

Chapter Eleven

Part 1

Hebrews chapter 11 has been called by many different titles. Some have called it the “Biblical Hall of Fame.” In this chapter we will see the name of some of the great people of God throughout the Old Testament. Some have called it the “Hall of the faithful.” Some others have called this the great “faith chapter.” The operative word in chapter 11 is “faith.”

Faith must be defined. Faith is not just belief in God. Faith has two components, belief, and trust. Biblical faith is a belief “that” and a belief “in.” A belief “that” is a belief that God exists and the Bible is true. A belief “in” speaks of trusting fully. Often, we use the word “faith” as a synonym to “belief,” but Biblical faith is much more than just believing something in your head. One individual said, “faith is doing what God says.”

The chapter really springboards off the Old Testament quotation that closed chapter 10, verse 38. **BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.** When he said, “my

righteous one shall live by faith” he was saying that the means to attain right standing with God is through faith. Right standing is not just through having belief, but it comes by living by faith or a determination to be faithful.

In chapter 11, he will focus on two major points about Biblical faith. First, he will highlight that Biblical faith is seen through actions. Second, he will point out that Biblical faith is forward looking. You will notice how much of the example in this chapter are about them looking ahead. He had just told them “not to shrink back.” Now, he is telling them that if they want to be like those Old Testament saints, they too need to look ahead, however it just so happens that they are further down the road of God’s plan coming to fulfilment, so they are looking ahead with different and better views.

In this chapter our author will illustrate that faith which saves the soul by pointing to men and women from Jewish history who passed it. He begins, however, with a statement concerning this saving faith, which some

have called its definition.

11:1 Faith is, on the hand, the substance or confidence or courageous assurance of things hoped for. This term expresses the sense well of the Hebrew word for faith used throughout the Old Testament. It is that confident and assured trust in God which enables one to endure with patience while moving toward the object of his hope.

Faith is, on the other hand, the evidence or proof, the absolute conviction, of things not seen with the physical eyes. The terminology expresses the sense of the Greek word for faith use in the New Testament. Saving faith, however, in every age and among all men, involves both of these elements.

Putting it more simply, such faith “is convinced of future good because it knows that the good for which it hopes already exists invisibly in God.” In that conviction, faith rises to meet great occasions, accomplishes mighty works through God’s power, and endures every kind of suffering for the sake of Him whose voice it has heard

and whose reward it has seen.

Hebrews 11:1 (1) Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

This is not necessarily the definition of faith, but a description of what faith does. Here, the intent is descriptive of Biblical faith. He is going to explain what the results are for a person who has determined to walk by faith. It seems that it is best understood when we view this “word” as not speaking about “belief” or even just “trust,” but rather of both working together. The focus is on Biblical, saving faith. We will see this validated in verse 2. This whole chapter is about an obedient, active faith.

Remember chapter 10 closed with the idea of a determination to be faithful and not shrink back. In this verse “faith” is described two ways. First, it is described as the assurance of things hoped for. This word carries the idea of a “title-deed.” What a title-deed is to real estate faith is for the things hoped for. A title-deed is a guarantee that

the property we claim is really owned by us. It is the means by which we can claim our hope with confidence. Some the word “confidence” is used here. We can have confidence of things that are in the future, even things that we have not seen. The word “assurance” is a Greek word which is a compound word that means literally to “stand under.” The idea being expressed here is that faith is pictured here as the thing that is central to the Christian life. Faith is the thing that stands under and supports our hope.

Some translations use the word “assurance” while others may use “substance” or the “real thing.” The same word was used earlier in **Hebrews 1:3a** And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature. Also in, **Hebrews 3:14** For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end. Both the ideas of “substance” and “confidence” are being conveyed here. He is saying that faith is the main substance or things that have been hoped for and Biblical faith is the title deed of the things we have hoped for.

