

# PUTTING FEET TO YOUR FAITH

## Faith in the midst of the fire – Hebrews 11:35-40

### I. The context of Hebrews 11:35-40

#### A. The book of Hebrews

1. The book was written to encourage believers that were being persecuted.  
*For more information go to [persecution.com](http://persecution.com) which is associated with the missions agency, Voice of the Martyrs.*
2. Some were responding to the persecution by reverting back to Judaism.
3. Hebrews presents the Lord Jesus Christ as being far superior to Judaism.
4. One of the main purposes of the book is to encourage believers to “*go on to maturity.*” (Hebrews 6:1)

#### B. Hebrews chapter 11

1. Hebrews 11 lists 16 names that were examples of those that put feet to their faith.
2. Most of these named individual overcame difficult challenges and God used them to bring deliverance to his people.
3. The key verse in the chapter is Hebrews 11:6 which says that “*Without faith it is impossible to please God . . . and that he rewards those that earnestly seek Him.*”

#### Applications:

- As stated by William Carey: “ Expect great things from God and attempt great things for God.”
- What has your faith in God enabled you to do?
- What can you trust God for today that is beyond your comfort zone or ability?

#### C. The key transition in Hebrews 11:35

1. The pivotal word is “*others*” which means others of a different kind.
2. Note the shift from the “named” to the “unnamed”.
3. The emphasis clearly shifts from those that escaped to those that endured.  
(compare Hebrews 11:34 with Hebrews 11:37)

#### Applications:

- Be very careful not to assume that the absence of deliverance means a lack of faith on the part of a believer. (Hebrews 11:39)
- Realize that it often takes more faith to endure than it does to escape.
- Know that faith does not always lead to material and physical blessings.
- Use Hebrews 11:35-40 to counter those who promote a health, wealth, and prosperity gospel.

### II. The content of Hebrews 11:35-40

#### A. Those that endured severe trials by faith

1. *"Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection."*  
\*\*The resurrection of eternal life is superior to the resurrection of physical life.
2. *"Some faced jeers and flogging."*  
\*\*Note the mental and physical mistreatment
3. *"Others were chained and put in prison"*  
\*\*The key idea here is severe restriction
4. *"They were stoned; they were sawed in two."*  
\*\*The biblical examples of Jeremiah (stoned) and Isaiah (sawed in two)
5. *"They were put to death by the sword"*  
\*\*They were martyred for their faith (note the word *"commended"* in Hebrews 11:39)
6. *"They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted, and mistreated."*  
\*\*The prophets would often wear these garments because of their extreme poverty.
7. *"The world was not worthy of them."*
8. *"They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground."*

#### Applications:

- Know that Satan has a fierce hatred toward those who have great faith.
- Know also that there is an irrational evil that consumes the wicked.  
(see Proverbs 4:14-17)
- With God's help strengthen rather than abandon your faith when severe trials come.

#### B. The rewards of a life of faith

1. *"They were all commended for their faith."*
2. *"Yet none of them received what had been promised."*
3. *"God had planned something better for us" which was the person and work of Jesus Christ.*

#### Applications:

- When you have it all, realize that God is better; and when you lose it all, realize that God is better.
- Develop and share a death-defying passion for God.
- Ask God to increase your faith and your perseverance.