

# Hebrews 11:8-16

- Outline of Abraham's Life
  - Genesis 11:24-32 – Generations of Terah, Abraham's father
  - Genesis 12:1-9 – Call of Abram and Promises of God, the Promise of a Nation (Abraham is 75 years old here according to 12:4)
  - Genesis 12:10-20 – Abram goes to Egypt during famine
  - Genesis 13:1-13 – Dividing the Land with Lot
  - Genesis 13:14-10 – Promise of the Land
  - Genesis 14:1-24 – War with kings from the East, Lot rescued, Melchizedek
  - Genesis 15 – Covenant of land for the nation
  - Genesis 16 – Hagar and birth of Ishmael (Abram is 86 years old in 16:16)
  - Genesis 17:1-14 – Covenant and circumcision (Abraham is 99 years old 17:24; Ishmael was 13) and Isaac will be heir and inherit the Covenant
  - Genesis 18 – The Lord appears to Abraham and Sarah with two angels at their "home"
  - Genesis 19 – Lot in Sodom; Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed
  - Genesis 20 – Abraham lives in Negev and in Gerar along with King Abimelek ("the king is my father")
  - Genesis 21:1-7; 8-21 – Isaac born (Sarah was 90/91 years old); Ishmael banished
  - Genesis 21:22-34 – dispute over water well with Abimelek at Beersheba
  - Genesis 22 – Offering of Isaac
  - Genesis 23 – Sarah's death (Abraham 137 years old)
- Acts 7:2-8 – Stephen said to the high priest, the Sanhedrin: "*Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, 'Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.'* Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living. Yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him, though he had no child. And God spoke to this effect—that his offspring would be sojourners in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and afflict them four hundred years. 'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.' And he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.
- Hebrews 6:15 – Abraham received what was promised -  
"So after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised."
- Hebrews 11:13 – Abraham died in faith not having received the things promised -  
"These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth."

**Hebrews 11:8 – “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.**

4102 [e]	2564 [e]	11 [e]	5219 [e]	1831 [e]	1519 [e]	5117 [e]	3739 [e]	3195 [e]	2983 [e]	1519 [e]	2817 [e]	
Pistei	kaloumenos	Abraam	hypēkousen	exelthein	eis	topon	hon	ēmellen	lambanein	eis	klēronomian	
8 Πίστει	καλούμενος	, Ἀβραάμ	ὑπήκουσεν	ἐξελθεῖν	εἰς	τόπον	ὄν	ἤμελλεν	λαμβάνειν	εἰς	κληρονομίαν	,
By faith	being called	Abraham	obeyed	to go out	into	a place	that	he was going	to receive	for	an inheritance	
N-DFS	V-PPM/P-NMS	N-NMS	V-AIA-3S	V-ANA	Prep	N-AMS	RelPro-AMS	V-IIA-3S	V-PNA	Prep	N-AFS	

2532 [e]	1831 [e]	3361 [e]	1987 [e]	4226 [e]	2064 [e]
kai	exélthen	mē	epistamenos	rou	erchetai
καὶ	ἐξῆλθεν	, μὴ	ἐπιστάμενος	ποῦ	ἔρχεται
and	went out	not	knowing	where	he is going
Conj	V-AIA-3S	Adv	V-PPM/P-NMS	Adv	V-PIM/P-3S

1. “By faith” – in proven confidence, convinced that God was true.
2. “obeyed” – Faith leads to obedience
3. “called to go out to a place...not knowing where he was going”
  - a. Abraham did understand the call and had confidence in God’s plan
  - b. Abraham did not understand the plan or where he was going
4. Two promises are taking place here:
  - a. The temporal land...Abraham **would not receive** only the promise of the land, but would receive a child who would become the nation that would receive the land in Joshua’s day.
    - i. Abraham **would receive** the son that would become the nation to inherit the land.
  - b. The eternal plan...Abraham **would not receive** or understand the fullness of this plan, but he knew it involved an eternal city not yet available to him.