Second, it is the conviction of things not seen. Some versions will say, “evidence.” This word is a weak translation, for faith is not the evidence of things not seen, because the presence or absence of faith does not prove things not seen. The Greek word actually means “conviction.” The author is trying to tell us that walking by faith is a personal conviction that there are things that are not seen in this world that exist. There is an intentional parallel with “things hoped for” and “things not seen. The “things not seen” point to all the invisible things in the Universe. He again, is calling the readers in a forward direction. The author is saying, “faith is to the believer confidence of the things we have hope in and a display of our conviction of things that are not able to be seen.”

11:2 It was by this very thing that honorable men of the past obtained a good report or were well-attested by God. Our author is not unique in naming famous men. He is alone in calling attention to the clear quality of saving faith which has exemplified all who

truly pleased God. We are reminded of those whose faith and deeds go before them. This verse may give a capsule illustration of the first part of faith's description in verse one. These were men who maintained a confidence and courage and assurance toward God in the face of whatever circumstances they encountered.

Hebrews 11:2 (2) For by it the men of old gained approval.

The "it" that is referred to, is "faith." The men of old speaks of the saints of the Old Testament times. The approval they received speaks of approval from God. The Old Testament saints gained favor and a good reputation in the sight of God because of the quality of their in Him. The word used for "approval" is a Greek word which means "bore witness." God bore witness of them and their faith through recording their life of faithfulness in the pages of sacred Scripture. While he will cite the obedient actions of the Old Testament heroes, it is not the actions themselves that gained them God's approval, it is that the actions were done in

faith. Remember, these readers were tempted to go back to the Law and abandon Christianity. They struggled constantly as they maintained close ties to Judaism. The temple, at this was still standing and many of the Christians tried to enter the Church by way of the Temple. The Jewish Christians held a strong connection to their Jewish past and the Jewish ancestors. So, the writer will cite their Jewish ancestors and describe how they lived. In all, he will mention 11 specific individuals who are examples of faithfulness. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Moses' parents, and Rahab. He then will mention three events in their history without mentioning a name, creation, the Red Sea crossing, and the fall of Jericho. He will name 6 others by name without detail. He will mention the entire class of their prophets. He will mention many more by inference through events that happened in the lives of their ancestors. He is going to tell them that if they really want to identify with their ancestors, with Abraham and the patriarchs and the prophets it is not done by looking backwards in time and facing them. The best way to identify with

their Jewish ancestors is to face the same direction that they faced. He is saying that they do not connect best to Abraham and the like by going back to Temple worship, they do it by doing what they did. This is the main point of this chapter.

11:3 Through this same kind of faith we understand the origin of the universe although we have no physical evidence to support our understanding. Paul uses “understand” similar statement in Romans 1:20. Here is just one example of the second part of the definition found in verse one.

The “world” (1:2) here refers to the space-time universe which is known by sensory perception, although the particular word literally means “ages.” In other words, God is responsible not only for the physical universe, but also its progression. All that is now seen was framed or came into being by the spoken word of God. Nothing came originally from what philosophers would call the phenomenal, but from God’s own invisible word and will.

The word of God here is not the same as in John 1:1. That is why we have not capitalized the word “word.” John uses the word “logos” which included both rationality or thought and the speech by which that is expressed. Our author uses a term which emphasizes the act of speaking, “rhema.” The former may be included in his remark that what we see did not come from what was apparent, and in the implication that it came from the mind and thoughts of God, which are invisible, by means of the spoken word of God.

If Moses saw a pattern of the true tabernacle in heaven before he built the one on earth, it is not surprising that the visible creation should have come from the thoughts of God and in the absence of any visible “stuff.”

On creation through God’s spoken word, we see also, Genesis 1, 2; Psalm 33:6, 9. The important point is that through faith we understand this, and that we may have the same proof or evidence through faith that one might seek through physical senses.

