

Hebrews 11:17-40

Week Eighteen

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Day 1



Heavenly Father, fill my thoughts with you today. Help me through your Holy Spirit to see you and know you better as I study your word.

- ✓ Read through the passage in each translation.
- ✓ Underline or write in the margin, themes that you see.
- ✓ Write a question you have about the passage.
- ✓ In the space below, write out a verse from our passage that stands out to you, that you can meditate on throughout the week.

Day 2- Hebrews 11:17-22

1. How was God testing Abraham according to verses 17-18?

Critical Connection: Read the following verses and answer the question:

-The test that God put Abraham through is a shadow or pointer to the salvation God would one day provide. Who was the lamb that God provided?

-How did God do what he was asking Abraham to do?

*Genesis 22:9-14*⁹ When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and

said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ¹² He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." ¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

John 3:16 -For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

2. God's command to Abraham seemed to contradict his promise to Abraham. How did Abraham reconcile those two things according to verse 19?

-How did God reconcile the problem?

3. Abraham had faith in the promises God made to him. How did he need faith to obey as well?

Picture and Ponder: "God tests our faith in terms of our willingness to sacrifice for him, and in this manner he also protects us from the idolatry to which our hearts are so inherently prone."¹

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses and answer the question:

-What are all the things the testing of our faith is doing for us?

1 Peter 1:6-7 ⁶ So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. ⁷ These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world. (NLT)

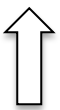


This difficult test of laying down Isaac came near the end of Abraham's life. God had been establishing, strengthening and testing Abraham's faith throughout his life. Even so, it is hard to imagine the kind of obedience that Abraham demonstrated. Our answer is not to focus on a hypothetical, dreaded test that God might put us through one day, but to focus on our faithful, promise keeping Father so that we will love him and trust him more and more.

- ❖ What do you have to believe about God to have this kind of faithful obedience?

- ❖ What does your relationship with God need to be like in order to have this kind of faithful obedience?

- ❖ What kind of tests of your faith do you encounter daily in your life right now? Is God asking you to give anything up?



Heavenly Father, help me to see the difficulties that come my way as tests of my faith, not merely arbitrary obstacles to my agenda. Overwhelm my mind and heart with your goodness and glory so that I will faithfully obey you.

Picture and Ponder: “The bounty of God should encourage us to surrender freely whatever He calls for, for none ever lose by giving up anything to God.”²

Verses 20-22 show how God's promise to Abraham would be passed on to Abraham's descendants. Usually the oldest son would receive the father's blessing and be the heir of the father's inheritance, but God chose younger sons Jacob and then Joseph to be the recipient of his promise. God also revealed to Abraham that the heirs of His promise would be enslaved for 400 years. In this we see that God's plan doesn't operate according to the world's ways and expectations and at the end of their lives Isaac, Jacob and Joseph heirs of the promise by faith trusted God's plan.

Day 3- Hebrews 11:23-26

4. Exodus 1:22 tells us that Pharaoh commanded that all baby boys be thrown in the Nile. Why were Moses' parents not afraid to disobey Pharaoh's edict according to verse 23?

Scholar's Note: "NIV says both parents hid Moses "because they saw he was no ordinary child." However, the Greek *asteios* means "beautiful" or perhaps "well-pleasing" rather than "not ordinary." The meaning appears to be that the child was so exceptionally beautiful that his parents believed that God had some special plan for him."³

Critical Connection: Read the following verses and answer the question:

-How did Moses' parents show their trust in God?

-From the information in Acts it seems clear that Moses knew God had called him to a special job. What is one explanation for how Moses might have known this?

Exodus 2:3³ When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank.⁴ And his sister stood at a distance to know what

would be done to him. ⁵ Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river... She saw the basket among the reeds... and she took it. ⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" ⁸ And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. ⁹ And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰ When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

Acts 7:23-25 ²³ "When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. ²⁴ And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian. ²⁵ He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand."

5. How did Moses demonstrate faith according to verses 24?

6. In choosing to identify with God and his people, what did Moses say yes to and what did he say no to according to verse 25?

7. According to verse 26, how was Moses able to make this choice?

Digging Deeper: Read the following verse and answer the questions:

- What should our reaction be when we are mistreated because we have chosen, like Moses, to live for God?

- How is this kind of reaction possible?

- The Jewish Christians Hebrews was written to, were being tempted to turn away from Jesus and back to Judaism. How would the example of Moses choosing the “reproach of Christ” be encouraging for them?

Matthew 5:11-12a "Blessed are you," Jesus said, "when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."

For Discussion: Share about a time when you have suffered for your obedience to the Lord. (Suffering can include dying to self, loss, being misunderstood, injustice.)



The example of Moses' life teaches us that if we are going to turn away from the particular sins that plague our lives, it will not be done by will power, but by faith. Only by believing and trusting that what God has to offer us is infinitely better than what sin promises, will we say no to sin and yes to obedience.

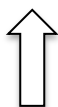
- ❖ When you choose the pleasures of sin over the reward of obedience to God, what are you demonstrating about what you believe or what your faith is in at that moment? Talk to God about this. Ask him to reveal what you are putting your trust in.

- ❖ “Being satisfied with all that God is for me in Christ – past, present, and future – is the power to resist the alluring temptations of disobedience.⁴” What do you need to readjust in your life to help you become more satisfied with God and more captivated by the beauty of the Savior?