**11:9 – “By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise.**

4102 [e]	3939 [e]	1519 [e]	1093 [e]	3588 [e]	1860 [e]	5613 [e]	245 [e]	1722 [e]	4633 [e]	2730 [e]	3326 [e]	2464 [e]
Pistei	parōkēsen	eis	gēn	tēs	epangelias	hōs	allotrian	en	skēnais	katoikēsas	meta	Isaak
9 Πίστει	παρώκησεν	εἰς	γῆν	τῆς	ἐπαγγελίας	, ὡς	ἀλλοτρίαν	, ἐν	σκηναῖς	κατοικήσας	μετὰ	Ἰσαὰκ
By faith	he sojourned	in	[the] land	of the	promise	as [in]	a foreign [country]	in	tents	having dwelt	with	Isaac
N-DFS	V-AIA-3S	Prep	N-AFS	Art-GFS	N-GFS	Adv	Adj-AFS	Prep	N-DFP	V-APA-NMS	Prep	N-GMS

2532 [e]	2384 [e]	3588 [e]	4789 [e]	3588 [e]	1860 [e]	3588 [e]	846 [e]
kai	Iakōb	tōn	synklēronomōn	tēs	epangelias	tēs	autēs
καὶ	Ἰακώβ	, τῶν	συνκληρονόμων	τῆς	ἐπαγγελίας	τῆς	αὐτῆς
and	Jacob	the	joint-heirs	of the	promise	-	same
Conj	N-GMS	Art-GMP	Adj-GMP	Art-GFS	N-GFS	Art-GFS	PPro-GF3S

**11:10 – “For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.**

1551 [e]	1063 [e]	3588 [e]	3588 [e]	2310 [e]	2192 [e]	4172 [e]	3739 [e]	5079 [e]	2532 [e]	1217 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]
exedecheto	gar	tēn	tous	themelious	echousan	polin	hēs	technitēs	kai	dēmiourgos	ho	Theos
10 ἔξεδεχέτο	γὰρ	τὴν	τοὺς	θεμελίους	ἔχουσάν	πόλιν	, ἧς	τεχνίτης	καὶ	δημιουργὸς	ὁ	Θεός
He was awaiting	for	the	-	foundations	having	city	of which	[the] architect	and	builder [is]	-	God
V.IIMP-3S	Conj	Art-AFS	Art-AMP	N-AMP	V-PPA-AFS	N-AFS	RelPro-GFS	N-NMS	Conj	N-NMS	Art-NMS	N-NMS

This is the key to their ability to endure and wait:

### **exedecheto**

ἔξεδεχέτο      γὰρ      τὴν      τοὺς      θεμελίους      ἔχουσάν      πόλιν      ἧς  
 he expected      for      the      the      foundations      having      city      of which

### **technites**

τεχνίτης  
 craftsman

καὶ  
 and

### **demiourgos**

δημιουργός  
 maker

ὁ θεός  
 God

1. ἔξεδεχέτο - *exedecheto* - “**he was looking forward to** (NIV)” means to await expectantly.
  - a. This preposition in compound from two words means “to be ready”, “to be prepared to deal with the situation”.
    - i. *ek* = “out from” and “to”
    - ii. *dexomai* = “welcome”
  - b. Means to “welcome from the heart”, “looking to the end-result of the waiting” and literally means “out-come,”
  - c. Defined as: “to take or receive”, by implication it means “to await, to expect”
2. τεχνίτης “**architect**” (NIV) means craftsman, artificer, designer, maker.
  - a. *technites* refers to the plan
3. δημιουργός - *demiourgos* - “**builder**” (NIV) means public workman, constructor, maker.
  - a. Taken from demos and ergon
    - i. “demos” means “people”
    - ii. “ergon” means “work, labor, doing”
  - b. This is a word used an ancient papyrus written by Christians to identify Jesus Christ as the Creator of all things.
  - c. This word *demiourgos* refers to the execution of the plan.

Abraham was looking forward to the eternal city.

1. Abraham was not looking forward to:
  - Canaan
  - Ur
  - The earthly city of Jerusalem
2. This city is mentioned in:
  - Psalm 87 – variety of nations and the people born there will visit Zion and be “born” there where the water of life flows.
  - Galatians 4:26 – a Jerusalem on earth in bondage; a Jerusalem above that is free which is connected to freedom found through faith in Jesus.

- Philippians 3:20 – a believer in Christ has citizenship in heaven where Jesus the savior will come from to bring transformation of earthly bodies into a glorious resurrected body like his.
  - Hebrews 12:22 – Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God....12:26 – once again a shaking of the earth to remove the temporal and establish the eternal
  - Hebrews 13:14 – “For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.” (ESV)
  - Revelation 21:1-27 – “the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven FROM God,...’Now the dwelling of god is with men, and he will live with them.’... ‘I am making everything new!’
3. The Dead Sea scrolls called Mt. Zion New Jerusalem

11:11 – “By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised.

