

FOCUS FOR THE UNFORESEEABLE
“Abraham”



Heb. 11:8

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9 **By faith he sojourned** in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For **he looked for a city which hath foundations**, whose **builder and maker is God**.

Our theme for this year is...

VISION

20/20

HIS VISION.

OUR FOCUS.

During these challenging days of the present pandemic, many people, including believers, are facing issues that a few months ago were simply **unforeseeable**. **Life is, unfortunately, a series of unforeseeable events.** For the next few weeks we will observe what the Bible says about how to handle such trying events, “*how to focus on the unforeseeable*.” We began three weeks ago with the principles found in 1 Jn. 5:1-5:

For the last few weeks we have been considering several individuals in the Bible that faced unforeseeable challenges in their lives: Abel, Sarah and Rahab, Enoch, Noah two weeks ago, and this week, we will continue to consider Abraham.

Abraham is considered the “father” of the Jews, Muslims, and the Christians. His introduction in Heb. 11, does not mention any details about his background, does not mention when he lacked faith and was disobedient, but begins with his first major step of faith – leaving home.

I. FAITH TO LEAVE...THE FAMILIAR

Heb. 11:8 **By faith Abraham**, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, **obeyed**; and **he went out, not knowing whither he went**.

A. The Motivation to Action – “By faith Abraham...”

- Before facing the unforeseeable in his life, Abraham was motivated to action...by faith.

B. The Message Acquired – “...when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance...”

1. The Call – “...when he was called...”

2. The Conviction – “...to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance...”

- Being called and used of God may necessitate a move out of our comfort zone.

3. The Commencement – “...and he went out...”

Gen. 12:4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: **and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.**

- Abraham’s calling BEGAN at age 75 – never too late to serve the Lord!

C. The Mindset of Acceptance – “...obeyed...”

Original Word: ὑπακούω

hypakoúō = **really listening to the one giving the charge (order)**. *hypakoúō* ("to hearken, obey") **suggests attentively listening, i.e. fully compliant (responsive)**.

<https://biblehub.com/greek/5219.htm>

- Obedience is a by-product of good listening.
- Obedience, by faith, leads to an adventurous lifestyle.

D. The Mystery Awaiting – “...not knowing whither he went.”

- Abraham was NOT focused upon the unforeseeable...he was focused upon obedience.
- The unforeseeable was obvious – just keep moving...walking by faith.

This morning we continue to look at the account of Abraham from Heb. 11:8-10. After Abraham obeyed went out from Ur of the Chaldees, he “sojourned.”

II. FAITH TO LIVE...THE FOLLOWING

Heb. 11:9 **By faith he sojourned** in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

A. The Faith to Continue – “**By faith he sojourned** in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country...”

Original Word: παροικέω

Transliteration: paroikeó

Definition: to dwell near, reside as a foreigner

Usage: I sojourn, **dwell in as a stranger**.

<https://biblehub.com/greek/3939.htm>

- A sojourner knows that the current residency is temporary.

Psa. 39:12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for **I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner**, as all my fathers *were*.

1 Pet. 1:17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, **pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:**

- One of the challenges of “sojourning” is to endure the monotony of the routine.

Gal. 6:9 And **let us not be weary** in well doing: for **in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.**

Isa. 40:31 But **they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength;** they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

- The “endurance” of life is dependent upon our focus:

Phil. 1:21 For **to me to live is Christ**, and to die *is* gain.

- The analogy of running a race places the goal as to being focused upon Christ:

Heb. 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and **let us run with patience the race that is set before us**,

2 **Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith**; who for the joy that was set before him **endured the cross**, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For **consider him** that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, **lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds**.

- As a believer faithfully runs the “race of life” he/she is setting the example for future generations.

B. Those Following Concur – “...**dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob**, the heirs with him of the same promise:”

Neh. 9:7 Thou *art* the LORD the God, **who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham;**

8 **And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land** of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, **to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words;** for thou *art* righteous:

Gen. 35:12 And **the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.**

Deut. 1:8 Behold, I have set the land before you: **go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them.**

Deut. 30:20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, *and* that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he *is* thy life, and the length of thy days: **that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.**

- The promises to Abraham continue today through Gentile believers.

Gal. 3:6 Even as **Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8 And **the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith**, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. ...

14 That **the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**

Jas. 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, **Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.**

- A faithful life is one desiring spiritual growth, looking to learn more of the Scriptures and of the Savior.

III. FAITH TO LEARN...THE FOUNDATIONS

Heb. 11:10 For **he looked for a city which hath foundations**, whose **builder and maker is God.**

A. The Awaiting of the Promises – “For he **looked** for a city which hath foundations...”

Original Word: ἐκδέχομαι

Transliteration: ekdechomai

Definition: to take or receive, by implication to await, expect (**look for**)

ekdémomai (from *ek*, "out from and to" and *dexomai*, "welcome") – **properly, welcome from the heart, looking to the end-result of the waiting (literally, its "out-come," outcome).**

<https://biblehub.com/greek/1551.htm>

- Abraham left an earthly city, looking for another earthly city = a lifetime commitment.
- Personally, I believe Abraham was looking for the fulfillment of the Abrahamic and Palestinian Covenants.

B. The Architect of the Premises – “...whose builder and maker is God.”

- Abraham was NOT focused upon building his own kingdom.

Original Word: τεχνίτης

Transliteration: technitēs

Usage: a craftsman, artisan, architect, **builder**.

<https://biblehub.com/greek/5079.htm>

Original Word: δημιουργός

Transliteration: démiourgos

Usage: an artisan, builder, **maker**; one who labors for the public.

dēmiourgós (from *dēmos*, "a unified group of people" and *epiphaínō*, "work") – **properly, someone working on behalf of a group of people (used only in Heb 11:10)**

- Abraham's confrontation of the unforeseeable was to look for what God had intended for his focus – "...whose builder and maker is God."

- By application, we can focus upon the New Jerusalem:

Rev. 21:14 And the wall of the city had **twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.**

- When focusing upon eternal values, we realize our citizenship is in heaven.

Phil. 3:20 For **our conversation is in heaven**; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Eph. 2:19 **Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints**, and of the household of God;
20 And are **built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone**;

Heb, 13:14 For **here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.**

- Abraham was focused upon the foundations, knowing the unforeseeable would take care of itself.

Psa. 11:3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

1 Cor. 3:11 For **other foundation can no man lay than that is laid**, which is **Jesus Christ**.

- Every life designed to bring glory to God is built upon **the foundation = Jesus Christ**.

2 Tim. 2:19 Nevertheless **the foundation of God standeth sure**, having this seal, **The Lord knoweth them that are his**. And, **Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity**.

- God knows and loves His children!

1 Jn. 3:1 **Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us**, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2 **Beloved, now are we the sons of God**, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

3 And every man that hath this hope in him **purifieth himself, even as he is pure**.

Conclusion

- A believer, sojourning today, follows the encouragement of the Apostle Paul to the church in Colosse:

Col. 3:1 **If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above**, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 **Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.**

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When **Christ, who is our life**, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

5 **Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth;** fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.