

Hebrews 11:17-22; "Generational Faith" April 27, 2025

- I. Welcome & Review
 - A. Good morning! Ohayougozaimasu! Welcome to Calvary Chapel Iwakuni.
 1. *Welcome any new faces and those streaming online.* Deterrence
 - B. Before we continue any further, let's go ahead and dismiss our elementary aged children to their Sunday School classrooms.
 1. *(2nd Service; Remember to dismiss the Bible English class.)*
 - C. This morning, we are finally going to get back to our study through the book of Hebrews.
 1. We started chapter 11 of the book of Hebrews and the "Hall of Faith" 5 weeks ago. Then a team of us went to the Philippines after that.
 2. Kevin did a great job of filling the pulpit in my absence and continued our study of chapter 11, but when the team from the Philippines returned we paused our study of the book of Hebrews to share about the importance of missions and share some of the details about the trip to the Philippines.
 3. The week after that was Palm Sunday, so we had a special time of study commemorating the Triumphal Entry of Jesus.
 4. Then last week, we had an amazing time together out at Yuu Beach celebrating our risen King. God held back the rain and gave us a great time together. We had some people make professions of faith through baptism and had a great time of food and fellowship.
 5. But this morning, we're finally coming back to our study of Hebrews chapter 11 and the "Hall of Faith".
 6. This chapter is often referred to as the Hall of Faith because the author makes mention of several different individuals who lived a life of faith, who believed in God and trusted in Him and His promises to them.
 7. When we first started off our study of the chapter we noted the faith of Abel and how he demonstrated his faith through his worship. We looked at the faith of Enoch and how he demonstrated his faith through his walk, and we looked at Noah and how he demonstrated his faith through his work.
 8. Then Kevin led us through the faith of Abraham and how it involved trust, tents, and a better city. Abraham trusted God when God told Him to up and move from Ur of the Chaldeans to a land that God would show him. He departed and set up shop in the land of Canaan, but he didn't look to rebuild his life there, instead he chose to live as a pilgrim simply passing through, choosing to dwell in tents, because He was waiting for a city whose builder and maker was God. He longed for that city of God, a country prepared for them by God, an eternal home.
 9. Abraham lived by faith and he died in faith not having received the promise, but still claiming it as his own, as one who saw the promise afar off and confidently embraced and confessed the promise as his own, despite not realizing it in his own lifetime.

- D. This morning we continue in our study of the book of Hebrews by picking up where Kevin left off 4 weeks ago with Abraham.
 1. We're going to read a little bit more about Abraham and his life of faith, but we will also look at the faith of his sons; those who are counted as the patriarch of the Jewish people; Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.
 2. Our text is going to be Hebrews chapter 11 verses 17-22 and the title of our message this morning is going to be "**Generational Faith**".
 3. Hopefully you have your Bible with you this morning. If so, go ahead and make your way to Hebrews chapter 11 if you haven't done so already. If you don't have a Bible with you feel free to reach down and borrow one of the Bibles underneath some of the chairs around you. I do think it is important to see for yourself what the Word of God says and for you to read along as we study through God's Word.
 4. Once you are there in Hebrews 11, I'd like to ask you, if you are able, to rise to your feet, in honor of God and His Holy Word.
 5. I'm going to read through our text from my Bible, I'll be reading from the NKJV, if you have a different translation just do your best to follow along in your own. The author of Hebrews continues our journey through the hall of faith in chapter 11 with the following in verse 17... (*R & P*)
- II. Intro
 - A. Recall that the author transitioned into this "Hall of Faith" here in chapter 11 after quoting from the book of Habakkuk at the end of chapter 10.
 1. At the end of chapter 10, the author was writing to his audience encouraging them and exhorting them to continue in the faith.
 2. His audience had been experiencing some difficulties, some persecutions because of their faith. They were being pressured into turning from their new found faith in Christ and going back to their old ways of Judaism and following the Law.
 3. The author reminded them how they had already endured a great struggle with sufferings and how they had need of endurance. They needed to keep moving forward in their faith without turning back.
 4. And he quoted from Habakkuk saying, "The just shall live by faith." (**Heb. 10:38a**)
 5. And as a way to stir them up, he transitions to this chapter highlighting men and women from their nation's past who demonstrated the kind of faith they would need. The kind of faith that doesn't give up, the kind of faith that endures even in difficult and challenging times.
 - B. In our text this morning, the author looks back at the patriarchs of the Jewish people; father Abraham, his son Isaac, his son Jacob, and Jacob's son Joseph. Four generations of faith; each sharing the same faith in God and His promises, but each in their own unique way.
 1. These four men each had faith and lived by faith, but each of them lived different lives and experienced different situations that helped define their faith and deepen their faith.

