

Title: SOJOURNERS and STRANGERS

Text: Hebrews 11:13-16

Let's take our Bibles and turn to Hebrews chapter 11. We are learning about faith through the great example found in Hebrews chapter 11. We have looked at the faith of Abel and Enoch and Noah. Now, we are looking at the Faith of Abraham. *Faith will result in action - you will do something which will prove that you have faith.*

First of all, we saw the faith of Abraham in his obedience to God's Word. God told him to ~~live~~ <sup>leave</sup> his land and go to a land he had never heard of before. He believed God's Word and he went to a new land.

Secondly, we saw the faith of Abraham in the main obstacle he faced in believing God's promise. And that obstacle was his old age and the old age of his wife Sarah. And because of their age..Abraham 99 and Sarah 89..that they were unable to have children.

Now, tonight, I want to come to the third example of Abraham's faith. But, let's look at the text...HEBREWS CHAPTER 11 beginning with Vs 13

(Read 11:13-16)

### Prayer

(3 ) The third way in which we see the faith of Abraham is in the ~~fact~~ <sup>fact that</sup> he did not see ~~seeing~~ the Promise fulfilled as stated in Genesis 12 verses 1-3. You see God promised Abraham a land and in that land there would be a great nation. He hadn't seen that promise fulfilled. And of course all the Patriarchs... (Issac, Jacob) had this same problem because Vs 13 puts it in the plural.

Now, I want to look at verses 13-16 in two ways. And this really blessed my heart. And I hope it will be a blessing to you.

(1 ) First of all, in relation to their faith, I want to give you five things.

(1 ) Number one, they responded to God until the day they died. Vs 13 says.... "All these died in faith, without receiving the promises." They responded to God until the day they died. *They didn't give up - They didn't quit*

(2 ) The second thing about their faith is that they received no fulfillment of God's promise during their life time. It says simply "without receiving the promises." I wonder if we could keep going on having never seen God's <sup>FULFILLMENT</sup>

I thought of an illustration that blessed me and might bless you. A lady prayed for her husband all of her life. She prayed that he would become a believer. She had known the Lord for many years. But ~~he~~<sup>her husband</sup> just refused to believe. And that woman died and her husband was still lost. She went to her grave with a burden on her heart. What a joy after that woman died, a couple of years later, her husband came to know Jesus as his saviour. God was faithful. But she died and never saw the fulfillment of her prayers.

You see, faith is faith in what God is able to do. Faith is trusting God even though it means trusting Him to the point of death and never seeing the fulfillment in your life. Yet, it is trusting God that he is fully able to do what he promised. That is very important that we understand this.

(3 ) The third thing is that they recognized it all by faith. There was no other way to see. The Bible says "having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance." This is referring to the promises. Welcoming them from a distance. It was as though the promises were right there and they saw them. But, how did they see them? By Faith. Because they never actually happened in their life time. But they saw them by faith. You will ~~see~~<sup>see</sup> much by faith when you trust God's Word. Because God's word does come to pass.

(4 ) Number four, they realized that this earth was not their final home. Vs 13 says that "they confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth." This isn't our ~~final~~<sup>final</sup> home. And when you get that into your ~~system~~<sup>head</sup> and you realize "Hay! I am a citizen of heaven." Philipians 3:7 says that our citizenship is in heaven from whence we look for Christ our saviour.

It is not down here. and when that gets into our ~~system~~<sup>head</sup> and we ~~realize~~<sup>you</sup> that this is only temporary down here, it brings back the joy of ministering. It brings back the peace that I am where God wants me to be. It brings back the excitement of believing and trusting God. Even though you haven't seen, yet, the fulfillment. You know where you are headed.

(5 ) And number five, they refused to go back. Vs 15..says "if indeed they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return."

*Abraham*

He could have given up the ship. And said, "God I have been here all these years. And nothing has happened. I am going back home."

A lot of us are the same way. Well, listen, I have been trusting God for over two years for this matter." Well, what if it is two hundred years? God is able to do what He has promised. And faith is trusting God and his plan in this world. It is very important to be patient in trusting God. To have faith and confidence in Him that He is always doing right. That all things are working together for good to those who love the Lord.

(2 ) Now, that is there faith. But, secondly, let's look at their future. And I want you to see three things about their future.

(1 ) One, it was based on a promise of a permanent home. Vs 14..says "those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own." You say, "Now, wait a minute. Maybe that is talking about the land of Canaan." Many Bible teachers say that. But I don't believe so. ~~Is believe in~~ the content it is talking about the heavenly city. WHY?

*In*

The word "country" is an unusally word. It comes from the word "father." And you would translate it "father land." And in Jewish style it would refer to your "true home land, where you really belong."

We would say..."We are going back home." You may not have lived there for the past 40 years. And you may have lived here for these past 40 years. But, you say we are going back home for a visit. That is what it is talking about., You true home land...Father land..

They were seeking that place that God had promised to them. A permanent, settled, true home land.

(2 ) And the second thing about their future is that it was based on a place in heaven according to Vs 16. It says "they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one." The little word "desire" in Vs 16 I would underline. Paul takes a word that is absolutely fantastic to show us why these people believed God. The word "desire" here means "to reach out, longing after something." Longing so much that every bone and muscle in your body was reaching out. Like a runner in a race reaching for the goal. And pushing every muscle in his body

*in order to reach the goal first*

And the Bible says that the reason these people walked by faith is because they were reaching out with every moment of their life, with every moment of their strength for a heavenly country.

*man's* When I read that I really got convicted. I reach out for things in my life that are earthly and temporary and will not last. The reason these people had faith and confidence in God is because they knew where they were going. Their future, they knew was a place in heaven. *Do you know where you are going to spend eternity?*

(3) And finally it was based on the preparation of God. They had nothing to worry about. Their whole future was based on the preparation of God.

Vs 16 says,..."Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

Jesus said in John 14:3, "I go and prepare a place for you; and I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

*God has prepared a place for us*

LET'S CLOSE IN PRAYER

*We are sojourners in this life. This is not our home. We are just passing through.*

*And if you want to, daily, experience the blessing of God, then keep your eyes on heaven. Looking forward to it - Anticipate that time when you will be home with your Lord -*

*Shall We Close In Prayer*