4102 [e]	2532 [e]	846 [e]	4564 [e]	4723 [e]	1411 [e]	1519 [e]	2602 [e]	4690 [e]	2983 [e]	2532 [e]
Pistei	kai	autē	Sarra	steira	dynamin	eis	katabolēn	spermatos	elaben	kai
11 Πίστει	καὶ	, αὐτῆ	Σάρρα	[στεῖρα]	, δύναμιν	εἰς	καταβολὴν	σπέρματος	ἔλαβεν	, καὶ
By faith	also	herself	Sarah	barren	power	for	[the] conception	of seed	received	even
N-DFS	Conj	PPro-DF3S	N-DFS	Adj-NFS	N-AFS	Prep	N-AFS	N-GNS	V-AIA-3S	Conj
3844 [e]	2540 [e]	2244 [e]	1893 [e]	4103 [e]	2233 [e]	3588 [e]	1861 [e]			
para	kairon	hēlikias	epei	piston	hēgēsato	ton	epangeilamenon			
παρὰ	καιρὸν	ἡλικίας	, ἐπεὶ	πιστὸν	ἠγήσατο	τὸν	ἐπαγγειλάμενον			
beyond	the opportune	age	since	faithful	she considered	the [One]	having promised			
Prep	N-AMS	N-GFS	Conj	Adj-AMS	V-AIM-3S	Art-AMS	V-APM-AMS			

1. Some have debated if Sarah or Abraham is the subject of 11:11:
  - a. Sarah is a poor example of faith. She laughed when told of Isaac’s birth.
    - i. But, she still feared the Lord because when he questioned her she was afraid enough to lie when she said, “I did not laugh.”
    - ii. So, her amazement at the ridiculousness and her fear of the Lord would be faith.
  - b. Abraham and his faith are the focus of verses before 11:11 and then again in 11:12.
  - c. The entire Genesis account is about Abraham’s faith. Not Sarah’s.
  - d. Paul uses the same story of Isaac’s birth in Rom. 4:20 as an example of Abraham’s faith.
  - e. The phrase “*katabolen spermatos*” translated “to conceive seed” instead refers to the father’s part and literally means “for the deposition of seed”.
  - f. *Katabolen* means “a laying down” and is used to say:
    - i. “foundation”
    - ii. “depositing, sowing, deposit”
    - iii. Technically used of the act of conception
  - g. *Spermatos* means “that which is sown” and “seed” and is used to say:
    - i. “seed” commonly referring to cereal seed
    - ii. “offspring” or “descendants”
  - h. But, no one is listed here by name that is NOT commended for their faith:
    - i. By faith Abel

- ii. By faith Enoch
- iii. By faith Abraham
- iv. By faith Sarah
- v. By faith Isaac
- vi. Etc.

**11:12 – “Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.**

1352 [e]	2532 [e]	575 [e]	1520 [e]	1080 [e]		2532 [e]	3778 [e]	3499 [e]		2531 [e]	3588 [e]
dio	kai	aph'	henos	egennēthēsan		kai	tauta	nenekrōmenou		kathōs	ta
12 διὸ	καὶ	ἀφ’	ἐνὸς	ἐγεννήθησαν	,	καὶ	ταῦτα	νεκρωμένου	,	καθὼς	τὰ
Therefore	also	from	one man	were born		and	he	having been as good as dead		as	the
Conj	Conj	Prep	Adj-GMS	V-AIP-3P		Conj	DPro-ANP	V-RPM/P-GMS		Adv	Art-NNP

798 [e]	3588 [e]	3772 [e]	3588 [e]	4128 [e]	2532 [e]	5613 [e]	3588 [e]	285 [e]	3588 [e]	3844 [e]	3588 [e]	5491 [e]	3588 [e]
astra	tou	ouranou	tō	plēthei	kai	hōs	hē	amos	hē	para	to	cheilos	tēs
ἄστρα	τοῦ	οὐρανοῦ	τῷ	πλήθει	,	καὶ	ὡς	ἡ	ἄμμος	ἡ	παρὰ	τὸ	χεῖλος
stars	of	heaven	-	in multitude		and	as	the	sand	-	by	the	shore
N-NNP	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Art-DNS	N-DNS		Conj	Adv	Art-NFS	N-NFS	Art-NFS	Prep	Art-ANS	N-ANS
													Art-GFS

