

Lesson 9, 3/21/19 (No Study, sick)  
3/28/19

You requested last time that we pursue the new MT Zion from Hebrews 11

We are going to get into some heavy stuff, so please ask me to explain further if needed.

I am sorry, but I find it very difficult to jump into the middle of an important doctrine without giving the context of that doctrine. So please bear with me as I may say more than you want to know.

Hebrews 11:10 (*For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*) was not given in a vacuum, so it will not stand alone. Abraham's faith was not something he had on his own.

So, we will start with

**Ephesians 2:8** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

**Notice the order here: Grace and then Faith, and not Faith and then Grace**

What is the importance of the order given by Paul? There can be no faith without God's grace.

A term we might hear is "Sovereign Grace." However, that can be a deceptive term, for some who claim "Sovereign Grace" reject any binding influence of the law of God upon them.

Defined

**"Grace:** 2) good will, loving-kindness, favour. 2a) of the merciful kindness by which God, **exerting his holy influence upon souls**, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues."

Note the term, "holy influence." We will use it often

**John 6:44** *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 65* *And he said, Therefore said I unto*

*you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.*  
**2 Timothy 1:9** *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,k*

4 points

**First: Since the fall,** no man has any desire to seek after nor to follow God. Everyone desires to go his own way.

**Romans 3:10** *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

God makes it clear that there is no natural, inborn desire to seek after him, so God must make the first move.

**Second: No man has ever had** nor has the faith to come to and follow the God of Scripture, so it must be an act of God's grace. God must exert his holy influence upon the soul of a particular individual.

Adam's, Abele's, Seth's, Enoch's, Methuselah's, and Noah's faith had to be a result of God's grace—his holy influence upon their souls.

**Genesis 6:8** *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.*

That is, God, in his sovereign and predetermined purpose, chose to exert his holy influence upon the souls of the saints before Noah, and to Noah, so Noah would have the faith to preach righteousness, and to build the ark. (2 Peter 2:5, Acts 2:23)

Romans 3:10-12 the requirement of "Calvinism" from the very time of the fall. I do not like to identify this clear scriptural doctrine with any man, but these five points best sum up God's eternal workings in the souls of men.

**Total Depravity** (also known as Total Inability and Original Sin)

**Unconditional Election**

**Limited Atonement** (also known as Particular Atonement)

**Irresistible Grace**

**Perseverance of the Saints** (also known as Once Saved Always Saved)

(I have a little booklet in which follow the roots and basic doctrines of the Arminianism and Calvinism.)

**Third: Particular Atonement.** That is, not according to any good he might see in an individual, but only *according to his own purpose and grace* does he exert his holy influence.

Another word for “Reformed Baptist” is “Particular Baptist.”

Particular Atonement, or God’s working in particular people, is illustrated throughout the Old Testament, *e.g.* Luke 4:26

**Fourth:** When God decides to work through a particular individual, in his grace, he will give the faith follow obey his will

Which brings us finally to Abraham.

**Hebrews 11:8** *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

**Acts 7:2** *And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, (Mesopotania) 3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.*

Judaism is a religion of good works, so it must teach that because of Abraham’s goodness, God chose him. Obviously, Judaism is not alone in teaching the goodness of Abraham.

([https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/112356/jewish/Who-Was-Abraham-The-First-Patriarch-in-the-Bible.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/112356/jewish/Who-Was-Abraham-The-First-Patriarch-in-the-Bible.htm))

**Joshua 24:2** *And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods. 3 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.*

Calvin: “It is inferred that Abraham, when he was plunged in idolatry, was raised up, as it were, from the lowest deep. ... [he] was drawn out by the hand of God.”

We are clearly told that as are all men, Abraham was a pagan who grew up in and lived in an idol worshiping society. It was the grace of God that drew him out of the depths of sin, and gave him the faith to obey him.

**The basis of Abraham’s faith** had to be the effectual call and promises of God.

**Abraham was saved by grace through faith.** He was called out by God, and converted, from his life in idolatry. No man can suppose more than what God clearly states:

**Galatians 3:8** *And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.*

**John 8:56** *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.*

We see in Hebrews that he was shown the heavenly city, the eternal reward for those who are saved by grace through faith.

