

- 4) During Joseph's 22 years away from family, he never lost his faith in God. As a result, God was able to bless him.
  - a) In the end, Joseph looked back and saw God's sovereign hand in all of his trials. He was not at all bitter towards God or hateful towards his brothers.
  - b) If faith in God kept Joseph walking in harmony with God, it can do the same for you and me. **Troubles and trials in life do not have to make us bitter. God wants to use them to make us better.**

### b. Joseph believed God's promises

- 1) Joseph knew God's promises to his forefathers.
- 2) By faith he quoted those promises and required his relatives to carry his bones out of Egypt when the time came that God would deliver them. (Gen 50:24-25)
- 3) Hundreds of years later, God kept that promise and delivered Israel from Egypt. They took Joseph's bones too.
- 4) The Bible is not a book of fairy tales. It is not a manmade religious book. It is God's written word. We can trust what God has said. Every word of it will come to pass.
  - a) God said He will judge the world – and He will!
  - b) Jesus warned of a literal eternal lake of fire where those who reject him will spend eternity – and it will happen.
  - c) Jesus promised to give eternal life to those who place their faith in Him – and He will!
  - d) Jesus promised to come again and take believers to heaven – and He will!

**Conclusion:** Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph (the Patriarchs) were not perfect men, **but they had faith in God**. God wants their faith to strengthen our faith. If your faith has been staggering, let the faith of these frail men strengthen your faith.

Have faith to surrender all (God wants only the best for you). Have faith to trust God for the future. Have faith to follow God's directions (He will not lead you astray). Have faith to believe God's promises.

If your faith needs to grow today, trust God and let Him have His way in your life.

**Song:** His Way with Thee - 367

# Faith of the Patriarchs

*29 September 2019 AM - Hebrews 11:17-22 - Heb19 - Scott Childs*

**Introduction:** One of the wisest things we can do in life is to learn from our forefathers. When we learn from them, we can avoid their mistakes and build on their qualities.

Our text this morning mentions the first four patriarch (forefathers) of the nation of Israel. Could you name those patriarchs? They are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Read Hebrews 11:17-22.

**Transition:** In these verses, God shows us four more characteristics of the faith of these patriarchs that ought to increase our faith in God.

## 1. Abraham had faith to surrender all

### a. God's request (Gen 22:1-2)

- 1) God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac.
  - a) This was an unusual request, especially since God forbid murder. Was God sincere?
  - b) Abraham believed God's promise to multiply his seed through Isaac so clearly that he knew God could raise his son to life again if he died (Heb 11:19).
- 2) God was testing Abraham's faith. Would he surrender ALL to God? Would he truly trust God with his treasured son?
  - a) **God wanted first place!** What is your treasure? It may be your children. It may be your occupation. It may be your house or another possession.
  - b) If God asks you to give it up, do you have faith to surrender all? **Does God have first place in your life?**
  - c) If God calls one of your children to the mission field, will you encourage him to go?

### b. Abraham's response (Gen 22:3-12)

- 1) He obeyed early the next morning.
- 2) He travelled three days to the location God chose.
- 3) He bound Isaac and laid him on the altar (Ge 22:9).
- 4) God stopped him before he killed Isaac (Ge 22:10-12).
  - a) Abraham showed that he had faith to surrender all.
  - b) Today, **God is looking for men and women, young and old, who will have faith to surrender all.**

✧ *Andrew Murray wisely said, "God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him."*

- c) God **may not** take your treasure from you, but he wants to know that you will truly surrender it to Him.  
**Have you honestly said to God, "I surrender all?"**

## 2. Isaac had faith to trust God for the future

### a. Isaac's rebellious flesh

- 1) In the brief biblical account of Isaac's life, he does not stand out as a great spiritual leader.
- 2) Surely, he knew that God told Rebekah his wife that her firstborn son would serve his younger brother (Ge 25:23).
- 3) When it came time to bless his sons before he died, he wilfully tried to bless his firstborn Esau rather than God's choice, Jacob.

### b. Isaac's renewed faith

- 1) It seems that, after Jacob deceived him, Isaac had faith that God would fulfil the blessings he had pronounced. He knew down in his heart that this was God's will and he accepted it.
- 2) Again, he blessed Jacob from his heart (Gen 28:2-3).
- 3) God may allow things into our lives against which our flesh rebels. We must trust God, not our flesh. His ways are perfect. We must not lean on our own understanding.

## 3. Jacob had faith to follow God's direction

### a. Jacob too often followed his flesh

- 1) Jacob cheated his brother out of his birthright.
- 2) Jacob deceived his father and received the blessing of the firstborn.
- 3) Jacob moved far north to Haran where he married and was deceived by his father-in-law into marrying his bride's sister.
- 4) After 20 years of mistreatment by his father-in-law, he left without telling him. This nearly caused a fight.
- 5) He favoured Joseph, the son of his favourite wife, above the other sons. This caused hatred and the brothers sold Joseph as a slave and deceived Jacob into thinking he was killed by a beast.

- 6) Years later, Joseph became second ruler of Egypt and invited his father and family to live in Egypt.

### b. On his death-bed Jacob followed God

- 1) Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph (Gen 48:13-19). This time he followed God's will.
- 2) By faith, he gave a special blessing to the younger son as God directed him to. From a human standpoint, this did not make sense, but it was God's will.
- 3) The Bible is God's written direction for our lives. Sometimes the Bible tells us to do things that do not make sense from a human perspective. **Here are two examples.**
  - a) God promises to bless those who tithe and give offerings to Him. (Proverbs 3:9-10) "*Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.*"
  - b) God tells us to do good to those who do evil to us. (Romans 12:21) "*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*"
- 4) It takes faith to do God's will when it does not make sense from a human perspective.

## 4. Joseph had faith to believe God's promises

### a. Joseph believed God during life's trials

- 1) Joseph was sold by his brothers when he was 17 to become an Egyptian slave.
  - 2) Because of his integrity, he was lied about and ended up in prison (Gen 17).
  - 3) When he was 30, he was elevated to second ruler of Egypt. After another 9 years, his father and family came to Egypt. He had not seen his father for 22 years.
- ✧ *George Mueller wrote, "God delights to increase the faith of His children...I say, and say it deliberately--trials, difficulties and sometimes defeat, are the very food of faith...We should take them out of His hands as evidences of His love and care for us in developing more and more that faith which He is seeking to strengthen in us."*