2281 [e]	3588 [e]	382 [e]
thalassēs	hē	anarithmētos
θαλάσσης	ἡ	ἀναρίθμητος
sea	-	countless
N-GFS	Art-NFS	Adj-NFS

1. “One man” indicates the small beginning of a very great result. All this came from one promise to one man who believed.
2. Descendants including who they would be, where they would go and what they would do are all too numerous to count (sand and dust).
  - a. It is not just the vast volume
  - b. It is also the vast effect they would have and territory they would cover

**11:13 – “These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.**

2596 [e]	4102 [e]	599 [e]	3778 [e]	3956 [e]	3361 [e]	2983 [e]	3588 [e]	1860 [e]	235 [e]
Kata	pistin	apethanon	houtoi	pantes	mē	komisamenoī	tas	epangelias	alla
13 Κατὰ	πίστιν	ἀπέθανον	οὗτοι	πάντες	, μὴ	κομισάμενοι	τὰς	ἐπαγγελίας	, ἀλλὰ
In	faith	died	these	all	not	having received	the	promises	but
Prep	N-AFS	V-AIA-3P	DPro-NMP	Adj-NMP	Adv	V-APM-NMP	Art-AFP	N-AFP	Conj

4207 [e]	846 [e]	3708 [e]	2532 [e]	782 [e]	2532 [e]	3670 [e]	3754 [e]	3581 [e]	2532 [e]
porrōthen	autas	idontes	kai	aspasamenoī	kai	homologēsantes	hoti	xenoi	kai
πόρρωθεν	αὐτὰς	ιδόντες	, καὶ	ἀσπασάμενοι	, καὶ	ὁμολογήσαντες	ὅτι	ξένοι	καὶ
from afar	them	having seen	and	having embraced [them]	and	having confessed	that	strangers	and
Adv	PPro-AF3P	V-APA-NMP	Conj	V-APM-NMP	Conj	V-APA-NMP	Conj	Adj-NMP	Conj

3927 [e]	1510 [e]	1909 [e]	3588 [e]	1093 [e]
parepidēmoi	eisin	epi	tēs	gēs
παρεπίδημοί	εἰσιν	ἐπὶ	τῆς	γῆς .
sojourners	they are	on	the	earth
Adj-NMP	V-PIA-3P	Prep	Art-GFS	N-GFS

1. The author returns to the general theme: These people of faith died without receiving the fulness of the promises.
2. “These all” specifically refer to those just mentioned as traveling to the land of Canaan – Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob. But, of course, the concept is to be applied to all.
3. But, people of faith still “saw the promises as fulfilled” by their faith or confidence in God’s nature and God’s Word.
4. Indeed, Abraham did receive what was promised to him: A son.  
But, Abraham did not see or receive what was promised to come through the son.
5. “Strangers” and “aliens” is what Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were there entire lives. Then, they went into Egypt for 400 years and eventually left because Egypt was not their home either.
6. In Genesis 23:4 Abraham calls himself a “sojourner” when talking to the Hittites about buying a plot of ground from them to bury his wife:  
*“I am a sojourner and foreigner among you; give me property among you for a burying place, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.”*
7. Jacob talks about his life as a time of sojourning in Genesis 47:9 when introducing himself to Pharaoh:  
*“And Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The days of the years of my sojourning are 130 years. Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning.”*
  - a. “of my sojourning” is *meguray* from *magor* /maw-goor/ meaning “a sojourning place, a dwelling place, a pilgrimage”
  - b. **Sojourn** in English means “to stay somewhere temporarily”

11:14 – **“For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.**

3588 [e]	1063 [e]	5108 [e]	3004 [e]	1718 [e]	3754 [e]	3968 [e]	1934 [e]
hoi	gar	toiauta	legontes	emphanizousin	hoti	patrida	epizētousin
14 οἱ	γὰρ	τοιαῦτα	λέγοντες	ἐμφανίζουσιν	ὅτι	πατρίδα	ἐπιζητοῦσιν .
Those	for	such things	saying	make manifest	that [their]	own country	they are seeking
Art-NMP	Conj	DPro-ANP	V-PPA-NMP	V-PIA-3P	Conj	N-AFS	V-PIA-3P

