

**"The Walk of Faith"**

**Part 9**

**Hebrews 11:1-40**

**Introduction:** Tonight we return to our study of Hebrews 11 in which the writer of Hebrews is looking back to the Old Testament and he is pointing to examples of people who lived and walked by faith. Tonight in our study we are going to look at the 4<sup>th</sup> example of living faith which the writer presents to the Hebrew believers.

The man we will see tonight is Abraham and what an example of walking by faith he is. Abraham was the father of the Nation of Israel and therefore the Hebrews would have been very familiar with the account of Abraham's life. He would be an example which would have spoken loudly to the hearts and the minds of Abraham. The account of Abraham is found in Hebrews 11:8-19. Now in this text the writer will also touch on the life of Sarah as he looks into the life of Abraham.

I. **The Examples of Faith**

**Part 7**

**"Abraham"**

**Notice Hebrews 11:8**

Now in order to grasp the impact of this verse we need to understand the background on Abraham's family and his homeland.

**Genesis 11:27-32**

<sup>27</sup> *Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.*

<sup>28</sup> *And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.*

<sup>29</sup> *And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.*

<sup>30</sup> *But Sarai was barren; she had no child.*

<sup>31</sup> *And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of*

the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

<sup>32</sup> *And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.*

From this account in Genesis 11 we can see Abraham and his family left Ur of the Chaldees and they came to Haran and they dwelt there. Let me show you what is recorded in the book of Acts.

#### **Acts 7:2b-4**

<sup>2b</sup> *The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,*

<sup>3</sup> *And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.*

<sup>4</sup> *Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.*

God had "appeared" to Abraham in Ur and made it known that He was calling him out of his homeland to the land of Canaan. As they journey they came to Haran and they dwelt there. Possibly his father became sick in Haran or possibly Terah desired to dwell in Haran and it was God Who had to remove him so Abraham could continue. Either way Abraham's father passed. After the death of Terah, Abraham then continued his journey around the Syrian Desert to the land of Canaan.

Now let me show you the spiritual condition of the land of Ur.

#### **Joshua 24:2**

<sup>2</sup> *And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.*

Ur of the Chaldees was a city of idols and therefore we can understand that Abraham and his family were deep into idolatry. Here in Joshua we see that they "served other gods".

But there is more. Let me describe the economic condition of Ur. Archeologists have actually uncovered the city of Ur and found that it was a thriving metropolis in Abraham's day. Most likely Abraham was a wealthy business man when God called him to go to Canaan.

Now with all of that background let us get to Hebrews again.

**Notice Hebrews 11:8 again.**

At the end of this verse we can see that Abraham walk out of Ur of the Chaldees NOT KNOWING WHERE HE WAS GOING.

**Genesis 12:1**

*Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:*

**Acts 7:3**

<sup>3</sup> *And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.*

God called Abraham to follow Him but God never told him where He was taking him to.

If you would have known Abraham in Ur and you would have asked him where he was going he would have said, "I don't know." If you would have asked him why he was going he would have said, "I don't know." If you would have asked who told him to go he would have said, "God". Then you would have asked, "Which god?" Abraham did not know where he was going nor did he know how he would survive there. All he knew was that THE ONLY TRUE GOD was calling him from his homeland and Abraham obeyed and he walked away.

Now let me take your mind back to the Hebrew believers who received this letter. They were struggling to trust God with their everyday lives in the face of the persecution. They were fearful to fully surrender over to God because they did not know what the end result might be. Many questions would flood their minds:

- ✓ How will we survive if we are cut off from our communities?
- ✓ What will happen to our families?
- ✓ Wouldn't it just be easier to return to the old life?
- ✓ What will happen a month or a year from now?

These are but a few of the questions which would be entertained in their minds. Abraham's walk of faith would have an answer for each of these questions.

Now let me explain the message in Abraham's faith and obedience for the Hebrews and for us. There are 2 important lessons here which we need to see.

1. **To live by faith starts by separating ourselves from the world.**

Let us consider some verses.

**Romans 12:1-2**

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

<sup>2</sup> **And be not conformed to this world:** but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

**2 Corinthians 6:14-16**

<sup>14</sup> **Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?**

<sup>15</sup> *And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?*

<sup>16</sup> *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

**1 John 2:15**

<sup>15</sup> **Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.** If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Abraham was fine with walking away from the city of Ur. He made a decision to follow God and he was willing to forsake the old life of idolatry and wealth for he believed God had something far greater for him.

Moses was another man who did the very same thing.

**Notice Hebrews 11:24-25**

Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter but instead he chose to walk by faith in God and forsake the riches and sins of the palace life. So the walk of faith begins with a separation from the world and the old life.

This is exactly what the Hebrew believers needed to hear. They were struggling to let go of the old life and the Old Covenant. They desired to be accepted by the society around them and therefore they had to be like Abraham and they had to be willing to step completely away from the old and cling to the promises of God.

**Application:**

We too must understand that it is not possible to please God while we hold on to the old ways of life.

**Hebrews 11:6**

<sup>6</sup> ***But without faith it is impossible to please him:*** for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

We must be willing to turn our backs on the old ways of life and walk in faith trusting in God to provide that which we need as we pass through this life.

2. The walk of faith cannot happen until there is a change of leadership.

Now I need to walk you back through some of Abraham's experiences to help you to see something else which happened.

**Genesis 11:31**

<sup>31</sup> ***And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.***

I show you this verse to help you to see that while God had called Abraham it was Terah who was in control. He was the one who had taken the lead. Then something happened.

**Acts 7:2b-4**

<sup>2b</sup> *The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,*

<sup>3</sup> *And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.*

<sup>4</sup> *Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, **when his father was dead**, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.*

Here in Acts we see again that it was not until Terah died that Abraham was able to move on to the place where God had called him to go.

There is an amazing picture within the death of Terah. Terah was the father of Abraham so he was the older of the 2 which is obvious. As the older of the 2 Terah represents the old nature of the believer or we could say that he represents the sin nature.

So the picture is this, while Abraham was led by the "old man" he was not walking by faith and he could not get to the blessings which God had for him.

**Application:**

The same is true for you and me also. While we are controlled by the "old man/the flesh/the sin nature" we will never experience the blessings of this life which God has for us. We will never live the "resurrected life". There must be a change in leadership in our lives. There is a battle within us every single day between the 2 natures. There is the old sin nature and the Divine nature and the sin nature desires the lusts of the flesh and the Divine nature desires the spiritual blessings of God.

**Genesis 25:21-24**

*<sup>21</sup> And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.*

*<sup>22</sup> And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD.*

*<sup>23</sup> And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.*

*<sup>24</sup> And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.*

The 2 children in Rebekah's womb were a picture of the 2 natures in the believer. When they were born God told her the older would serve the younger and that is the way it MUST be in our lives. The OLDER is the FLESH and it must be kept in submission to the Divine nature.

God provided a way for us to have the victory in this battle.

**Romans 6:6**

*<sup>6</sup> Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

**Conclusion:**

From the call and obedience of Abraham we can see 2 points which are necessary for any believer to have a walk of faith.

1. Separation from the world and the practices of the old life.
2. Change of leadership within our heart.