

Heb 11:7

7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Noah became an heir of righteousness

- which is according to faith.

To become an heir is to receive something promised to you. Biblically speaking, in the OT, heirs usually received land.

In the NT, becoming an heir expands to include spiritual inheritance. Rom 8 says we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Noah became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Righteousness - right standing with God.

- not something a person earns.

Our righteousness is as filthy rags,

- and there is no one righteous.

Righteousness is given by God and received thru faith.

For Noah, righteousness was something he received,

- not something he achieved.

It wasn't based on his works in building the ark,

- but it was according to his faith
- as stated in verse 7.

The Lord allows us, and not only allows us

- but takes us thru trials
- in order to increase our faith
- and to prove or refine our faith.

In fact, both James 1:2-3 and 1 Pet 1:6-7 confirm this.

Trials often cause a person to seek Christ.

Ps 77:11-12

11 I will remember the works of the Lord;
Surely I will remember Your wonders of old.

12 I will also meditate on all Your work,
And talk of Your deeds.

It's never a bad thing to remember the trials the Lord has brought us through.

Remembering often reinforces God's faithfulness and removes doubt and discouragement.

Eph 3:14-19

14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

It was this same faith that Paul prayed for and which Noah lived out.

Heb 11:8

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

When it comes to the subject of justification by faith,

- Abraham's name comes up.

Abraham obeyed when he was called to go to a strange land.

Abraham means "Father of a multitude, or father of many nations."

God called Abram at the young age of 75.

He told him, go out and count the stars if you are able to number them.

Then He said, "So shall your descendants be."

Abraham didn't have any children at the time.

When Mary was told she was going to have a child she asked, "How can this be since I do not know a man?"

She was simply asking for clarification.

Luke 1:38

38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."

She yielded to the will of God by faith.

Zechariah on the other hand learned that his wife Elizabeth

- was going to give birth to John
- and he didn't believe

Abram was called to leave his homeland,

- Ur of the Chaldeans which is in
- the southern part of modern day Iraq,
- somewhere near or in An Nasiriyah.

Life in that region at the time was highly organized, urban and complex.

They produced wheat, barley, dates, and vegetables,

- therefore, their economy was very active
- and relatively prosperous.

Mesopotamia was polytheistic,

- they worshipped many gods.

However, each city had a patron deity, a god or goddess

- that protected them and supported them.

The patron deity was thought to watch over them, bless them etc.

The deities were believed to reside in the city's temple or ziggurat.

A ziggurat looked like a tiered pyramid with multiple levels.

Historical records support the idea that the city where Abraham lived in Ur was devoted to the moon god Nanna (sin).

If the historical information is accurate, then Abram was called to leave this sinful area.

Jesus said:

Matt 11:28

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Abram was called, he obeyed and verse 8 says he went out, not knowing where he was going.

The region of Mesopotamia was polytheistic

- but in Ur where Abraham was,
- they had the moon god called Nanna.

The moon god was associated with the lunar cycle,

- fertility and agriculture,
- wisdom and divination.

The bible doesn't mention the moon god,

- but it does indicate that Abraham came
- from an idolatrous background

Josh 24:2-3

2 And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods. 3 Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac.

Some may have thought to themselves that Abraham was losing his mind.

And you know, it's like that for people at times

- when they leave other religions
- or practices for Christianity.

As Christians, we know when the Lord speaks to us, it's real.

- He gives us something that the world cannot give,
- His love, His kindness, His forgiveness, peace and joy.

The world can't offer that. What the world offers is what John described in 1 John.

1 John 2:16-17

16 For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Jesus contrasted His peace with that of the world in

John 14:27

27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.

Later in this chapter the author said of Moses:

Heb 11:24-25

24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

The joys of this world are temporary and are often dependent on circumstances.

- The book of Ecclesiastes calls them vanity.

Isa 57:20-21

20 "But those who still reject me are like the restless sea,
which is never still
but continually churns up mud and dirt.

21 There is no peace for the wicked,"
says my God.

What about nice people who seem to be at peace with God?

A person may be calm or even display good morals, but they won't truly be at peace unless they've reconciled with God.

Rom 5:1-2

1 Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. 2 Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

Heb 11:9

9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

The word dwelt is the same as to sojourn.

He was a sojourner, meaning to dwell in a place only for a short time.

