

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

BOOK OF HEBREWS

FAITH AND THE FLOOD (HEBREWS 11:1-7)

THE EYES FOR THE UNSEEN

Our eyesight leads us in the natural, our faith leads us in the spiritual, or unseen. We often say, "Seeing is believing," but in Christianity believing is seeing. Faith lets the unseen realities of God provide a living, effective power for all aspects of life.

IT TAKES FAITH TO BELIEVE GOD MADE THE UNIVERSE

v3 is a companion of Romans 1:20. Paul alludes to the evidence and complexity of the universe being an arrow that points to God, but v3 confirms that it still takes faith to believe He is Creator. **Creation displays God's power.**

THE FAITH OF ABEL (GENESIS 4:3-7)

Gen. 4 doesn't tell us exactly why Abel's sacrifice is better than Cain's, but here we get clarity. It was the genuine faith of Abel as opposed to the half-hearted approach of **Cain that made the sacrifice acceptable. Cain held back, but Abel was obedient.** Abel's obedience echoed for generations, even though he was murdered

THE FAITH OF ENOCH (GENESIS 5:24)

Enoch "walked with God, then he was not there because God took him." His release from death was due to tremendous faith and living a life that pleased God.

"WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD"

We must "draw near to him" and know "He exists and rewards those who seek him"

THE FAITH OF NOAH (GENESIS 6-9)

Noah faced ridicule for being obedient to God and building an ark in preparation for a catastrophic event that "was not seen and motivated by godly fear"

- Noah's **obedience and visible faith** made him right with God

THE PATRIARCHS (HEBREWS 11:8-22)

THE FAITH OF FATHER ABRAHAM (GENESIS 12-25)

Once a worshipper of the moon god Nanna and other idols, Abraham responded to the call of God and is now the most revered man in the world's largest religions.

- Abraham left his hometown by faith, and let God lead him. He didn't receive his reward immediately or even know the location of the Promised Land.

WE LEARN SOME FACTS ABOUT ABE'S FAITH

1. His faith extended to his family, mainly Isaac and Jacob.
 2. He showed strong faith by living in a foreign land with no rights or privileges.
 3. Abe wasn't just looking for a physical Promised Land, but a spiritual one.
- **We need God as the "architect and builder" of all aspects of our life. We must be dependent on His "foundations"**

ABE'S GREATEST DEMONSTRATION OF FAITH (GENESIS 17)

Abe was 100 and Sarah was 90 when God told them they would have children. Sarah laughed at first, but then embraced the promise along with Abe.

- 2 people "as good as dead" (V12) had faith and became the starting point of a people "as numerous as the stars... and sand on the seashore"

SUMMARIZING THE PATRIARCHS ABE, ISAAC, JACOB AND JOSEPH (V13-16).

1. They lived by faith all the way to death.
2. They did not receive their promise in their lifetime. They trusted God to give future generations what they only hoped for.
3. They confessed they were "temporary residents"

THE RESULT OF SUCH FAITH WAS GOD WAS NOT ASHAMED TO BE THEIR GOD

He has prepared a more glorious city and promise for them than they imagined

- This is how God works. **We have promises given to us if we're obedient and in our times of confusion, God not only delivers, but He does so in a way that exceeds our expectations**

ANOTHER ACT OF GREAT FAITH FROM ABE (V17-19)

God that miraculously gave Abe a son, later asked him to sacrifice Isaac. Though he had never witnessed a resurrection, Abe's faith was so strong he thought God would bring his son back from the dead. **Whatever God gives us is His, but are we willing to sacrifice everything if He asks?**

FAITH THROUGH GENERATIONS (V20-22)

Abe, Isaac, and Jacob trusted God's sovereignty and passed down their faith to the generation following them. Joseph, the 11th son of Jacob, showed his faith in mentioning an exodus of his people from Egypt centuries before it happened.

