

7-9-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-5

Purpose: Provoke people to embrace the lessons of enduring and receiving faith modeled by Abraham and Sarah.

Truth for Today: Abraham shows us how to have faith in God that endures difficulties and receives God's promises.

Text: Hebrews 11:1, 8-12

Topic: Faith, Abraham, Sarah, Endurance

Series Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives

Series purpose: Provoke people to have faith in God that is aligned with His will so we can obediently endure difficulty and receive what He promises in His timing.

Series Truth for Today: Faith that endures becomes faith that receives God's promise.

Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-5

I. Introduction

- A. Review series: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, a vs. by vs. walk through Heb. 11.
- B. Series purpose: Provoke people to have faith in God that is aligned with His will so we can obediently endure difficulty and receive what He promises in His timing.
- C. We've talked about faith and creation, and heroes of faith like Abel, Enoch and Noah.
- D. Today we'll talk about another hero of faith, Abraham. He is the greatest example of faith in the Bible. Relevance for our salvation, [Galatians 3:7-9 (NLT) The **real children of Abraham**, then, are those who **put their faith in God**.⁸ What's more, the Scriptures looked forward to this time when **God would make the Gentiles right in his sight because of their faith...**⁹ So all who put their **faith in Christ** share the same blessing Abraham received because of his faith.] [Ephesians 2:8 (ESV) For by grace you have been **saved through faith**. (NLT when you believed)] Faith is the door to be saved and to receive His blessings. Abraham shows us how to have faith that endures and receives.
- E. Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-5

II. Abraham, the father of faith

- A. Def. faith, [Hebrews 11:1-19 (NLT) Faith shows the **reality** of what we hope for; it is the **evidence** of things we cannot see...] Faith aligned with God's will is a spiritual fact not a wish. Pic link in the chain Faith is the link

that connects us to God. It's being certain God exists and His promises are true; it's proof to convince us that unseen hopes will become reality.¹

B. Summary of Abraham's life: He was called by God at 75, (his wife, Sarai, was 65) to have a son, Isaac, who would give birth to the Jewish people and establish their homeland. It was 25 years before God's promise was fulfilled. His faith was tested as he faced the test of time, but he became the example to the world of the role of faith in receiving God's promises and His righteousness.

C. [vs. 8, It was **by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going.**]

1. [Ge. 12:1–4 (NLT) The Lord had said to Abram, “**Leave your native country, (Haran)**...and your father's family, and **go to the land** that I will show you. (*Caanan*)² I will make you into a great nation...³...All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”] (ESV)⁴ **So Abram went**, as the Lord had told him...]

a. Faith formula: Leave your native country...go to the land... So Abram went.

D. [Vs. 9, And even when he reached the land God promised him, **he lived there by faith**—for **he was like a foreigner, living in tents**. And so did Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the same promise.¹⁰ Abraham was confidently **looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God**.¹¹ It was **by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep his promise**.¹² And so a **whole nation** came from this one man who was as good as dead—a nation with so many people that, **like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore**, there is no way to count them.

1. Life App #1: Genuine faith is always linked to obedience. [vs. 8, It was by faith that **Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home.**] Faith without action is only a spiritual wish. [James 2:17–18 (NCV)...**faith by itself—that does nothing—is dead (meaningless).**]¹⁸ ...**I will show you my faith by what I do.** (MSG) Faith and works, **works and faith, fit together hand in glove**. E.g., we signed a contract to buy Gander Mtn., not knowing where all the \$ come from.

2. Life app #2: Sometimes it's not clear where our faithful obedience will lead us. [Vs. 8 **He went without knowing where he was going.**] E.g.,

33 years PJ from Palestine to Texarkana, bridge 155, God spoke but I didn't know the church was broke and divided; it was hard to see how God would turn it around, but He did.

