

Hebrews Chapter 11 Continued

Verses 8-19: "Abraham" (see Gen. 11:27 – 25:11).

Hebrews 11:8 "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

"A place ... inheritance": The land of Canaan, far from his original home in Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. 11:31). He went by faith.

When God called Abraham to follow Him, Abram (as he was known then), lived in Ur of the Chaldees. Abram was not from a God fearing family. Abram's father had been an idolater. Ur was a city of great wealth. Abram's family was thought by historians to be very well to do. Historians say that he probably lived in a house with at least 16 rooms.

Abram would never live in a house again. He would wander, living in tents, looking for a city whose maker is God. Let us look first at the call God made on Abram.

Genesis 12:1 "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:"

Genesis 12:4 "So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram [was] seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran." The remarkable thing in this to me, is that God told him to leave his homeland, and he did without even questioning. Look in the next verses what God promised him.

Genesis 17:1-6 "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I [am] the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." "And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." "And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, " "As for me, behold, my covenant [is] with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations." "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." "And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee."

These promises to Abraham go much further than just making him a father of many nations. It also promises the land of Israel will be an everlasting inheritance as well. We read in the next verse, what made Abraham righteous in God's sight.

Genesis 15:6 "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

Hebrews 11:9 "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as [in] a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:"

“Promise”: Neither Abraham, Isaac, nor Jacob was able to settle permanently in or possess the land God promised to them (verse 10). Abraham first went there in faith, and they all lived there in faith, believing in a promise of possession that would not be fulfilled for many generations beyond their lifetimes (Gen. 12:7).

Hebrews 11:10 "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God."

“City”: Abraham’s ultimate and permanent Promised Land was heaven which, through faith, he knew he would ultimately inherit. This city is mentioned again (in verses 16; 12:22; 13:14).

The important thing in all of this is that Abraham believed God. This is the most important thing in our life as well. We must stop looking at homes and things here on the earth and look for the home in heaven which God has provided for all who believe. This city Abraham was looking for was the New Jerusalem that comes down from God out of heaven.

2 Corinthians 5:1 "For we now that if our earthly house of [this] tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Revelation 21:2 "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

Verses 11-12: Sarah (see Gen 11:27 – 23:2; 1 Peter 3:5-6).

Hebrews 11:11 "Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised."

“She was past age”: At 90 (Gen. 17:17), she was long past child-bearing age and had never been able to conceive. God enabled her, however, because of her faith in His promise (Gen. 21:1-3).

Genesis 17:17 "Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall [a child] be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" This seemed so strange because Sarah had already gone through the change of life.

The thing that she and Abraham had forgotten is that you have to have an impossibility, before you can have a miracle. This is not a child of the flesh. This is a miracle baby. This is Abraham's and Sarah's child of promise from God. He is of the spirit, not of the flesh.

We see here that Sarah had faith that what God said, He would do. Sarah had the baby because she believed God's promise.

Hebrews 11:12 "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, [so many] as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable."

“As good as dead”: At 99, Abraham was well beyond the age to father children apart from divine intervention (Gen. 17:1, 15-17; 21:1-5).

“Stars ... sand”: This is hyperbole to stress the vastness of the population that would come from Abraham’s loins (see Genesis 15:4-5; 22:17).

This came to pass in the physical house of Israel (descended from Abraham). We know that close to 3 million descendants of Abraham came out of Egypt and went to the holy land. Even more than this is the spiritual descendants of Abraham (the believers in Christ).

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

We see the number of this group of believers are so great, that they are beyond number (in Revelation).

Revelation 7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;"

Now let us see for sure who this large group is.

Revelation 7:13-14 "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." God does not lie, He fulfilled His promise to Abraham.

Verses 13-16: “Strangers and pilgrims”: (See Gen. 23:4). Their faith was patient and endured great hardships because they believed God had something better. They had no desire to go back to Ur, but did long for heaven (Job 19:25-26; Psalm 27:4).

Hebrews 11:13 "These all 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."