- **Faith is openhanded, not just in trusting God, but in equipping others to carry the torch when we're irrelevant**

THE FAITH OF MOSES (HEBREWS 11:23-28)

FROM BIRTH MOSES WAS UNIQUE

Acts 7:20 says. that from birth Moses was special. His parents went to great lengths to keep him alive. His parents had such strong faith that they broke the king's edict to have male children killed, and God honored their faith (Exodus 2:8-9)

MOSES STEPPED OUT ON FAITH AS AN ADULT

Moses grew up in the lap of luxury under the pharaoh, but he made a deliberate choice to leave those comforts and join in the sufferings of God's people. **He refused temporary pleasures that ease and sin provide and held on to the eternal pleasures of following God.**

SUFFERING IDENTIFIES US WITH CHRIST

Colossians 1:24 mentions it's a pleasure to suffer like Christ for the church. Isaiah said similar things in 63:9. When Moses suffered, he suffered with Christ for His people.

Hebrews is urging the reader to do the same; **suffer like Christ for His people.** This identifies us with Him **HIS FAITH LED HIM TO EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS**

We know Moses as the man that defied a pharaoh and led the Jews out of slavery, split the Red Sea with his staff, and received the 10 Commandments from God.

- Moses **lived by faith in a God he couldn't see, and it literally saved his life multiple times.**

THE FAITH OF ISRAEL (HEBREWS 11:29-40)

THE FAITH OF ISRAEL

Because of the faith of the Jews, their history is packed with miraculous events. The first one mentioned here is the walls of Jericho falling after 7 days of Joshua and the Jews being obedient to God's commands (Joshua 2)

- We also read of the pagan prostitute Rahab that responded to the Spirit's nudge that moved her to aid the spies.

TIME IS TOO SHORT TO EVEN MENTION THEM ALL (V32)

The author mentions Gideon (Judges 6-8), Barak (Judges 4-5), Samson (Judges 13-16), and Jephthah (Judges 11-12) but confesses there isn't enough time to brag about these men's faith. They would've known these stories, especially Samuel and David

9 STATEMENTS OF EXTRAORDINARY FAITH (V33-34)

...by faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice (Joshua 8), obtained promises (1 Samuel 7), shut the mouths of lions, quenched the raging of fire (Daniel 3:6), escaped the edge of the sword, gained strength after being weak (Isaiah 38), became mighty in battle, and put foreign armies to flight (2 Samuel 8).

MORE EVIDENCE OF REMARKABLE FAITH (V35-38)

Through faith Elisha raised a woman's son back to life, faith enabled "men to be **tortured**" but not give up their hope, others endured "**mocking and scourging**" as well as "**imprisonments**" for their beliefs. Some were **stoned, sawed in two**, or lived "**destitute, afflicted, and mistreated**" in "deserts, mountains, and caves"

"THE WORLD WAS NOT WORTHY OF THEM"

The extreme difficulty faced by the heroes of the OT led the author to exclaim that the "world was not worthy of them"

- Faith in God doesn't guarantee comfort in this lifetime but does promise a great reward in the life to come. **The world is not worthy of the faithful, because our source of hope is not of this world.**

WE ARE APPROVED BY OUR FAITH

Though we may not "receive what was promised" while on this earth, we must be assured that God "does not delay His promises as some understand delay."

- **God is faithful in honoring obedience and dedication.** Faith earns favor with God and will one day put us in the same eternity as the heroes of our faith.

WHERE ARE WE AT THE MOMENT?

- Called to do something radical, but fear ridicule
- Afraid time has passed and God can't use you for great things
- Treated unfairly, but called to show grace
- Called to lead even though it's not natural
- Told to break down some unstoppable wall
- Sold yourself out but feel God pulling you to join Him

WE CAN GET THERE, BUT WE NEED HELP

- God does extraordinary things with ordinary people, but it takes faith. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing from the Word (Romans 10:17). If we commit to Him in prayer, study, and obedience,
- He will do amazing things in and through us.