**Genesis 12:1** *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. 4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.*

**In Genesis 12:1-5 and by his sovereign grace, God established a new culture or nation through Abraham.**

The old culture was a culture of death. It started when sin entered into the world. Though it was Eve who believed the devil’s lie that man can be his own god and

could determine for himself what is right and wrong apart from God's word, Adam followed her into her sin.

Adam was the federal head of the human race; that is, he was the head of the human race. Thus, as mankind's representative, his sin was passed down upon all men. We shall see in Romans 5 how all this works together. Paul will explain that Christ is the federal head of a new humanity.

**Grace:** It was the grace of God that keep his true worship alive until Noah, and through the flood in Shem.

The old culture was built on man believing he can be like God, and live and prosper according to his own ideas.

The new culture was established through God grace and faith given to Abraham. From that time, the new culture has existed side by side with the old culture; it always has been and is built on God's grace through faith. The warfare between the two cultures is between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness.

Hebrews 11:8, *according to his own purpose and grace* God determined to establish a new race, so he exerted his holy influence in the heart of Abraham.

Abraham's call was because of God's grace. He called, and he gave Abraham the faith to answer that call. *He went out, not knowing whether he went.*

Just the same as with all the called of God, Abraham was given the faith to place himself totally in the hand of God to do with him as he pleased.

**Galatians 3:7** *Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.*

Hebrews illustrates faith in the life of Abraham:

*He sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country.*

**This was an exercise of his faith.**

**The land of promise was just that,** a promise. It was not a possession at this point. The city of our God or the new Jerusalem is just that for us. It is a promise, not yet a possession.

**Abraham did not war** against the inhabitants to try to dispossess them from Canaan. He was content to live as a stranger, and keep his heart fixed on his heavenly home, the heavenly Canaan, the new mount Zion.

The physical land of promise, Canaan, was given to the seed of Abraham, but that was not the enduring promise.

**Abraham avoided** those things that might hold him down if the Lord told him to move.

The Lord has provided over the years so I could avoid debt. Not being entangled in debt enabled me to move at his command at a moment's notice. (We did go into debt for a house, but it was less than a 7 year note as required in Deuteronomy 51. We kept our standard of living very frugal in order to match our income.)

*V. 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

Abraham understood that Canaan was not the fulfillment of the promise:

“The description given of heaven: it is a city, a regular society, well established, well defended, and well supplied: it is a city that hath foundations, even the immutable purposes and almighty power of God, the infinite merits and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, the promises of an everlasting covenant, its own purity, and the perfection of its inhabitants: and it is a city whose builder and maker is God. He contrived the model; he accordingly made it, and he has laid open a new and living way into it, and prepared it for his people; he puts them into possession of it, prefers them in it, and is himself the substance and felicity of it.” (MH)

Abraham, as did the rest of the saints, knew that the earth was not his permanent home. The saints did not say, “When you are dead, you are dead, so let us eat, drink and be merry.” Rather, they looked forward to the heavenly home that awaited them.

*Hebrews 12:22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

Hebrews 13:14 *For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*

The promise was the promise of the Gospel Church, the bride of Jesus Christ, and the promise that we will dwell where he is.

Somehow, Abraham was shown the end result of his faith, and he refused to get sidetracked from what he was shown.

**John 14:3** *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

(Read all of Psalms 48)

1 «A Song and Psalm for the sons of Korah.» *Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. 2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.* Read all of this psalm.

Zion in the OT primarily used for physical Jerusalem because that was the physical seat of the kingdom of God on earth. However, in both Testaments, Zion or Sion is used for the spiritual or heavenly Jerusalem, where God dwells.

Psalms 50:2, Mat 21:15, John 12:15, Heb 12:22, Rev 14:1

By faith, the saints of old knew they would be in that heavenly city where God dwells, so they refused to see this world as their home. Rather, it was their temporary dwelling place. That faith is also worked out in the lives of the rest of the saints listed in Hebrews 11.

The redeemed are the seed of Abraham, and are heir to his promise which is fulfilled in Christ Jesus our Lord.