

So far in our study of chapter 11 in the book of Hebrews, we are trying to answer a vital question, which is: “WHAT KIND OF FAITH DOES GOD ACCEPT?”

We have looked at several examples of why faith is necessary to please God, and what that faith truly looks like.

I gave this title to my sermon on chapter 11.

WHY FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS IS COMMENDED

I SUGGESTED IN THE FIRST SERMON THAT BEFORE WE CAN SEE WHY FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS IS COMMENDED, WE NEEDED TO:

1. DESCRIBE WHAT FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS LOOKS LIKE:

IN OUR FIRST SERMON WE LOOKED AT THREE EXAMPLES WHICH WERE:

- 1.1 **ABEL HAD A SACRIFICE DEFINING FAITH**
 - 1.1.1 **ABEL'S OFFERING POINTED TO A LAMB**
 - 1.1.2 **ABEL OFFERED THE “FIRSTBORN”**
 - 1.1.3 **ABEL OFFERED “The Fat-Portions”**
 - 1.1.4 **ABEL DIED BECAUSE HE SERVED GOD**
- 1.2 **ENOCH HAD AN OBEDIENCE DEFINING FAITH**
 - 1.2.1 **JESUS LEARNED OBEDIENCE**
 - 1.2.2 **THE OBEDIENCE OF JESUS WON OUR SALVATION**
 - 1.2.3 **OBEDIENCE SHOULD CHARACTERIZE CHRISTIANS**
- 1.3 **NOAH HAD A PROPHETIC DEFINING FAITH**
 - 1.3.1 **THE ARK IS A SYMBOL OF CHRIST –**
 - 1.3.2 **THE FLOOD POINTS TO THE COMING JUDGEMENT**

IN OUR SECOND SERMON WE LOOKED AT EXAMPLES OF WOMEN WHO'S FAITH WAS IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS

- 1.4 **SARAH HAD A MIRACLE DEFINING FAITH**
 - 1.4.1 **THE BIRTH OF ISAAC FORESHADOWS THE MIRACULOUS BIRTH OF JESUS –**
 - 1.4.2 **THE BIRTH OF ISAAC FORESHADOWS THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS**
 - 1.4.3 **BOTH SARAH AND MARY HOLD A SPECIAL PLACE IN HISTORY**
- 1.5 **JOCHEBED HAD A PROTECTING DEFINING FAITH**
 - 1.5.1 **BOTH THE PARENTS OF MOSES AND JESUS PROTECTED THEIR CHILDREN IN EGYPT –**
 - 1.5.2 **BOTH THE PARENTS OF MOSES AND JESUS RECOGNISED THEIR CHILDREN WERE UNUSUAL**

1.5.3 **BOTH THE PARENTS OF MOSES AND JESUS WOULD SEE OTHER CHILDREN DIE AND THEIRS BE SAVED**

1.6 **RAHAB HAD A TRUST DEFINING FAITH**

1.6.1 **RAHAB TRUSTED IN THE GOD OF THE ISRAELITES** –

1.6.2 **RAHAB TRUSTED IN THE COVERING OF “BLOOD”**

1.7 **WOMEN HAD A RESURRECTION DEFINING FAITH**

Women had a pivotal role to play in the resurrection story.

1.7.1 **A WOMEN, MARY, ANNOINTED JESUS IN PREPERATION FOR HIS DEATH** –

1.7.2 **WOMEN WERE AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS WHEN JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED**

1.7.3 **WOMEN WERE AT THE TOMB WHEN JESUS WAS BURIED**

1.7.4 **WOMEN WERE THERE WHEN JESUS AROSE**

1.7.5 **A WOMEN WAS THE FIRST TO SEE THE RESURRECTED CHRIST**

TODAY I WANT TO LOOK AT THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM. IN MANY WAYS ABRAHAM SETS THE TONE REGARDING THE SUBJECT OF FAITH IN THE BIBLE. THE APOSTEL PAUL GOES SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT HE IS THE “FATHER OF FAITH”

*Romans 4:1-3 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? v2 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about--but not before God. v3 What does the Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.**"*

*Romans 4:11-12 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, **he is the father of all who believe** but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. v12 And he is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.*

*Romans 4:16-17 **Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring--not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.** v17 As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed--the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.*

HOW THE FAITH OF THE FATHER OF FAITH WAS IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS

v8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

v9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. v10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. v11 By faith Abraham, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. v12 And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. v13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were

aliens and strangers on earth. v14 People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. v15 If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. v16 Instead, they were longing for a better country--a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. v17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, v18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." v19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death. Hebrews 11:8-19

1.8 THE FAITH OF THE FATHER OF FAITH

1.8.1 ABRAHAM HAD A RESPONSE OBEYING FAITH –

v8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

The FIRST STEP of faith is an invitation.