- ❖ Meditate on the chorus of this old hymn, Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus:

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus
 Look full in his wonderful face
 And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
 In the light of his glory and grace.⁵*

Picture and Ponder: “Here is the secret of the power of faith to break the enslaving force of sinful attractions. If the heart is satisfied with all that God is for us in Jesus, the power of sin to lure us away from the wisdom of Christ is broken. And we will love holiness because it is an expression of the personality of the One who brings us so much satisfaction.”⁶



Father, help me to say yes to obeying you even if it means suffering. Help me to love you more and to see with eyes of faith your beauty and splendor and to keep focused on you and not on the temporary pleasures of the world.

Day 4- Hebrews 11:27-29

Critical Connection: Read the following verses and answer the questions:

- How long did Moses wait in the wilderness of Midian before God made his calling to Moses clear and put him into action?
- How do you think God used that time in Moses' life to prepare him for what was ahead?

Acts 7:25-31 “He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand. ²⁶ And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and tried to reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each other?’ ²⁷ But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?’ ²⁸ Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’ ²⁹ At this retort Moses fled and became an exile in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons. ³⁰ “Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. ³¹ When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and as he drew near to look, there came the voice of the Lord:”

8. Verse 27 tells us that by faith Moses left Egypt, (and his position in Pharaoh's home for 40 years) not being afraid of the anger of the king. How does faith combat fear?
9. What helped Moses endure on the path God had called him to according to verse 27?

- How does “seeing him who is invisible” support the definition of faith in 11:1?
- What do you need to “see” of God to help you endure or to not be fearful?



God initiated the very first Passover with Moses when he instructed him to have the children of God paint the blood of an unblemished lamb on the doorposts of their houses. If they would do this they would be spared from the final, horrible plague, carried out by the angel of death, which would claim the life of the firstborn of every living being in Egypt (Ex. 12).

This must have seemed so strange to Moses, but verse 28 tells us that by faith he did what God told him to do. Little did Moses know at that time that Passover would be God’s primary instrument in showing his people the redemption that was coming in Jesus. Without fully seeing or understanding God’s grand plan, Moses obeyed in faith. In this act of faith, Moses was looking forward to Jesus, the Lamb of God, whose precious blood bought redemption for those who place their faith in him.

- ❖ We would feel more comfortable if our lives were structured so that we wouldn’t need to live by faith, but this is not God’s plan. Why does faith please God?
- ❖ In what area of your life do you need faith to obey?

Critical Connection: Read the following verses and answer the question:

- Verse 11:29 tells us that by faith the people crossed the Red Sea after they left Egypt. The Red Sea was in front of them and Pharaoh's army was behind them. From the verses in Exodus, what is God asking them to do in faith?

Exodus 14:13-14 "And Moses said to the people, 'Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.'"



Father, forgive me for the times I shrink back in fear instead of stepping out in faith. Help me to be a faithful leader in the areas you have entrusted to me so that you will be glorified.

Day 5- Hebrews 11:30-40

10. Verses 30-32 name heroes of faith that came after Moses. What attribute of God was showcased, when in faith, Joshua ordered the Israelites to march around the city of Jericho (Joshua 6:20-21)?

Critical Connection: Read the following verses and answer the question:

- What saved Rahab, who was a Canaanite and a prostitute?

Joshua 2:9-11 "I know that the LORD has given you the land ... we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt ... for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath "

11. List all the things that were done through faith in verses 33-35.

-What is noteworthy to you about this list?

12. List all the things that were endured through faith in verses 35-38.



Without faith in Jesus, life doesn't make sense. Circumstances overwhelm, dreams die, troubles invade, disaster strikes and without the promises of God to cling to how do you endure and overcome? Faith sees the invisible reality of a great and loving God even when his presence at times cannot be felt, or his help cannot be perceived. If we endure in faith there will come a day when we will look back and see his fingerprints all over the silences and we will reap the reward of greater peace, greater joy and greater love for God that comes from faith that perseveres in the darkness.

- ❖ When your "faith" is hoping God will do what you want, what fruit does that bear in your heart?

- ❖ When your faith is in God and his promises, what fruit does that bear in your heart?

- ❖ Spend some time reflecting on the state of your faith. Take these thoughts to God in prayer.

Critical Connection: Read the following verses and answer the question:

-Verses 39-40 tell us that these heroes did not receive what was promised. What was “The Promise” that the Old Testament saints did not receive in their lifetime?

Galatians 4:4 “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,”

One Thing: Look back over this week’s study. Pick one thing that God was stirring in your heart, convicting you about, or something new that you learned and write it here.

How will knowing this impact the way you think and act?

¹ Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Locations 5945-5946). Kindle Edition.

² Richard D. Phillips. Hebrews (Reformed Expository Commentary) (Kindle Locations 5942-5943). Kindle Edition.

³ Expositor’s Commentary Copyright © 1998-2018 Olive Tree Bible Software

⁴ Piper, John Piper, John The Pleasures of God p.237 Multnomah Books, 1991

⁵ Helen Howarth Lemmel. Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus lyrics © Warner Chappell Music, Inc, Capitol Christian Music Group

⁶ Piper, John The Pleasures of God p.236 Multnomah Books, 1991

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