1. The continuous use of “sojourning” and “pilgrimage” means these people:
  - a. Saw their life on earth as temporary and their presence here to not be in their homeland
  - b. Lived this life anticipating they were going somewhere else eventually that would be permanent and be their actual homeland.
2. The New Testament picks up this theme that the writer of Hebrews is making as he drives this point home – we also are aliens, strangers in this age on our way to somewhere permanent.
  - a. 1 Peter 1:1 – “*To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.*”
    - i. This verse, like James 1:1, may be focused more of Christian Jews scattered from Judea and Jerusalem by persecution or still living in foreign lands since the days of the Assyrian dispersion in 722 BC -  
 “*James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
 To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.*”
  - b. 1 Peter 1:17 – “*And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*”
  - c. 1 Peter 2:11 – “*Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable.*”
  - d. Philippians 3:20 – “*But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.*”

11:15 – “**If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return.**”

2532 [e]	1487 [e]	3303 [e]	1565 [e]	3421 [e]	575 [e]	3739 [e]	1545 [e]	2192 [e]	302 [e]	2540 [e]	344 [e]
kai	ei	men	ekeinēs	emnemoneuon	aph’	hēs	exebēsan	eichon	an	kairon	anakampai
15 καὶ	εἰ	μὲν	ἐκείνης	ἐμνημόνευον	ἀφ’	ἧς	ἐξέβησαν	εἶχον	ἄν	καιρὸν	ἀνακάμψαι .
And	if	indeed	that	they had been remembering	from	where	they came out	they would have had	-	opportunity	to return
Conj	Conj	Conj	DPro-GFS	V-III-3P	Prep	RelPro-GFS	V-AI-3P	V-III-3P	Prtcl	N-AMS	V-ANA

1. The word translated “thinking” is *emnemoneuon* from *mnemoneuo* which means “remember”
  - a. The Hebrew box above translates it “they had been remembering”
2. The area of their faith was in their “thinking” or in “remembering” where that promised city or promised land was located.
  - a. It was NOT on this side of history, otherwise they could have went there. Or, even returned there.
  - b. But, since it was NOT here yet, they had to wait for it.
  - c. All they could do now was “think”, “remember” or trust the promise “knowing” it was true and would soon appear.

3. Just like Psalm 87 Abraham and these other people of faith left their homelands, renounced their citizenship and began to look for the place where it would be said:  
 “The Lord records as he registers the peoples, ‘This one was born there.’” – Psalm 87:6
- They are “born again” in another city
  - They have citizenship in a new country

11:16 – **“But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.”**

3568 [e]	1161 [e]	2909 [e]	3713 [e]	3778 [e]	1510 [e]	2032 [e]	1352 [e]	3756 [e]	1870 [e]	
nyn	de	kreittonos	oregontai	tout'	estin	epouraniou	dio	ouk	epaischynetai	
16	vũv	δὲ	κρείττονος	ὀρέγονται ,	τοῦτ'	ἔστιν ,	ἐπουρανίου .	διὸ	οὐκ	ἐπαισχύνεται
	Now	however	a better [one]	they stretch forward to	that	is	a heavenly [one]	Therefore	not	is ashamed of
	Adv	Conj	Adj-GFS-C	V-PIM-3P	DPro-NNS	V-PIA-3S	Adj-GFS	Conj	Adv	V-PIM/P-3S

846 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	2316 [e]	1941 [e]	846 [e]	2090 [e]	1063 [e]	846 [e]	4172 [e]
autous	ho	Theos	Theos	epikaleisthai	autōn	hētoimasen	gar	autois	polin
αὐτοὺς	ὁ	Θεὸς ,	Θεὸς	ἐπικαλεῖσθαι	αὐτῶν ;	ἠτοίμασεν	γὰρ	αὐτοῖς	πόλιν .
them	-	God	God	to be called	of them	He has prepared	indeed	for them	a city
PPro-AM3P	Art-NMS	N-NMS	N-NMS	V-PNM/P	PPro-GM3P	V-AIA-3S	Conj	PPro-DM3P	N-AFS

- “he has prepared for them a city” –
  - This is past tense on purpose
  - Also, prepared in the past tense is the Lake of Fire in Matthew 25:41 –  
 “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”
- 1 Peter 2:9-12 -  
*“you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession...Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people...I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable.”*