

Text: Hebrews 11:8-12

The Patriarch is promised a Place and a Person

Promise 1: Hebrews 11: 8-10 the patriarch is promised a place (Canaan)

- Genesis 12:1
- Abraham is called to a place he has not seen before to receive it as an inheritance.
- Abraham's immediate obedience is an outward sign of an inward faith.
- It is a sacrificial faith. Abraham is out of his comfort zone, he is not a young man (75 years old).
- Abraham displays what economists call permanent geographic and occupational mobility.
- Abraham never actually possesses the place - not yet .It is already inhabited; his family live in tents and are forced by famine to move temporarily to Egypt.
- There are struggles of faith as this situation appears to be contrary to the promise of God. But Abraham resists any the temptation to turn away from God.
- The secret of Abraham's patience is that he looked forward to a permanent heavenly city. The ultimate promised place (the New Jerusalem).

Promise 2: Hebrews 11: 11-12 - the patriarch and matriarch are promised a person (Isaac)

- Genesis 12:2
- Abraham and Sarah are told they will be parents and have innumerable descendants.
- Their combined ages are an outward sign of impossibility – not seen.
- It must become a dependent faith. Both must learn to accept this promise can only be achieved by God. Not yet, wait till you are 100 and 90 years old.
- Their struggles of faith are sometimes displayed through laughter. It is an outward sign of inward doubts by Abraham (Genesis 17:17) and Sarah (Genesis 18:12). Then finally there is the laughter of joyful wonder when Isaac is born (Genesis 21:6.)
- The birth of Isaac points towards Jesus the ultimate promised person.

Applications

1. Abraham and Sarah lived in a tent - we too are strangers in this world.
2. Abraham and Sarah had a dependent faith – our salvation comes from faith not works.
3. They had struggles of faith - we should not be surprised if we have them too and seek to be strengthened by God's word. Romans 4:18- 21