2. So, let's go ahead and take a look at each of these four patriarchs and see what lessons we can learn from their life of faith.
 3. We'll begin with **Father Abraham** by taking a look at verses 17-19.
- III. Hebrews 11:17-19; The Faith of Abraham
- A. Last time we were in the book of Hebrews, Kevin did a great job teaching about Abraham's life of faith.
 1. How he trusted God and His promises to him. How Abraham lived not for this world and the things of this world; but was simply a pilgrim, a sojourner, passing through, looking and longing for that city and country whose maker was the Lord God Himself.
 2. Abraham died in faith, not realizing the fulfillment of God's promises tangibly, but we were told that he saw them afar off and embraced them and confessed them as his own.
 - B. But the author had more he wanted to say about Abraham and the life of faith that he lived and so he brings him back up here in these verses and highlights one of the greatest acts of faith you will ever read of throughout the entire Bible.
 - C. If you were with us last time we were in Hebrews 11, Kevin spoke of the miraculous birth of Abraham and Sarah's son, Isaac.
 1. It was a miracle because Abraham and Sarah were well beyond the age of childbearing. You see, Abraham and Sarah suffered with fertility problems. For years they tried to have children of their own without any success. As the years went by, I'm sure the thought of them ever having children of their own faded away to the point where they had given up on the prospect of every having children of their own.
 2. Then something happened. God called Abraham and his wife Sarah to leave their home in Ur of the Chaldeans to move to an undetermined place that God would eventually show them.
 3. And when Abraham and Sarah were called to leave their home and head to Canaan, God also spoke to Abraham and told him that he was going to make of him a great nation.
 4. And as they stepped out by faith and landed in the land of Canaan, God once again spoke to Abraham and told him, "To your descendants I will give this land." (**Gen. 12:7a**)
 5. Now, in order for land to be given to his descendants, it would of course necessitate Abraham having children. This promise of descendants brought a glimmer of hope that maybe, just maybe, it wasn't too late for them; maybe it wasn't too late for Abraham and Sarah to have children at the age of 75 and 65.
 6. But then 10 years passed without Abraham and Sarah having any children. And so, they decided to take matters into their own hands; to try and give God a hand and help God bring about this promise of descendants for Abraham.
 - D. The name Isaac literally means laughter and was so named most likely because of the reactions that both Abraham and Sarah had when they were told they were going to have a child at the age of 100 for Abraham and 90 for Sarah.
 1. But I imagine the name was also fitting because of the joy that it brought Abraham and Sarah. Each time they would look upon this child of promise all they could do was laugh with great joy over the precious gift God had given to them.
 2. And I'm sure Isaac grew up hearing all about the joy and laughter he brought to his parents; who had sought to have children together for decades without any success. God finally fulfilled His promise and gave to Abraham and Sarah a descendant to call their own; a descendant through whom the promises of God would be fulfilled.
 - E. And then came Genesis 22 and one of the greatest tests of faith ever recorded. Our text this morning reminds us of that test Abraham went through.
 1. In Genesis 22 God once again appeared to Abraham and what he said to him is difficult to even imagine. God said, "Abraham!", to which Abraham replied "Here I am". God continued, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." (**Gen. 22:2**)
 - a. God told Abraham to take his son, his only son (because God didn't recognize Ishmael as a legitimate son of Abraham and Sarah; he was just a work of their flesh), Abraham was to take his only son, the one whom he loved dearly, and go to the land of Moriah, which was a few days journey from where they were at, the land of Moriah is where the city of Jerusalem would be established later on in the future. And there upon a hillside of God's choosing, Abraham was to offer up his son as a sacrifice to God.
 2. Now, we have the privilege of being able to read this account in our Bible and understand that this was a test. In our text, in verse 17, it says "when he was tested", in Genesis 22 we even read at the very