Hebrews 11:3 (3) By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

This is the first of 18 specific examples that begin with the phrase “by faith.” Because of our faith we believe certain things. We believe that God created the heavens and the earth the way the book of Genesis teaches. The idea of creation is a foundational belief. There are a lot of attempts to attack in our minds the creation account. If we fail to see God as our creator that we miss the point. This is an example of a “thing not seen.” We as Christians believe by faith that God’s Word accurately records what took place at creation. Since none of us were there at creation to see what took place, we are dependent upon God to tell us. We believe not with blind faith, but with a logical faith and a faith confirmed by the evidence. The things which we can see now were not made out of things that could have been seen. This means that the Bible absolutely teaches a creation out of nothing.

11:4 The first example of faith is Abel, who by it offered a sacrifice which God regarded as more excellent than that offered by his brother Cain. A number of suggestions have been made as to why Abel's offering pleased God when Cain's did not. Cain brought his fruit but Abel brought his first fruits. Abel's blood-offering may have signified a realization of his need for forgiveness, while Cain's offering of produce showed no such insight or humility. Others have concluded that God prescribed the specific offering desired and that we have a simple contrast between obedience and disobedience. Perhaps his offering was given begrudgingly. Perhaps he did not bring the appropriate sacrifice, or the appropriate amount. Perhaps Cain's sacrifice was not a blood sacrifice. Perhaps his sacrifice was not of first fruits or among the best. Our author says only that Abel's acceptance was due to his faith. There seems to be a simpler explanation of these words than any yet mentioned.

Faith which successfully approaches God by nature involves the heart. Our writer urges

that the heart not be hardened, or evil and unbelieving when judged by God's word. It is rather to be inscribed with God's laws, sincere, with full assurance of faith and strengthened by grace. The test here says that Abel's offering was accepted because he presented it out of faith, and the Old Testament indicates a distinction between the hearts of Abel and his brother Cain.

Hebrews 11:4 (4) By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

It is even here the case that faith comes by hearing the word of God, but Abel's faith responded to God's word in the general and regularly, not simply on this occasion. The key to his accepted offering is not the offering itself but his heart. God was pleased to accept the offering because of the faith which prompted the man who brought it. Jesus said that Abel was a righteous man.

Matthew 23:35 so that upon you may fall the

guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. John says that Cain killed Abel because he knew that his deeds were righteous. **1 John 3:12** not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brothers were righteous.

Cain was evil before he killed Abel. Cain did not walk by faith. We must walk and live by faith. We are told by the prophet Habakkuk “my righteous one shall live by faith.”

By the same faith Abel obtained witness from God that he was righteous. If one construes the which here as referring to the sacrifice instead of the faith, the point remains unchanged. For, if by the sacrifice Abel obtained witness from God, it was only in God’s testimony that he was known to be righteous, but he was righteous because of his faith. God testified that Abel was righteous by receiving his gifts. Whether He

indicated this reception by a divine word or by sending fire upon the altar we are not told.

Though Abel had been long dead even when Hebrews was written, by his faith he still speaks. His message is not only a cry to God for vengeance, but is particularly a word to all God's people that they may find divine favor through faith.

11:5 We know very little about Enoch. If Abel died as a result of his faith, Enoch found life through his. Enoch "walked with God," is not that a great description of a person's life.

Hebrews 11:5 (5) By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.

By faith Enoch was translated when God took him, which our author interprets as meaning that he did not see death. When Enoch's associates searched for him, he was not found. But before his translation

Enoch had received this testimony or witness that he pleased God.

The Greek Old Testament says that Enoch “was well-pleasing to God,” where the Hebrew text says he “walked with God.” These terms are applied by the Old Testament to Noah as well as to Enoch, but to no other man. Jude indicates that Enoch’s contemporaries were anything but pleasing to God, and one piece of uninspired Jewish literature had him “caught away lest wickedness should change his understanding or guile deceive his soul.” Again, what is important is that Enoch pleased God through his faith.

11:6 Although the Old Testament does not state that Enoch was a man of faith, our writer argues that he must have been. For without faith it is impossible to please God, and scripture says that Enoch pleased God, so it had to be by faith.

