

The Promises of God - Lesson 1

Introduction:

1. With this lesson we are beginning a study of "the promises of God."
2. To introduce this series of lessons we are studying Hebrews 11:13-16.
3. As we study these verses, we must:
 - a. keep in mind the theme of Hebrews
 - b. consider the context
 - c. carefully examine the information revealed in them.

Discussion:

- I. LET US KEEP IN MIND THE THEME OF HEBREWS
 - A. The writer referred to his letter as *"the word of exhortation"* (13:22).
 1. It was written to Hebrew Christians who were facing affliction.
 2. The writer wanted the Hebrew Christians to be ready for a *"day"* that was approaching (10:25).
 - B. Hebrews was written to encourage Christians to remain faithful to the Lord.
- II. LET US CONSIDER THE CONTEXT OF THESE VERSES
 - A. According to 10:36, *"patience"* is required of those who desire to receive God's promise.
 - B. In ch.11 we read about Old Testament characters who demonstrated patience.
 - C. Their examples of patience will motivate us to run our race *"with patience"* (12:1).
- III. LET US EXAMINE THE INFORMATION REVEALED IN THESE VERSES
 - A. Vs.13 mentions some people who *"died in faith, not having received the promises."*
 1. They believed the promises that God made to them, they considered themselves to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth, they refused to return to the country they left, and they were looking for a heavenly city.
 2. God was *"not ashamed to be called their God."*
 - B. The people under consideration in these verses were:
 1. Abraham (vs.8-10)
 - a. God made special promises to him (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:4-5, 18; 17:1-8).
 - b. Were all these promises fulfilled before Abraham died?
 2. Sara (vs.11-12)
 - a. God made special promises to her (Genesis 17:15-16; 18:9-11).
 - b. Were all these promises fulfilled before Sara died?
 3. Isaac (vs.20)
 - a. God made special promises to him (Genesis 26:1-4).
 - b. Were all these promises fulfilled before Isaac died?
 4. Jacob (vs.21).
 - a. God made special promises to him (Genesis 28:12-15).
 - b. Were all these promises fulfilled before Jacob died?
 - C. Abraham, Sara, Isaac, and Jacob *"died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."*
 - D. Also, God was not ashamed to be called their God (Exodus 3:6).
 - E. As Hebrews 11 concludes we see that all the Old Testament characters listed obtained a good report through faith without receiving the promise (vs.39).
- IV. APPLICATION
 - A. This introductory lesson illustrates the need for Christians to carefully study and examine God's promises.
 - B. We learn from Hebrews 11:13-16 that *"trusting in God's promises will lead us to serve Him faithfully."*
 - C. We have certain advantages over the men and women listed in this chapter in that God has *"provided some better thing for us"* (vs.40).
 - D. Let us exercise patience so we can receive the promise (10:36).