1. Faith is not in nothing. Faith must have an object.
2. God called, and Abraham responded.
3. Abraham's faith was not in "FAITH", his faith was in ONE who was calling him to respond.

Jesus displays the same faith.

John 6:25-38 When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" v26 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. v27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." v28 Then they asked him, "**What must we do to do the works God requires?**" v29 Jesus answered, "**The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.**" v30 So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? v31 Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" v32 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. v33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." v34 "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread." v35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. v36 But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. v37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. v38 **For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.**

GOD IS STILL CALLING – HAVE YOU RESPONDED?

1.8.2 ABRAHAM HAD A TRUST GROWING FAITH –

v8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

In many ways, the VERY DEFINITION OF FAITH is STEPPING OUT WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW THE OUTCOME!

God called Abraham to leave his hometown of Ur to go to a part of the world which he knew very little about. Now Ur was a sophisticated place, and Canaan (lowlands) was not.

Jesus did the same when He was sent from heaven to earth.

*John 5:37 **And the Father who sent me** has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, John 12:49 For I did not speak of my own accord, but the **Father who sent me commanded** me what to say and how to say it. Galatians 4:4 **But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son**, born of a woman, born under law, 1 John 4:14 And we have seen and testify that **the Father has sent his Son** to be the Saviour of the world.*

When Jesus came to earth, he was FULLY MAN. He needed to live by faith in the same way we do.

1.8.3 ABRAHAM HAD AN INCARNATION MODELLING FAITH

v9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

1. Abraham moved from living in a permanent home to a temporary home – a tent.
2. Jesus did the same. We read in **John 1:14** *The Word became flesh and **made his dwelling among us**. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.* The word translated “dwelling” is the word Tabernacle – a tent

1.8.4 ABRAHAM HAD AN ANTICIPATING FAITH –

v10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

1. When Abraham left Ur, his ultimate trust was in a God who would provide a permanent home.
2. Jesus anticipated the same. We read in **John 14:1-4** *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. **Trust in God; trust also in me.** v2 **In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.** v3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. v4 You know the way to the place where I am going.”*

1.8.5 ABRAHAM HAD A NATION CREATING FAITH –

v11 By faith Abraham, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. v12 And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. v13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. v14 People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. v15 If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. v16 Instead, they were longing for a better country--a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

1. We saw at the start of this message that Abraham was the FATHER of those who live by Faith, apart from being the Father of the nation of Israel

*Romans 4:16-17 **Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring--not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.** v17 As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed--the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.*

2. Jesus TOO is the founder of a nation. We read in **1 Peter 2:9-10** *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a **holy nation**, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. v10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

1.8.6 ABRAHAM HAD AN EXPERIENCE BUILT FAITH –

v17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, v18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." v19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.

1. When God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham could fully step out in faith. FOR GOD HAS RAISED HIS AND SARAH'S BODY FROM DEATH TO GIVE THEM A CHILD.
2. Jesus also fully trusted God, based on his experience of God while living on earth.

Luke 22:39-44 Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. v40 On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into

temptation." v41 He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, v42 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." v43 An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. v44 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

CONCLUSION

So far in our journey to discover

WHY FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS IS COMMENDED?

AS WE DESCRIBE WHAT FAITH IN THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS LOOKS LIKE:

WE SAW:

- 1 THE FAITH OF ABEL AS A SACRIFICE DEFINING FAITH**
- 2 THE FAITH OF ENOCH AS AN OBEDIENCE DEFINING FAITH**
- 3 THE FAITH OF NOAH AS A PROPHETIC DEFINING FAITH**
- 4 THE FAITH OF SARAH AS A MIRACLE DEFINING FAITH**
- 5 THE FAITH OF JOCHEBED AS A PROTECTING DEFINING
FAITH**
- 6 THE FAITH OF RAHAB AS A TRUST DEFINING FAITH**
- 7 THE FAITH OF A GROUP OF WOMEN WHO HAD A
RESURRECTION DEFINING FAITH**

TODAY WE SAW

- 8 THE FAITH OF THE FATHER OF FAITH**
 - 8.1 **ABRAHAM HAD A RESPONSE OBEYING FAITH –**
 - 8.2 **ABRAHAM HAD A TRUST GROWING FAITH –**
 - 8.3 **ABRAHAM HAD AN INCARNATION MODELLING FAITH**
 - 8.4 **ABRAHAM HAD AN ANTICIPATING FAITH –**
 - 8.5 **ABRAHAM HAD A NATION CREATING FAITH –**
 - 8.6 **ABRAHAM HAD AN EXPERIENCE BUILT FAITH –**

**ARE YOU WILLING TO STEP
OUT IN FAITH WITH GOD?
If God called, How would you
respond?**