**Koinonia – 1 March 2020**

**The Hall of Faith: The Call to Keep the Faith...!**

***The LIFE of FAITH... (Faith made VISIBLE...)***

Heb 11:8-12

**Introductory Thoughts:**

• I want to invite you to open your Bibles to Heb 11 as we continue our series on Heb 11 called: ***The Hall of Faith: The Call to Keep the Faith...!***

• One of the **CORE** **REFORMARTION** truths, one of the **SOLAS**, that was reclaimed by the Reformation is **SOLA** **FIDE** – the truth that **JUSTIFICATION** is by **FAITH** **ALONE**...!

• Rom 3:21-24, 28

• But then we read in Jam 2:24, 26...

• We are saved by **FAITH** alone, but **NOT** by a **FAITH** that **REMAINS** alone...!

• In Heb 11:1-7 we noticed the **NATURE** of Faith as well as the **EXPRESSION** of faith in the lives of Able, Enoch and Noah...

• Now in Heb 11:8-12 we will start to turn our attention to **ABRAHAM**, who is called the father of the faith, and we will notice from his history ***The LIFE of FAITH***... we will see how his ***FAITH was made VISIBLE***...

**Teaching Points:**

• We will look at **THREE** **ESSENTIALS** of the **LIFE** of **FAITH**:

**1. It is a LIFE of SIMPLE OBEDIENCE... (v8)**

• Gen 12:1-3 – God called Abraham to leave his family, relatives and country and go to the land that God would show him... verse 4 records his **RESPONSE**...

• In the **CALL** of **ABRAHAM**, God took the **INITIATIVE**... that is how God **ALWAYS** works...

• He is the One who **CALLS** and **COMMANDS** and we **SIMPLY** have to **OBEY**... just **DO** what He says.

• When He called Abraham, He only **REVEALED** what Abraham **NEEDED** to know – God will give him a land as his inheritance...

• He didn’t know **ANYTHING** more than that and it would be a **TEST** of his **FAITH** - would he **TRUST** God?

• The **PROOF** of his trust was just **SIMPLE** **OBEDIENCE**...! His response also conveys something of how **IMMEDIATE** it was... there wasn’t this **long** **deliberation** of whether He **SHOULD** now do what **GOD** has **CALLED** him to... the **CALL** of God was **CLEAR** and **STRAIGHT** **FORWARD**...!

• **OBEDIENCE** to God and His call is the **RESPONSE** of **TRUE**, **SAVING** **FAITH**.

• Wherever you find **REAL** **FAITH** in **GOD**, you will find a **LIFE** of **SIMPLE** **OBEDIENCE**.

• Throughout the New Testament, we find that **FAITH** and **OBEDIENCE** are constantly **CONNECTED** with one another: Rom 1:5; Joh 3:36; Matt 7:21-23

• A life of **OBEDIENCE** stands as the **EVIDENCE** of **TRUE**, **SAVING** **FAITH**...! It is the **FRUIT** of **FAITH**.

• And it is **SIMPLE** **OBEDIENCE** – it is simply **DOING** what God has called us or commanded us to do.

• It is based on **TRUSTING** God, for we do **NOT** know how things will work out in any given situation... all that we can **DO** is to **ACKNOWLEDGE** God is **ALL** of our ways and simply **DO** what we **UNDERSTAND** and **KNOW** His will to be...

• It is letting **GO** of all the “**WHAT** **IFS**” and simply doing what we **KNOW** is His will...!

**2. It is a LIFE of a being a PILGRIM... (v9-10)**

• God promised Abraham a **LAND** and when he got there, he lived as a **FOREIGNER** in that land, never owing **ANY** part of that land... he and his sons lived in **TENTS**, as **NOMADS**, as **PILGRIMS** not having any permanent **DWELLING** place of his own...

• It is **INTERESTING** for me to note that **ABRAHAM** was always **TRAVELLING**... **PAUL** was always on the **GO**... **JESUS** was always on the **MOVE** as well...

• The **PRINCIPLE** is that they weren’t **TIED** **DOWN** by the tings of this world in such a way that they were seeking to make this world their **HOME** or **PERMANENT** **DWELLING**...