Hebrews 11:6 (6) And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is

a rewarder of those who seek Him.

What is true of Enoch is true in general. Any person who comes to God must believe or have a two-fold faith. First, that God exists; second, that He becomes a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him by faith. Those who come to God are coming to His presence. The idea of entering His presence is seen in prayer, worship, and ultimately in our hope of Heaven.

Both these are keeping with the nature of faith as described in verse one. Faith believes that God is, although He is not seen, and that He will give those seeking Him the reward for which they hope. Only with such faith is God pleased; He has no pleasure in those who draw back in disbelief. Those who received this epistle needed just such a faith if they were to receive their reward. Those who read it today need the same.

11:7 Noah was also a man of faith. Like Abel, he was righteous; like Enoch, he walked with God or pleased Him, **Genesis 6:9**. When

warned by God, Noah prepared an ark, for his faith provided evidence of things not seen as yet. He moved with godly fear or piety, itself a companion of faith, which resulted in the saving of his house.

Hebrews 11:7 (7) By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Hebrews says that Noah was warned about things not yet seen. Perhaps it was in reference to a worldwide judgment. The flood took place 1656 years into the life of man. It appears that Methuselah (Enoch's son) died that same year. We are not sure if he died in the flood, but we do know he died in the year of the flood. Perhaps it was in reference to rain. It had never rained up to that time. **Genesis 2:5-6** (5) Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.

(6) But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.

Can you imagine how that affected Noah's preaching? "Hey guys, I just want to warn you that God told me that it is going to rain and flood the earth and kill anyone no this big bolt I am building." "It is going to what???" "Rain, you know, water is going to come down from the sky."

It was probably a mixture of the two. Jude referenced Enoch as having prophesied about God's coming judgment, so Noah was not the first one with knowledge of a coming judgment, but he may have been the first one warned about details of the judgment. By faith, Noah condemned the world which did not have faith. He became an heir of the only righteousness God recognizes, that which is according to faith. Noah was saved by faith. His faith showed itself by acting in assurance of the unseen, through confidence in the God who had promised. Faith did and always has come to individual through hearing. **Romans 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the**

word of Christ. Notice that Noah was warned by God. He heard God's Word and believed it by faith. When he heard what God said, he acted upon it by building an ark. **James 1:22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. James 2:17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.**

Noah obeyed God with no other evidence or an impending flood than God's Word. He believed what God said in spite of the fact that for 1,600 years there was nothing in man had ever experienced. We do not need evidence that something is true than the very words of God. Noah believed God and took Him at His Word. Remember what scripture says of Abraham's belief, "he believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness." It is not just that Abraham believed in God, he believed God. He believed God's Word. He believed it in a way that caused him to act upon it. That is Biblical, saving faith. This makes evident that Biblical faith is a "belief in testimony."

Based on Noah's faith and this verse he did

three things. The first thing that Noah did was build an ark. Noah was not just warned; he was instructed exactly what he should do and how he should build the ark. A warning of deviation from God's plan is certainly a part of the equation there and here. A part of Noah's faith was submitting to building the ark to the exact specifications that God stated.

So many people would change those instructions, thinking that they could do better. Many do this in the church today. God gave instructions for how the church should be structured and how it should function, but they twist and change things because they see it as more practical and fitting to their cause. Noah built the ark according to the way God said to build the ark. A part of Noah's faith was to be content saving those God said to save. Those God said to save were those who entered the ark. Only those in the ark were saved from God's judgment, the flood. The church today is our Ark of safety from God's coming judgment, if we are not in it, we will not be saved. God warned Noah so that he could provide a

chance for his family to be saved. Noah showed a grave concern for the salvation of his household. **1 Peter 3:18-21** (18) For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; (19) in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, (20) who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. (21) Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

We can tell something about Noah's character and His view of God by the way in which he built the ark. It also says that he built the ark out of reverence for God. Reverence speaks of a godly fear. Here the idea is that "he paid close attention to the instructions." The Greek word for reverence implies fear and awe. Reverence for God is

a good motivator for obedience. He was careful to build the way God said to build because he held God in reverence.

