

## Hebrews Bible Study – Year 2 – Lesson 9

### Notes

#### Hebrews 11:8-10

*8 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. Heb 11:8-10*

#### The meaning of the word 'Faith'

In Greek, the root word from which we get 'faith', the noun is Pistis, and 'believe', the verb is Pistueo. One goes with the other they are not separate.

Faith means- belief, firm persuasion, assurance, firm conviction, faithfulness. Faith is confident in what we hope for and the assurance that the Lord is working, even though we cannot see it. Faith knows that no matter what the situation in our lives or someone else's, the Lord is working in it.

It is the act whereby a person lays hold of God's resources, becomes obedient to what He has prescribed and putting aside all self-interest and self-reliance, trusts Him completely. It is an unqualified surrender of the whole of one's being in dependence upon Him. It is wholly trusting and relying upon Him for all things. It is not just mental assent to the facts and realities of truth, it must come from a deep inner conviction. (Proverbs 3:5)

Faith and belief are the connectors that link us with God and make Him a reality in our lives. Faith is the beginning in a relationship with God (Hebrews 11:1; 11:6)

Our text mentions a man named Abraham. He is known as "The Father of The Faithful." This man is revered by over one-half the world's population. In our day, Abraham is held in high esteem by Jews, Muslims and Christians. In ancient times the Jews considered Abraham to be almost worthy of their worship. In the Bible, Abraham is presented to us as a great example of a man who lived his life by faith, (Heb. 11:8-19). James 2:23 records the fact that Abraham was called the "Friend of God."

If you will take the time to observe Abraham's life, you will see that he has the marks of genuine faith. The same marks that were in his life will also be in ours when we are saved.

A. **Pilgrimage of Faith** – Abraham was a lost pagan living in a place called Ur of the Chaldees, (Gen. 11:28). He was raised in a society of people that worshiped a moon god. He was headed to Hell; but we are told that God "called" him to go with

God. Somehow, God spoke to Abraham's heart and told him to leave the land he was living in and go to a new place. God moved on his heart and called him out.

This is how faith comes to every person that has it! No one wakes up one morning thinking today is the day I will get saved. The lost sinner cannot think that way. Why? He is dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. 2:1-3. He is blinded by the god of this world, (2 Cor. 4:4). He has no desire for God, (Rom. 3:10-12), and he has no ability to get to God. He is dead!

On the day assigned by God, however, He begins to move in the lost sinner's heart. God quickens that dead spirit and causes the sinner to become aware of his sins, (Rom. 3:23). He makes the sinner aware of the wrath of God and of the coming judgment on sin (John 3:18; 36; Rom. 6:23). He shows that sinner that he is headed to Hell and that he has only one hope of salvation. God takes that sinner and points him to Jesus; to the Lamb of God Who died on the cross and rose from the dead. And God in His sovereign way calls, "If you will come to Me through faith in My Son, I will save you from your sins; deliver you from My wrath and give you eternal life!" (my paraphrase) This call is called conviction and without it no one will ever be saved, (John 6:44-45).

Have you ever experienced that divine call that brings the conviction of sins? That is the essential first step in acquiring genuine faith in God!

B. **Involves a Response** – We are told that when Abraham heard the call of the Lord, he "obeyed." He did what God told him to do! This faith in God is what brought salvation to Abraham, (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3; Eph. 2:8).

This is the second step in acquiring genuine faith in God. First you are called, and then you come! When you come, Jesus promises to receive you and to keep you, (John 6:37-40). It is not enough to know that you are a lost sinner. It is not enough to be convicted. You must come to God by faith, repenting of your sins and trusting Jesus for your salvation. But, don't fear, when He calls, He also gives you the faith to believe and be saved, (Eph. 2:8-9).

Can you recall a moment in your life when you turned from your sins to embrace Jesus? Placing your faith in Him is an essential component of salvation. It is not enough to join the church, become a "better" person, turn over a new leaf, get baptized, or to try to stop sinning. The Bible says, "ye must be born again," (John 3:3; 7).

When did it take place in your life? That moment is the instant when genuine faith is born in your heart. The moment when you respond to God's call in humble obedience is the first and most important mark of genuine faith.

Salvation comes down to you by hearing His call and you seeking Him. To follow Jesus means that you will love what He loves; hate what He hates; go where He goes; and do what He does.

**C. The Attitude of Faith** – Isaiah refers to Abraham as *“the rock from which you were hewn”* and *“the quarry from which you were dug”* (Isaiah 51:1-2), it reminds his fellow Jews that God sovereignly and purposefully called Abraham out of paganism and idolatry in order to bless him and the world through him. God did not call him because of his moral standard, He chose him because He wanted to choose him. When God spoke to Abraham, he listened, when God promised, he trusted, when God commanded, he obeyed.