“These all”: The reference is to the patriarchs only (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). This interpretation is supported by the fact that the promises began with Abraham (Acts 7:17; Rom. 4:13; Gal 3:14-18), and were passed on to Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5, 24), and Jacob (Gen. 28:10-15).

In addition, only those individuals fit the description (in verse 15), and Enoch did not die (see note on 6:15). These people of faith didn’t know when they would inherit the promise. They had a life in the land, but did not possess it.

Abraham was aware that there would come a redeemer to the world. As I have expressed, I believe Abraham got a glimpse of what was to happen in Melchizedek. In the next few Scriptures, we will find that Jesus went to hell and preached to those who had not had the opportunity to know Him. They believed and He brought them out with Him.

1 Peter 3:18-20 "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:" "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;" "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

Ephesians 4:8 "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

Even today, in Israel, the holy men are looking for the coming Messiah. He had been promised since the third chapter of Genesis. These men of the Old Testament were not living when Jesus did come as Savior, but they knew He would come and they believed.

1 Chronicles 29:14-15 "But who [am] I, and what [is] my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things [come] of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." "For we [are] strangers before thee, and sojourners, as [were] all our fathers: our days on the earth [are] as a shadow, and [there is] none abiding."

This is the fate of all mankind. Our days on the earth are but a blink of the eye compared to all of eternity. We too, should be looking for that city whose maker is God.

Hebrews 11:14 "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."

The earth is not our home, we are just passing through. The Christian is homesick for heaven, our home. We are in the world, but we are not of the world.

2 Corinthians 5:1-7 "For we know that if our earthly house of [this] tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:" If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked." The clothing that we shall wear is the white linen robe of righteousness that has been washed in the blood of the Lamb." "For we that are in [this] tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing [is] God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." "Therefore [we are] always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:" "(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)"

I will give just one more Scripture that shows what happens to us at what is commonly known as death.

1 Corinthians 15:54 "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

What can I say to add to this? The victory for every Christian is to shed this flesh and blood and go in our spiritual body to our home in heaven with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hebrews Chapter 11 Continued Questions

1. Abraham _____ God and went to a land, not knowing where he was going.
2. What was Abraham's name before God changed it?
3. What religious background did Abraham's father have?
4. Describe the city of Ur.
5. Abraham probably lived in a house with how many rooms?
6. Where would Abraham live?
7. What was Abraham looking for?
8. When God called Abraham, what did He tell him to do?
9. How did Abram respond?
10. How old was Abram when he departed Haran?
11. Who went with Abram?
12. What does the author believe to be remarkable about this?
13. How old was Abram in Genesis chapter 17 verse 1?
14. Who did the Lord tell Abram He was?
15. What was Abram to do for the blessings?
16. What covenant promises did God make to Abraham?
17. Why did God change his name to Abraham?
18. What made Abraham righteous in God's sight?
19. What 2 other men were mentioned through whom the blessings would come?

20. What is this city, Abraham was looking for?
21. What lesson is in this for us?
22. We know if this earthly tabernacle were dissolved, we would have what?
23. Where does new Jerusalem come from?
24. What is new Jerusalem compared to?
25. How did Sara receive strength to conceive in her old age?
26. Who was her confidence in?
27. How old was Abraham and Sarah when she had the baby Isaac?
28. To have a miracle what must the circumstances be?
29. In Hebrews 11:12, we see Abraham's descendants number how many?
30. How many physical descendants of Abraham came out of Egypt?
31. Who are an even greater number than that of his descendants (spiritual)?
32. What did Abraham's seed say they were in Hebrews 11:13?
33. When Jesus preached in hell, what happened?
34. Who are the holy men in Israel looking for today?
35. What are days on earth described as in 1 Chronicles 29:15?
36. The earth is not our _____.
37. Christians are ___ this world, but not ___ this world.
38. What will Christians wear in heaven?
39. Whilst we are at home in the body, we are _____ from the Lord.
40. What must this mortal put on for our stay in heaven?
41. What is victory for the Christian?