

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 13TH, 2025 // HEBREWS

FAITH DEFINED (HEBREWS 11:1-7) SENSES FOR BOTH WORLDS

Our eyesight is the sense that leads us in the material world, but our faith is the “sense” that leads us in the spiritual, or unseen, world.

- Faith is not a “blind leap.” Our reasons for faith are not able to be measured physically but must be understood spiritually. The world says, “Seeing is believing,” but we say, “**Believing is seeing.**”

A BELIEF BEYOND REASON

Faith is needed for what we can't see with our eyes and touch with our hands. For example, reason says that the universe came into existence, but it is by faith that we believe it was “created by the word of God.”

- Paul (Romans 1:20) and the Psalmist (Psalm 19:1) both allude to **the splendor and complexity of the created universe pointing to a creator.**
- Romans 1:20

“FOR BY THIS OUR ANCESTORS WERE APPROVED”

The audience needed encouragement through the examples of faith in others. There are many great examples of godliness throughout Scripture, and everyone had different circumstances and personalities, but **they all had one thing in common—faith.**

- It was the patriarchs' faith that justified them, not their works (Genesis 15:6).

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

Verse 4 gives us insight that Genesis 4 does not offer about why Abel's sacrifice was better than Cain's.

- **The genuine faith of Abel made his sacrifices acceptable** as opposed to Cain's evil half-hearted approach (1 John 3:12). Even the violent death of Abel could not stop the message of his faith from being shared for generations.

THE FAITH OF ENOCH (GENESIS 5:21-24)

Enoch, a mysterious man of the OT, is the man who “walked with God, then he was not there because God took him.”

- **Enoch escaped death because of his tremendous faith and living a life that pleased God.** We seek to follow the example of Enoch instead of getting caught in the weeds.

“WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD”

Enoch shows us that true fellowship with God cannot exist without faith. One must draw “**near to him,**” “**believe that he exists,**” and that “**he rewards those who seek him.**”

- When we seek, He reveals Himself to us. He gives us the opportunity to fellowship with him and, therefore, **fulfill the purpose for which we were created** (Revelation 4:11).

THE FAITH OF NOAH (GENESIS 6-9)

Noah was warned of a catastrophic event unlike anything they had ever seen. He was motivated by a godly fear to believe a flood was coming and to also do what God was telling him to do because a flood was coming.

- Real faith is genuine and active. **Faith moves us from belief to doing something with our beliefs** (James 2:18).

THE PATRIARCHS (HEBREWS 11:8-22)

THE FAITH OF FATHER ABRAHAM (GENESIS 12-25)

Abraham, who once worshiped a false god and many idols, responded in faith to God and is now the most revered man in the world's largest religion.

- Paul dedicated a section of writing (Romans 4) to Abraham's faith leading him to **leave his hometown, led by God to a location that he did not even know.**

TRUTHS ABOUT ABRAHAM'S FAITH

- His faith extended to his family, namely to Isaac and then Jacob.
- He displayed strong faith by living as a “sojourner” in a foreign land.
- His faith propelled him to a greater city, a “city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.” **We are to live as “sojourners” desiring to reside in God's will.**

A GREAT EXAMPLE OF FAITH (GENESIS 17)

Abraham received the promise of offspring when he was 75 but did not have his son Isaac until he was 100 and Sarah was 90.

- Through faith, though imperfect, they waited 25 years for God's promises, and two people considered “**as good as dead**” became the starting point of a people as numerous “**as the stars**” and “**sand along the seashore.**”

“THESE ALL DIED IN FAITH” (VS. 13-16)

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph lived by faith all the way to their deaths. Though they never received the promise in their lifetime, they trusted God to give future generations what they only hoped for. They made it clear that they were “temporary residents.”

- God was pleased with them and prepared a more glorious city **exceeding their expectations.**

“BY FAITH ABRAHAM...OFFERED UP ISAAC”

God miraculously gave Abraham Isaac then later asked him to sacrifice him. In faith that God could raise someone from the dead, Abraham set out to fulfill what God had asked of him.

- To Abraham, Isaac was as good as dead, so when God stopped him, **it was from the dead that he received him back.**

FAITH THROUGH GENERATIONS

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob trusted in God's sovereignty and were **examples to the generations that followed.**

- Joseph, the 11th son of Jacob, spoke of an exodus from Egypt centuries before it happened. Joseph did not want to be buried in Egypt so his coffin above ground could serve as a **reminder of his faith in God's promises.**

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

“BY FAITH MOSES...”

God specifically chose Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt to salvation in the Promised Land.

- From birth, Moses was special (Acts 7:20) and his parents went to great lengths to keep him alive. As Moses grew into adulthood, he began to empathize with the plight of the Hebrews and fled to Midian.

“HE WAS LOOKING AHEAD TO THE REWARD”

Moses left behind safety and security as the “son of Pharaoh's daughter” and chose to suffer with God's people.

- Moses knew that all the treasure that came with being the “son of Pharaoh's daughter” could not hold a candle to the reward from **being identified with Christ through suffering** (1 Peter 4:13).

EXTRAORDINARY FAITH

Moses' faith guided him in obedience to God but in defiance of Pharaoh. He spared his people from slaughter in the Passover, led the Jews out of slavery, split the Red Sea with his staff, and received the 10 Commandments.

- Moses lived by faith in a God he could not see. **His faithful obedience saved his life and the lives of others on multiple occasions.**

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

THE FAITH OF ISRAEL AND RAHAB

By faith, Israel crossed the Red Sea and watched as the walls of Jericho came crashing down.

- Though they could not see exactly what God was doing by nudging a pagan prostitute to assist spies (Joshua 2) and commanding them to march for seven days, **they continued in obedient faith.**

OTHER HEROES OF FAITH

In verse 32, the author mentions others who had extraordinary faith but says the time is too short to talk in depth about their faith.

- The audience would have been familiar with the stories of Gideon (Judges 6-8), Barak (Judges 4-5), Samson (Judges 13-16), Jephthah (Judges 11-12), and especially David and Samuel.

THE STORIES OF THEIR EXTRAORDINARY FAITH

“...who by faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice [Joshua 8], obtained promises [1 Samuel 7], shut the mouths of lions, quenched the raging fire [Daniel 3; 6], escaped the edge of the sword, gained strength in weakness [Isaiah 38], became mighty in battle, and put foreign armies to flight [2 Samuel 8].”

FURTHER EVIDENCE OF EXTRAORDINARY FAITH

It was through faith that Elisha raised a woman's son back to life. Faith enabled men to be “tortured” but not give up their hope, others endured “mockings and scourgings” as well as “imprisonment” for the faith. Some “were stoned,... sawed in two” or lived “destitute, afflicted, and mistreated” in “deserts,” “mountains,” and “caves.”

THIS IS NOT OUR HOME

After looking at the extreme difficulty these faith heroes faced, the author powerfully states, “**The world was not worthy of them.**”

- The world is not worthy of the faithful because **our source of hope is not of this world.** It is by faith that they were approved. It is that same faith that earns favor with God and will one day place us in the same eternity with them.

DRAWING INSPIRATION

- Have you been called to do something, but fear ridicule?
- Do you believe “your time” has passed for God to do great things through you?
- Have you been called to lead though it does not come naturally to you?
- Is there an unscalable wall in your way that needs to fall?

WHAT NOW?

- Have you given yourself over to the world, but feel God's nudge to join Him?
- Faith is openhanded, not just in trusting God, but in equipping others to go on to do greater things than us.
- Faith comes by hearing, and hearing from the Word (Romans 10:17). Through obedient faith we will see amazing things!