

May 1, 2016

## Heroes of Faith, Part Two

*A series on Heroes of the Old and New Testament  
"The act of faith is what distinguished our ancestors,  
set them above the crowd," Hebrews 11:3 The Message*

### Abraham: (Pastor Erik)

#### Believing the Impossible"

*"It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep his promise. And so a whole nation came from this one man who was as good as dead—a nation with so many people that, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore, there is no way to count them."*

*Hebrews 11:11-12*

#### A. Abraham's story and the story of the Promised Land...

1. Abram lived in Ur until the age of 70. Ur was a beautiful and prosperous city with lovely parks and grand public buildings. Abram's family would have been a wealthy family. Ur was a pagan city where human sacrifice was practiced.
2. Abram left with his father, Terah, and his nephew Lot. His father died at Haran about 5 years later.
3. Abram left Haran for Canaan. He settled in the Promised Land with Lot, his nephew.
4. Abraham's descendants went to Egypt and came back. The nation of Israel was carried away as captives and then came back after 70 years.
5. In 70 AD, they were scattered all over the world. In the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century they returned to set up the nation of Israel in 1948, probably the beginning of final regathering of Israel before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.

#### B. Abraham's faith...

*"Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised."*  
*Romans 4:19-21*

1. He left the comfortable, not knowing where it was taking him.  
*"It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going."*  
*Hebrews 11:8*
2. He left the comfortable to settle in the uncomfortable.  
*"And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner, living in tents."*  
*Hebrews 11:9a*
3. He kept his faith looking for a better place.  
*"Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God."*  
*Hebrews 11:10*
4. He believed the impossible.  
*"It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep his promise."*  
*Hebrews 11:11*
5. He was willing to give his dearest treasure and the fulfillment of the promise upon God's request.  
*"It was by faith that Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice when God was testing him. Abraham, who had received God's promises, was ready to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, even though God had told him, 'Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted.'" Hebrews 11:17-18*
6. He was promised the land, the nation, and the blessing, but he didn't see all the promises fulfilled in his lifetime.  
*"All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it."*  
*Hebrews 11:13a*

#### C. Abraham's mountain...

1. Mount Moriah was the mount of sacrifice for Abraham and Isaac.
2. David later built an altar there.
3. Solomon, David's son, built Solomon's Temple there.
4. 400 years later, it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar's armies.
5. 70 years later, it was rebuilt and in the 1<sup>st</sup> century Herod added to it so it became Herod's Temple.
6. Jesus drove out the money changers there and was ultimately sacrificed on the same mountain.
7. In 70 AD, it was destroyed again and all that remains is the site of the Wailing Wall.

8. It is also the site of a Muslim mosque but a third temple will be rebuilt there and it will be a little more than 100 yards to the location of the return of Christ at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming!

*"They will be killed by the sword or sent away as captives to all the nations of the world. And Jerusalem will be trampled down by the Gentiles until the period of the Gentiles comes to an end."*  
*Luke 21:24*

#### D. Abraham's doubts...

1. Abraham wavered when he feared loss of life and didn't speak the truth about Sarah, twice!
2. Abraham wavered when it came to fulfillment of the promise and humanly tried to fulfill the promise through Ishmael and Hagar.
3. Abraham even suggested that his servant, Eliezer, be the heir to fulfill the promise.
4. Faith can and will waver!

#### E. What seemingly impossible things are you believing?

1. Are you willing to leave the comfortable to go to the uncomfortable to trust God?
2. Are you willing to believe that God has this and is in control?
3. Are you willing to trust God with your dearest possessions, including family?
4. Are you willing to give up whatever God is calling you to leave behind to follow Him?
5. Are you willing to hold fast to the promises of God, in spite of impossible circumstances?

*"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."*  
*Hebrews 11:6*

*"Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see."*  
*Hebrews 11:1*

Next week...

May 8, 2016

**"Esther: (Mandy- Children's Ministry Director)  
For Such a Time as This"**

*"If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?"*  
*Esther 4:14*