Second, he condemned the world. Noah obviously did some preaching. Peter says that he was a preacher of righteousness. **2 Peter 2:5** and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; However, it was not just his preaching that condemned the world, it was his righteous character that did that.

Third, he became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. Notice that Noah was an heir of righteousness which is according to faith. When it says he “became an heir of righteousness” this speaks of the fact that Noah gained right standing with God on the basis of his faith. He became an heir of this righteousness in that the full benefits of this right standing with God after his life on earth was over. We know that Noah was righteous and found favor with God. In fact, he is the first man the

Bible calls “righteous.” This does not mean that he was 100% righteous all the time. We know that Noah got drunk and uncovered his nakedness. This particular action was wrong, shameful, and sinful. It is interesting that as we look through this chapter that the sins and shortcomings of the people mentioned are completely ignored. The reason why is because when we walk by faith God does not hold our sins against us. There is no doubt that Noah was faithful, moral, and different from other people of his day, however he is declared righteous based on his faith. Noah was comparatively righteous, but he became an heir of righteousness based on faith and the type of faith he had in God. This is the same concept that Paul teaches about our salvation in Christ. **Romans 1:17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “**BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.**” Incidentally, the Old Testament passage quoted here is the same one quoted at the end of chapter 10.

Salvation and right standing with God is now

and always has been on the basis of faith through grace. This does not mean that no action is needed. We are saved by faith, but we are saved by a faith that does something. Noah believed God. He had faith in God. That faith save him. However, it would not have saved him if he only believed what God said and then never built an ark. His faith is seen in the building of the ark.

11:8 The next five verses turn to the example of Abraham's faith, noted by Old Testament writers as well as new. Our writer has already discussed Abraham twice; once in connection with God's faithfulness and once in giving historical context and background to Melchizedek. Here Abraham's faith is in the spotlight.

By faith Abraham obeyed the call of God to go out, not knowing where he would go. He knew only that God had commanded. "Faith and obedience are inseparable in man's relation to God." Abraham would not have obeyed the divine call had he not take God at His word; his obedience was the outward evidence of his inward faith.

Abraham was to receive a promise of the land as an inheritance, but that promise was not given until after he had initially obeyed. The promise concerning an inheritance was itself a reward of his initial faith, not the original motive for his obedience. That rested on faith alone.

Hebrews 11:8 (8) By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

There are four things that are mentioned in regard to Abraham's faith. His call, His living in the land, becoming the father of Isaac, and His offering Isaac. In addition, Sara is mentioned in the middle of the talk of Abraham's faith. Abraham is prominent in the whole Bible. His name appears more than 300 times in scripture. Abraham's faith gets the most recognition as far as space in this chapter. Abraham is not just the model of faith in the book of Hebrews, but his faith is referenced many other time in the New

Testament.