• We are **CALLED** to be **PILGRIMS** in this life – 1 Pet 2:11

• We need to remember that our **CITIZENSHIP** is **NOT** here, but in **HEAVEN** – Phil 3:20

• Steven Cole: ***“As pilgrims, we need to adopt the mindset of pilgrims... As God’s people, our homeland is heaven. We’re just passing through this earth. Our mindset toward success, possessions, and purpose in life should be radically different than the mindset of the natives. The natives’ hopes centre in this life only, and so they try to accumulate all of the things and engage in all of the activities that they think will bring them happiness in this life. But pilgrims’ hopes centre in Jesus Christ and their eternal inheritance in Him. So they hold the things of this life loosely. They enjoy all that God provides, but their real treasures are in heaven.”***

• To be a **PILGIM** in this world s to focus on **ETERNITY** rather than in seeking our best life now...!

• Abraham looked **BEYOND** his temporary life here on earth, in which he was living in **TENTS** as a **FOREIGNER** in the land, towards the **PERMANENT** **DWELLING** **PLACE** of which **GOD** is the **BUILDER** and **DESIGNER**... the **CITY** that has a **SURE** **FOUNDATION** and will **NEVER** be moved... **HEAVEN**...!

• To live as a **PILGRIM** is this life is to live a life that is **SEPARATE** and **DIFFERENT** from the natives of this land and to know that this **WORLD** cannot bring the **FULFILLMENT** that we are **LONGING** for...

• Abraham was “**looking** **forward**”... not **AROUND** him or **BACKWARDS** to what was... He was **FOCUSED** on what was **COMING**...

• The Life of **FAITH** is where we are **NOT** trying to make this **WORLD** our **PARADISE** and not seeking our **FULFILLMENT** in this world and life. We are **PILGRIMS** on a **MISSION** of **SEEKING** and **KNOWING** **GOD** and **MAKING** **HIM** **KNOWN**...!

**3. It is a LIFE of TRUSTING in God’s PROMISES... (v11-12)**

• God **PROMISED** Abraham and Sarah that they will have a son.

• This although Sarah were biologically **UNABLE** to have children and **BOTH** of them were past the **NATURAL** time of having children – Abraham were 100 and Sarah 90 years old!

• Sarah **RECEIVED** God’s promise in her **HEART** and **ACTED** upon His promise, even though **ALL** of the **NATURAL** **ELEMENTS** were **AGAINST** her...!

• There is **TRULY** **NOTHING** **IMPOSSIBLE** for God...! What He has **PROMISED**, He **WILL** do...!

• The Life of faith is where, rather than focusing on human **INABILITY**, you focus on **GOD’S** **POWER** and **FAITHFULNESS**.

• He is **FAITHFUL** to who He **IS**, what He has **PLANNED** and what He has **PROMISED**...!

• We need to **RECEIVE** the promises of God by **FAITH**...!

• We need to be **CERTAIN** of what God **HAS** promised and what he has **NOT** promised – therefore we need to **STUDY** God’s Word **DILLIGENTLY** and **RESPONSIBLY**.

• When we are then **CERTAIN** of what is **CLEAR** that God has promised, we need to **TRUST** that God will **DO** what He has **PROMISED**.

• We **REVEAL** our trust in God’s promise. by **FULFILLING** the **PRE-REQUISITE** to His promise...!

• Abraham and Sarah did, and it lead to Abraham having a great **NATURAL** descendance, but even **GREATER** than that were his **SPIRITUAL** descendance, his **SPIRITUAL** **CHILDREN**...!

• Rather than focusing on answers in **THIS** **LIFE**, faith trusts God to **KEEP** **HIS** **WORD** in **HIS** **TIME**...!

• Faith looks to the **INTEGRITY** of God; to the **ABSOLUTENESS** of His **CHARACTER** and **ATTRIBUTES** to **DO** what He has promised.

• Abraham did **NOT** see the **REALIZATION** of Heb 11:12... when he died, he didn’t own the **PROMISED** **LAND** except for a **BURIAL** **PLOT**... he only had **ONE** **SON** by Sarah and would see the birth of Jacob and Esau, but would never see any of the sons born for Jacob...

• We need to see this principle then as well: ***God’s time is not our time... He WILL be faithful to His promises on HIS TIME...!***

• We have the **PRIVILEGE** to see that God **PROOFED** to be **FAITHFUL**...!

• May that **ENCOURAGE** us to **KNOW** that we can **TRUST** in **GOD** and what He has **PROMISED**...!

**Closing Thoughts:**

• Are **YOUR** faith made **VISIBLE** to this **WORLD** through your **OBEDIENCE**...? By living as a **PILGRIM**...? By **TRUSTING** God and **HIS** **PROMISES**...?

• I was reminded of this very basic song: ***“Trust and obey, it’s the only way, to be happy in Jesus, is to trust and obey...”***