The only other time in the NT the word "dwelt, or sojourner" is used

- is in Luke 24:18 on the Emmaus road
- when Jesus approaches two disciples
- and they're talking about the things
- which had taken place.

Jesus asked what they were talking about then Cleopas answered, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"

They thought Jesus was a stranger in the land.

The Lord took Abraham to the land of Canaan.

- That's where he settled as a sojourner.

Christians are sojourners.

- We're living in a strange land,
- And it's temporary

The only land Abraham owned was cave to bury his wife Sarah

6

- although God promised him the land.

The promise of owning the land wasn't fulfilled until the time of Joshua.

We trust what God has promised and we trust He will fulfill His promises.

Heb 11:10

10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

In verse 8 we see that Abraham was called,

- he obeyed,

In verse 9 he sojourned, and now in verse 10 he waited or he looked

- as the NT word study dictionary puts it.

This word "to wait or to look" is only used 8 times in the NT.

John 5:1-4

1 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. 4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.

Just for the record, some translations have omitted verse 4

- because early manuscripts do not have it.

Some scholars believe it was inserted because of a popular belief

- of the pool having healing powers.

John 5:7

7 The sick man answered Him (Jesus), "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

Jn 5:3

3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water.

The great multitude of sick people waited for the moving of the water for whatever reason.

Heb 11:10

10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

To "look or to wait for" means to wait with expectancy concerning a future event.

When the Lord called us, we obeyed,

- then we realized we are just passing thru this world,
- then we are to wait expectantly on future events.

We look forward to the day the Lord calls us home.

We should be excited for the Lord's return for the church

- since that will be our eternal dwelling place.

What about heaven?

Jesus said He was going to prepare a house for us

- and that He would return for us.

Paul said he desired to remain on the earth

- so that he could continue his labor for Christ,
- but he knew it was far better to be with Christ.

Revelation 21 says there will be no more pain,

- no sorrow, no crying or death in heaven
- and that nothing unclean will enter in.

Heaven is described as having streets of gold and gates of pearl.

Rev 4 describes God on His throne surrounded by worship.

Colossians 3:1-2 - set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

Heb 11:11-12

11 By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude – innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

The writer of Hebrews moves from the faith of Abraham

- In believing God would fulfill His promise to give him the land
- to now speaking of the faith of Sarah.

Sarah was barren her entire life

- and now she is beyond the age of child bearing.

Abraham was about 100 years old and she was right at 90 years old.

When Sarah heard she would give birth to a young boy,

- she laughed within herself.

Abraham already had another son with Hagar.

- Because of Sarah's impatience,
- she gave Hagar to Abraham

We should realize as we read this chapter of Hebrews regarding these people of faith,

- they each had faults.
- They each made mistakes in their life.

None of them were perfect as we'd think of perfection.

God's promise wouldn't be fulfilled thru Ishamel, it was thru Isaac.

- And God re-affirmed His covenant
- and assured Abraham that the child of promise
- would come thru Sarah, Gen 17.

Gen 21:1-3

1 And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him – whom Sarah bore to him – Isaac.

God always fulfills His promise.

Heb 11:11

11 By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

God is always faithful in His promises.

One last thing I want you to notice regarding Sarah. She initially doubted in the book of Genesis, but in Hebrews we're told that she received strength by faith. Her faith was developed as she placed her trust in God.

Heb 11:12

12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude – innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

That's what the unbelieving world thinks of Christians today, you're dead.

- You guys have lost your mind.

Paul gives us a commentary in the book of Romans on Abraham's faith

- in the birth of Isaac.

What were the keys to his faith at the birth of Isaac.

Rom 4:17-22

17 (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed – God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; 18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." 19 And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

Abraham placed his faith in God knowing that God would fulfill what He promised.

22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

So what do we see here as keys to his faith?

In Verse 18, he hoped against hope.

- He hoped in something which seemed hopeless.

When you think something is impossible,

- with God, nothing is impossible!

In verse 19 we see that Abraham did not look at the impossibilities.

In verse 20 Abraham gave glory to God

- before seeing the promise fulfilled.

When God promises to do something, He will come thru.

God promises to be with us wherever we go.

- Jesus said He would never leave us nor forsake us.

Finally, in verse 21 Abraham was fully convinced

- that God was able to do what He said He'd do.

Righteousness is not achieved apart from God but is received from God through faith.