

"The Walk of Faith"

Part 4

Hebrews 11:1-40

Introduction: We have been looking at chapter 11 in our study of the book of Hebrews the past 3 weeks. The focus of this chapter is Faith and it is the desire of the writer within this chapter is to get his readers to LIVE BY FAITH. We have looked at several points so far.

1. The Definition of Faith

Notice Hebrews 11:1

There are 2 main statements here in this verse:

- a. **Faith is the foundation upon which the believer stands as he or she waits upon the promises of God.**
- b. **Faith is the evidence of God's promises.**

The writer then goes on to point to the NEED to walk by faith.

2. The Personal Benefits of Faith

Notice Hebrews 11:2

The elders/Old Testament saints received a witness from God when they walked by faith which was an encouragement to them as they passed through this world.

The writer then gets to the next point.

3. The Examples of Faith

Notice Hebrews 11:3

The example he points to here is the faith which they are already exercising in the creation and the order of God's universe.

This now brings us to where we are in our study tonight.

i. The Examples of Faith

Part 2

Notice Hebrews 1:4-7

We are going to look closely at each of these verses but before we do I want to help you to see who the writer has chosen as examples here. He has picked out 3 men from the pre-flood era. After this he will move on to the patriarchs but for now he has much to say concerning Able, Enoch and Noah.

Now it is in these 3 men that we shall see 3 points concerning faith.

1. **Abel - The worship of faith.**
2. **Enoch - The walk of faith.**
3. **Noah - The work of faith.**

1. **Abel- The Worship of Faith**

Notice Hebrews 11:4

We need to look at this verse in several sections.

Genesis 11:4a

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,...

In order to grasp onto what the writer is pointing to here we need to go back to the book of Genesis to read the account.

Notice Genesis 4:1-2

We are introduced here to 2 of the children of Adam and Eve. Cain grew up to become a farmer and Abel grew up to become a shepherd.

Notice Genesis 4:3-4a

There was an appointed time for man to bring his offerings to God and there was a specific place where these offering were offered. When these 2 men brought their offerings they each brought something different.

Cain - He brought of the fruit of the ground and since he was a farmer this tells us his offering was the WORKS OF HIS HANDS. This is by the way the establishment of the

first false religion which was based upon works. Cain's religion is at the center of every false religion today. The Bible has a title for this religion.

Jude 1:11

¹¹ *Woe unto them! for they have gone in **the way of Cain**, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

This "Way of Cain" is a religion that ignores Calvary and it denies the need for the shedding of blood for the forgiveness of sin. It rejects the need of a Savior as a Substitute to pay the penalty for our sins and the sins of the entire world. It is a religion based upon man's efforts to please God and God despises this religion. It is rejected in every form in which it is presented. It is man's attempt to come to God on terms other than what God has established.

Notice Genesis 4:4a again.

Abel - Abel's offering was different than Cain's for he brought a lamb that he had sacrificed. The question then is, "Why did he bring the lamb?" This lamb was brought because he knew there was the need for a Substitute who would die in his place. But how did Abel know this?

Genesis 3:21

²¹ *Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*

Here is something which took place after the fall but before the birth of Cain and Abel. After Adam and Eve sinned they covered themselves with fig leaves which God would not accept as a covering for sin. So God gave both Adam and Eve an object lesson on that day. He took 2 animals (probably lambs) and in front of Adam and Eve God killed them. These lambs were the substitutes for their sin.

Genesis 2:16-17

¹⁶ *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:*

¹⁷ *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: **for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.***

God had told Adam that in the day in which he would eat of the forbidden fruit he would die. Both of them did die spiritually and so the lambs would be the means for them to cover their sins.

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin is death;

This was a picture of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ on the cross. This was taught to the children of Adam and Eve so both Cain and Abel understood that God required a substitute which would die in their place and the blood of the substitute would cover their sins. Let me show you why I say this.

Romans 10:17

¹⁷ So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

So Cain and Abel had heard the Truth which was that God required a payment for all sin. So at each appointed time they were to bring their sacrifices.

Cain refused to believe he needed a substitute because he did not see himself in his true sinful condition. Abel on the other hand brought the lamb because he believed what God had said concerning the cost of sin. The bottom line was that Abel came to God on God's terms.

Now let me show you Hebrews 11:4 again.

Hebrews 11:4b

⁴ By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

Here we see that God accepted the offering of Abel and it was a witness that he was declared righteous.

Notice Genesis 4:4b-5

Here we see that God had "respect" unto the offering of Abel but not unto the offering of Cain. How did God let Abel know that He had accepted his offering and that He had rejected Cain's? We are not told how but most likely it was fire that fell from heaven and

consumed the offering of Abel but the fire never touched Cain's offering. Let us notice several examples of the fire consuming the sacrifice.

Leviticus 9:24

²⁴ *And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.*

1 Kings 18:38

³⁸ *Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.*

Now let me get your mind back to Cain and Abel. What was the significance of the fire which consumed the offering of Abel? Fire is symbolic of the judgment of God. So when the fire fell on Abel's sacrifice it was the judgment of God, intended for Abel, falling instead on the substitutionary sacrifice.

Now we must keep in mind here that it was NOT the offerings which separated these 2 men. The offerings were the manifestation of the heart. It was the attitude of the heart which separated these 2 men. Cain refused to believe the Word of God. He refused to believe he needed a substitute and so he would not come to God by faith in a substitute but instead he attempted to come to God by his own works which was pride. Abel had faith that he could worship God through the sacrifice of the substitute. He knew he was a sinner and he knew that God required the shedding of blood for the atonement of sin. Therefore, Abel came to God by faith in the death of the substitute. The lamb he brought was proof of the attitude of his heart. He worshipped God by faith.

Let me show you Hebrews 11:4 again.

Hebrews 11:4b

⁴ *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.*

Abel's faith still speaks today for we hear it speak as we study the Word of God.

Now there is something else here that we need to see. I want to show you again the definition of faith.

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Now let me show you how this definition can be seen in the life of Abel.

Abel's faith was the foundation upon which he stood upon as he continued to follow God in his day. Now we need to understand that his life was not easy.

1 John 3:11-12

¹¹ For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

¹² Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Abel was hated by his own brother because Abel's lifestyle convicted Cain. Then on top of this Jesus tells us that Abel was a prophet.

Luke 11:50-51

⁵⁰ That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

⁵¹ From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

As a prophet he was a spokesman for God. He lived in the midst of a godless society.

Remember what Cain said?

Genesis 4:14

¹⁴ Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

His faith was the foundation he stood upon and also the evidence of things unseen. His faith was his testimony and even today we can learn from his faith for it yet speaketh.

Conclusion:

Abel is a wonderful example of how FAITH [In our Substitute] is required in order for anyone to be justified and for anyone to be able to worship God.

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