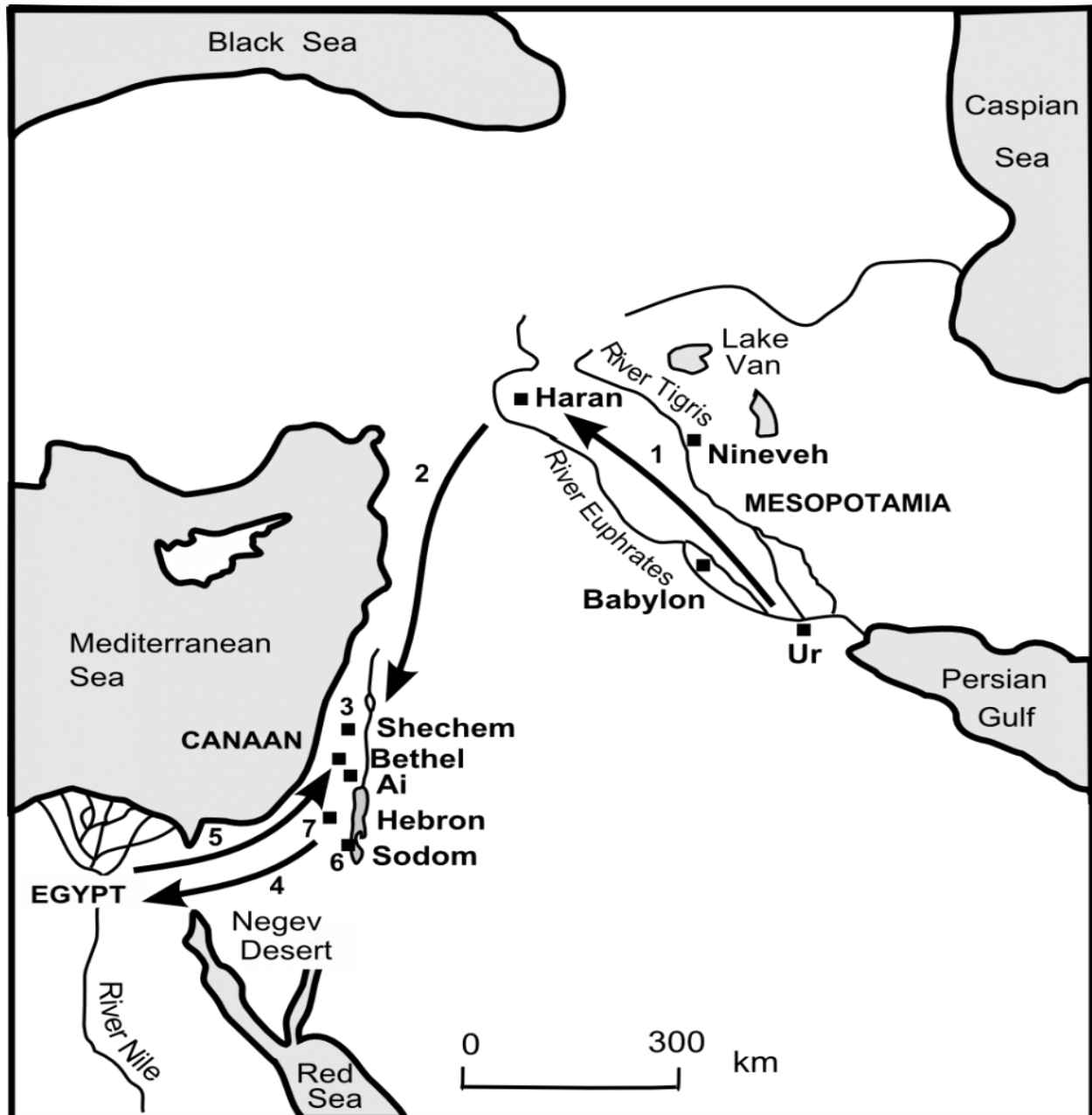
The first event mentioned about Abraham's faith is his call. Abraham was first living in Ur of the Chaldees, which is now Iraq. This is where Abraham received his first call from God. Abraham and his family left Ur headed for Canaan, but they stopped in Haran.

Genesis 11:31 Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans

in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there. According to Genesis chapter 12 Abraham would receive a second call from God, when he was living in Haran.

Genesis 12:1-3 (1) Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; (2) And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; (3) And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who

curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."



He stayed in Haran for five years. Abraham was a man of faith before he ever was called by God to leave Ur. His father Terah was an idol worshipper. **Joshua 24:2** Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'From ancient times your

fathers lived beyond the River, namely, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods.

A large reason why Abraham may have been chosen by God was because of the faith that he had to reject the gods his father and countrymen worshipped. Perhaps he is an example of the fact that the creation proves that there is a Creator God and the fallacy of idolatry. It is likely that Abraham did not know much about this God, but he believed. There are two elements to responding to God's call where Abraham's faith is seen.