When any person comes to Christ, God demands of him a pilgrimage from his old pattern of living into a new kind of life. Just as Abraham’s faith separated him from paganism and unbelief and started him toward a new land and a new kind of life. *“Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come”*. (2 Corinthians 5:17). The life of faith begins with the willingness to leave one’s Ur, one’s place of sin and unbelief. We cannot see the blessings and satisfaction of life in Christ before we trust Him as Lord and Savior.

**D. The Patience of Faith** – In salvation, we get a whole new way to live and a whole new address. (Rom 12:2) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

This world and all of it’s attractions is not ours, we are considered aliens and strangers here now, this isn’t our home any longer, we are just passing through and like Abraham, we are awaiting further instructions as to what He would have us do and where He would have us go. It will take a whole lifetime here to accomplish His will. God will teach us how to turn loose of the things here that keep us bound to this world and this life. He will allow situations in our lives that will give us opportunity to turn loose of things that are keeping us focused on this world and this life, and He will help us persevere for the sake of the brethren who need Godly examples of faith in the future.

Not only did Abraham hear and heed the call of God; he also proved the reality of his faith by the way he lived out the remainder of his life. Notice how his faith expressed itself as the years passed by. *“He went out, not knowing where he was going.”* That is an act of faith! He did not know where he would end up, but he trusted the Lord to lead him along the right path!

God is not looking for people who have everything figured out. He is looking for people who will trust Him to direct their path. He is looking for people who will follow Him as Lord, and who will fall in line behind Him and go where He leads! Sometimes His paths are hard, but they are always the best, (Psa. 37:23; Job 23:10); Faith knows this and lives as God leads.

From the time Abraham left Ur, he and his people lived in tents. Even at that time in history, tents were not considered permanent dwellings. Even as nice as they might have been, they were not permanent. Abraham's faith required patience, God has promised that Abraham would be blessed, and yet he didn't ever own the land that he traveled through. His faith had to keep its eyes on God and not on the land or belongings. He waited all of his life for the land of promise, which was never given. Yet he waited and watched and worked in the patient belief that God is faithful. Can we do that when things don't turn out according to our expectations? Can we still be patient and know that God is faithful?

**E. Faith's Expectation** – Abraham's faith was an expectant faith. It was a faith that looked beyond the here and now and embraced a time far into the future. Notice what his faith expected, a Heavenly hope – Even as he journeyed from place to place in Canaan, pitching his tent and following the leadership of the Lord, Abraham was looking for another country. Even as he looked to God to give him and his offspring the Promised Land; he had his eye on another land that would be his someday. He lived with this hope and it sustained him through many hard miles and many harsh trials.

Genuine faith walks through this world with the same kind of hope. Peter called it a "lively hope, (1 Peter 1:3-4). It is the sure knowledge that someday, the saints of God will leave this world and fly away for one that is far better. We are pilgrims and strangers here, (1 Pet. 2:11). This faith keeps the child of God going through the trials, tragedies and troubles that plague us here. This hope came in when Jesus entered our hearts, (Col. 1:27). As Abraham journeyed, he longed for the day when he could settle down. He was not looking for a city on this earth, but he was looking for a heavenly city, built by God, where he could live forever in the presence of the Lord.

As we journey through this world, we know that we are not home yet. We know that there is a city called Heaven and The New Jerusalem, where we will settle down and wander no more. Like Abraham, the genuine faith that occupies the hearts of God's children, longs for that Heavenly home.

1. **Faith Looks For A Prepared Home** – "builder and maker" – We look for a home prepared for us by the Lord Himself. This was His promise, (John 14:1-3), and faith expects Him to keep it. Faith will not be disappointed!
2. **Faith Looks For A Perfect Home** – "God" – This home will be built by God and God builds perfection. The home He is preparing for His people is a perfect land designed for a perfected people. In that land, none of the things that blemish this land will ever be found there, (Rev. 21:4; Rev. 21:27). It is glorious beyond description and faith longs to be there!

3. **Faith Looks For A Permanent Home** – “foundations” – This home is not a temporary home like the tents Abraham dwelt in, or the homes we live in. That heavenly home is a permanent home, a place that will never fade away, fall away, rust away or rot away, (1 Pet. 1:4; Matt. 6:19-20). It is a permanent home, and faith longs to settle down there.

As we look at these verses about Abraham’s faith walk with God. We look at his struggles, we look at God’s promises, and as children of God, we want what God promised Abraham, the promise of blessings. Unfortunately, oftentimes we look at the wrong things as blessings, we look to this world and what it calls blessings. But Romans gives us a different picture of the blessings of God to His children.

*Rom 8:16-17 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.*

What a beautiful inheritance we have as children of God, first of all a relationship with Christ all of our living days, and being allowed to be Ambassadors of Christ, and then joint heirs with Jesus, all He has is ours. And then lastly, for all eternity Heaven and the New Jerusalem will be our home. We are indeed blessed children and have a greater inheritance than anything we could have here on this earth. Like Abraham, let us keep walking by faith.

John MacArthur – Commentary  
John MacArthur - Sermon on Hebrews 11:8-10  
An Exposition of Hebrews, AW Pink,