

Hebrews 11:17–29

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By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with my series about Hebrews 11. This installment was a presentation titled “Hebrews 11:17-29.” I want to share some of my comments in this article.

Mentioned Abraham

Hebrews 11:17-19 discussed God testing Abraham by asking him to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice (Genesis 22:1-2).

- Abraham had a relationship with God in the Old Covenant, where he could know that this request was legitimate.
- I am concerned that this example could be dangerous to individuals in the present—especially those who are dealing with an unstable mind or erratic emotions. Many people who hear voices (which they attribute to God) are not in close contact with the Almighty.
- Verse 19 showed that Abraham understood the sovereignty of God and the resurrection.

Mentioned Isaac

Hebrews 11:20 discussed Isaac blessing Jacob and Esau (Genesis 27:1-40).

- To be honest, I find this example to be a little disturbing.
- The story of Isaac blessing Jacob and Esau is filled with drama and deception—including a wife who was undermining the intent of her husband and resorting to manipulation and trickery. Could her devious behavior be included in a historical record about faith?
- Someone could ask—Was Rebekah helping the fulfillment of God’s prophecy about the two boys that God gave in Genesis 25:23?

Genesis 25:23—“And the LORD said to her: ‘Two nations are in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body; one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger.’ ”

Was God using her manipulation and trickery to fulfill His will?

- Hebrews 11:20 is complimenting the action of Isaac.

■ By faith, Isaac displayed his behavior. While Isaac could be accused of being gullible, the intent of his heart was apparently proper.

Mentioned Jacob

Hebrews 11:21 discussed Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph (Genesis 48:1-22).

■ Bible students believe that the idea of Jacob “leaning on the top of his staff” indicates his advanced age.

■ Jacob’s advanced age is also apparent in Genesis 48:8, when Jacob asked: Who are these boys?

Mentioned Joseph

Hebrews 11:22 discussed Joseph giving instructions when he was dying (Genesis 50:24).

■ Joseph wanted his family to follow the instruction of God to go to the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Mentioned Moses

Hebrews 11:23-29 mentioned the phrase “by faith” involving five different incidents.

■ Verse 23—By faith, Moses’ parents resisted the king’s command and hid Moses.

■ Verses 24-26—By faith, Moses chose the path of being with the people of God rather than being immersed with the greater riches of Egypt and the accompanying lifestyle involving the pleasures of sin.

■ Verse 27—By faith, Moses focused upon the invisible God to deal with the wrath of the king.

■ Verse 28—By faith, Moses accepted God’s deliverance by obeying God’s instructions (in this case specifically about the Passover and the blood on the door).

■ Verse 29—By faith, Moses accepted God’s deliverance by obeying God’s instructions (in this case specifically about the parting of the Red Sea).