First, is in the urgency he had in obeying the call. The thing that was done by faith was not just receiving the call from God, but it was obeying the call. In the Greek, the immediacy of Abraham's obedience is clear. It is literally translated "while he was being called" not "after he was called."

Second, Abraham obeyed despite the unknown. Abraham did not know the location of his final destination. In all, Abraham's

calling was to travel 1,500 miles without knowing where he was going. It was about 400 miles from Haran to Canaan. The Hebrew writer had already talked about Biblical faith and its connection with “things not yet seen.” Noah warned about things not yet seen. Faith is described as “conviction of things not yet seen.” Even though we can see how Abraham’s journey and obedience to God’s call is described as being “by faith” we also see in the story that it was not perfect obedience to the calling. He was told to leave his relatives behind, but he took Lot and his father, Terah from Ur. Again, we see shortcomings of the Old Testament saints who walked by faith, but not in this chapter.

11:9 By faith Abraham sojourned or lived as a stranger who was passing through a strange country, although in fact he was in the land which according to God’s promise would someday belong to his descendants. He lived as an alien in the land of promise. He lived with Isaac, who born when Abraham was 100 years old, and Jacob, born when he was 160 years old, for fifteen years in tabernacles or tents. As semi-

nomads the patriarchs did not settle for the luxuries of any city around them. The metropolitan areas of Sodom and Gomorrah were by no means alone in Palestine and Syria of Abraham's day. Jericho had been a fortified city already for thousands of years. Yet the patriarchs remained intentional strangers, looking for a special kind of city which only God could prepare.

Hebrews 11:9 (9) By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;

Having moved around for about 100 years, he remained faithful. The promise of his descendants inheriting the land would not be made fully known until Abraham was in Canaan and would not be realized by himself. Although the land was promised to him, the only piece of land he owned was Sarah's burial place. **Acts 7:5** "But He gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot of ground, and yet, even when he had no child, He promised that HE WOULD GIVE IT TO HIM AS A POSSESSION, AND TO HIS

DESCENDANTS AFTER HIM.

He did not go to Canaan in order to possess the land. He went in obedience to God. It is here that Isaac and Jacob are described as fellow heirs of the same promise. God repeated the promise to both Isaac and Jacob. The promise was for many descendants and an off-spring through whom all nations would be blessed. Abraham never considered Canaan to be his real home or the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise.

11:10 Abraham, and apparently Isaac and Jacob as well, looked for the city that has foundations. Both definite articles are present in the original, adding emphasis to the uniqueness of the city for which they searched. The following verses tell us that they were trusting God for a home in the heavenly city. This verse calls it the city with the foundations, whose builder or craftsmen or architect and constructor is God.

In addition to other references in Hebrews, the new or heavenly Jerusalem is mentioned

in Galatians and Revelation. At times it is a present reality, distinguished from the physical, and is discernable by faith. At the same time, it is to be distinguished in a temporal sense as the inheritance not-yet-given which awaits the people of God.

Hebrews 11:10 (10) for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Here we see why Abraham walked by faith. Abraham knew that the physical land was not the best of his inheritance. The Greek makes clear that the “looking” was something he continuously did. He kept looking. We place our hope in the same thing, a city which has foundations and whose builder is God. Notice the clear contrast in between where Abraham was in verse 9 and what he looked towards in verse 10. He was living in tents as an alien. However, he looked forward to a city with foundations. A tent has no foundation. The presence of a foundation indicates permanence. Abraham’s true hopes and expectations were not tied up in this world,

but rather in the world to come. It seems obvious that somehow Abraham had heard a promise of a place like that described. Although, the scriptures do not record a specific promise of Heaven made to Abraham, it seems evident that is what was on his mind. God is described as the architect and builder. The Greek word architect means planner or craftsmen. The Greek word for builder means maker. Our hope is also in a heavenly city. The good news is that we have more information on this city than Abraham had. Revelation 21 speaks of the promise of a heavenly city in great detail. Once again, we see a forward-looking aspect to Biblical faith.