3. Life app #3: Faith, anchored in a promise from God opens the door to miracles. [Vs. 11 It was **by faith** that even **Sarah was able to have a child**, though she was barren and was **too old** (90). **She believed that God would keep his promise.**]

a. Faith in God's promises and seeing the impossible are connected. A man who had a demon possessed son, [Mark 9:23 (ESV) Jesus said...**All things are possible for one who believes.**] An angel to Mary about the virgin birth, [Luke 1:37 (ESV) For **nothing will be impossible with God.**"] **E.g., Gander Mountain...**\$11.5 million building project during covid lockdowns. Sell old

III. Longing for our heavenly home

A. [Vs. 13 **All these people** (*Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob*) **died still believing what God had promised them.** ("*All of these persons trusted God until the time they died*"²) **They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it.** They agreed that they were **foreigners and nomads here on earth.**¹⁴ Obviously people who say such things are **looking forward to a country they can call their own.**¹⁵ If they had longed for the country they came from, they could have gone back.¹⁶ But they were looking for a better place, **a heavenly homeland.** That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for **he has prepared a city for them.**]

1. Life App # 4: People can be **still living by faith** when they die, even if they do **not receive the things promised.** Abraham received the promise of a child but didn't see his descendants as the stars in the sky. We can have a promise from God and still walk in faith but die believing. E.g., prophets declaring revival in America.

a. Sometimes we have faith but what we pray and believe for doesn't happen. We can be devastated. Maybe it wasn't God's will; maybe satan won a battle; maybe someone made a bad choice. Whatever the reason, we can feel like God let us down and be tempted to quit. Don't! E.g., 2 Sam. 12:16, David fasted and prayed for his child not to die but he did. David got up, washed his face and kept walking with God.

b. Faith is a drawbridge, not a lever to force God to act.

2. Life App #5: Earth is not our home; we are to be like vs. 13, **foreigners and nomads here on earth**. The ultimate goal of our faith is heaven. Some things are fulfilled on earth; all will be fulfilled in heaven. Persecution and suffering [Heb. 10:34 (NLT)...when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. **You knew there were better things waiting for you that will last forever**. Heb. 13:14 (NLT) **For this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come.**] [Revelation 21:2–4 (NLT) **And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven...**³ I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, **“Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people...**⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain..]

a. We should view life not as home but as pilgrims passing through.

IV. Conclusion: Abraham shows us how to have enduring faith until we receive what God promised

A. Context faith in Jesus for salvation, [Romans 4:9–25 (NLT)...**Abraham was counted as righteous by God because of his faith...**For **Abraham is the father of all who believe.**¹⁷ That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, **“I have made you the father of many nations.”** **This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.**¹⁸ Even when there was **no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, “That’s how many descendants you will have!”**¹⁹ **And Abraham’s faith did not weaken**, even though, at about **100 years of age**, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah’s womb.²⁰ **Abraham never wavered in believing God’s promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.**²¹ **He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises.**²² **And because of Abraham’s faith, God counted him as righteous.**

V. Response

A. Souls/ salvation [Vs 23 And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn’t just for Abraham’s benefit. It was...²⁴ for our benefit, too, assuring us that **God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.**²⁵ **He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with**

God.] If we believe this, turn to God, and follow Him we will have eternal life.]

B. Prayer: Your faith is being tested. You're struggling waiting for God to answer.

VI. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Hodges, Z. C. (1985). [Hebrews](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 807, 808). Victor Books.
2. Ellingworth, P., & Nida, E. A. (1994). [A handbook on the Letter to the Hebrews](#) (p. 263). United Bible Societies.

VII. Supplemental Material

A. Life app #5: God keeps His promises if we do our part/ faithfully obey. [Genesis 15:2–6 (NLT) ² But Abram replied, “O Sovereign Lord, what good are all your blessings when I don’t even have a son? Since you’ve given me no children, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. ³ You have given me no descendants of my own, so one of my servants will be my heir.” ⁴ Then the Lord said to him, “No, your servant will not be your heir, for **you will have a son of your own who will be your heir.**” ⁵ Then the Lord took Abram outside and said to him, “**Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That’s how many descendants you will have!**” ⁶ And **Abram believed the Lord**, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.]

a. [Heb. 11 ¹² And so a whole nation came from this one man who was as good as dead—a nation with so many people that, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore, there is no way to count them.]

B. III A By faith the old saints saw the promised realities **from a distance** and persisted in their pilgrim character, **looking for a country of their own** and refusing to **return** to the land they had left. ¹

1. “God is not ashamed to acknowledge them as his people, and so he has prepared a city for them,” or even “... and this is shown by the fact that he has prepared a city for them to live in.”²
2. “long before what God promised took place, they, as it were, saw it” or “... saw what would happen.” The expression *and welcomed them* may be rendered as “and were very happy.”²
3. The writer’s main interest is not in the “promised land” of Exodus or Joshua, but in the city *with permanent foundations* in heaven (verse 10)²