13–16

66 With regard to belief—Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. 2•Indeed, the one who had embraced the promises was willing to offer up that unique son—to him it had been said, “In Isaac your descendents shall be called” [Genesis 21:12]—since he reasoned that God is in fact able to raise him up from the dead. 3•For this reason, he received him back as a sort of parable.

11:17–19

67 With regard to belief—Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come.

11:20

68 With regard to belief—Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph; and “he bowed down in humble gratitude to God over the extent of his branch of the family.” [Genesis 47:31]

11:21

69 With regard to belief—Joseph, when he was reaching his end, made reference to the exodus of the sons of Israel and gave instructions concerning his bones.

11:22

§ 2.3 • The Significance and Nature of Belief in the Times of the Exodus

PART 25

70 With regard to belief—Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw the child to be notable and they were not afraid of the edict of the king.

11:23

71 With regard to belief—Moses, when he was grown, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, opting rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to have the fleeting enjoyment of sin, because he counted the ridicule of the anointed one as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. 2•For he was keeping his eyes on the reward.

11:24–26

72 With regard to belief—he left Egypt, not fearing the fury of the king. 2•Indeed he remained firm in his commitment to do as God instructed, as one who is seeing the invisible outcome.

11:27

73 With regard to belief—he performed the Passover feast and the sprinkling of the blood to the end that the destroyer would not touch their firstborn.

11:28

74 With regard to belief—they passed through the Red Sea as if on dry land. 2•When the Egyptians made the attempt to cross over on it, they drowned.

11:29

11:29

75 With regard to belief—the walls of Jericho collapsed, after they had been marched around for seven days.

11:30

76 With regard to belief—Rahab, the harlot, did not perish along with the disbelieving, because she had received the spies in peace.

11:31

§ 2.4 • The Significance and Nature of Belief in the Lives of Other Jewish Ancestors

PART 26

77 And what more shall I say? 2•For time will fail me if I were to give a full account of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David and also of Samuel and the prophets.

11:32

78 These men, in keeping with their belief, subdued kingdoms, brought about righteousness, obtained promises, closed the mouths of lions, extinguished the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were rendered strong, became mighty in battle, turned away the armies of foreigners. 2•Women welcomed their dead back by means of resurrection.

11:33–35a

79 Now others were tortured, not accepting their freedom, so that they might meet with a better resurrection. 2•And others underwent an ordeal of mockings and scourgings—even more, of chains and imprisonment. 3•They were stoned. 4•They were sawn asunder. 5•They were tried. 6•They died by murder with a sword. 7•They traveled about in sheepskins, in the hide of goats. 8•Being destitute, troubled, abused—these men, of whom the world was not worthy, went wandering about in the wilderness, even in the mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

11:35b–38

80 And all these, even though they had been commended by their belief, did not obtain the promise, because God had foreseen something that was better for us—namely, that they would not realize the final fulfillment of the promise without us.

11:39–40

§ 3 • Final Exhortations to Persist in Belief and Hope

§ 3.1 • Exhortation to Persevere in Belief through Suffering and Persecution

PART 27

81 Therefore, we are to do so too, removing every encumbrance, even the sin that so readily trips us up—because we have such a great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us. 2•In keeping with perseverance, let us run the contest that lies before us by fixing our attention on the leader and finisher of this contest of belief, Jesus. 3•He, for the sake of the joy that lay before him, endured the cross, disregarding the shame, and has been seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

12:1–2

82 Consider carefully the one who persevered through such hostility from sinners against himself, to the end that you not grow weary and fail in your personal resolve. 2• You have not yet encountered opposition to the point of blood as you experience conflict with sin.