beginning of the chapter that God asking Abraham to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice was a test. (**Gen. 22:1a**)

- a. God was testing Abraham to see if he would be obedient to God and be willing to offer up his one and only son, the son of promise, the son of joy and laughter, the son he had waited his entire life for, the very son whom God had miraculously given to him.
 - b. Would Abraham be willing to give him up, to sacrifice what he held most dear in all of his life?
 - c. God was testing Abraham and his faith in God. It's been said that a faith that can't be tested, can't be trusted. God was working upon Abraham and wanting to deepen Abraham's trust in Him.
 - d. God had told Abraham that He was going to bless him with descendants that numbered like the stars in the heaven and like the sand on the seashore.
 - e. And God told Abraham that the miracle child given to him at the ripe old age of 100 was going to be the one to fulfill that promise. But at this time, Isaac hadn't married anyone yet and he didn't have any children.
 - f. If Abraham would offer up Isaac as a sacrifice what would happen to the promise of God? How could Isaac be the one to fulfill the promise of descendants that numbered like the stars in the heavens if he was dead?
3. But Abraham doesn't let the questions keep him from being obedient to what God told him to do. We read in the Genesis account that Abraham rose early in the morning loaded up his donkey with the supplies for the sacrifice and he and a few of his men along with Isaac set out upon the journey to the land of Moriah.
4. When they arrived to the place God had told him to go, Abraham dismounted from his donkey, told his men to wait for him while he and his son Isaac went up the hillside to go worship God.
5. Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and placed it upon his son Isaac's back and had him carry it up the hillside to the place where God was going to have Abraham offer up Isaac as a sacrifice.
- a. Now I want you to note something important here. Isaac is not a little kid at this time. Most Bible commentators agree that Isaac was more than likely a strong young teenager at this time, perhaps even into his early 20's. He was strong enough to carry up all the wood for the sacrifice upon his own back.
 - b. As they made their way up the mountain, Isaac questioned his father saying, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" (**Gen. 22:7b**)
 - c. To which Abraham replied, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering."

6. When they finally arrived to the place where God had told Abraham to go, we read that Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and then he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.
 - a. This is amazing. Because this tells me that Isaac was a willing sacrifice. There's no way a 120-year-old man is going to overpower a 20 year old young man. Isaac had to be a willing participant in this. He let his father bind him and place him upon the altar.
7. And we read in Genesis 22:10 that Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. (**Gen. 22:10**)
 - a. Abraham was about to kill his one and only son as a sacrifice in obedience to God. But right before he was about to plunge the knife into his son's chest, the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven and said "Abraham, Abraham!". To which Abraham replied "Here I am." And the Angel of the Lord said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." (**Gen. 22:11-12**)
8. Abraham had passed the test. But I want you to note something about how Abraham passed the test.
 - a. Abraham was fully expecting to go through with sacrificing his son. I think sometimes we may read the account in Genesis and wonder just how this may have played out. We may wonder how long Abraham stood there with the knife in his hand, perhaps even raised up, waiting for God to say "Stop! Don't do it."
 - b. But that isn't the sense that we get from Scriptures. Abraham didn't have faith that God would stop him at the last second before he plunged the knife into his son to kill him. That wasn't it at all.
 - c. Abraham had faith in God to do something even more incredible. Abraham had faith in God to do something that had never been done before, to do something that Abraham had never seen or heard or experienced before. Abraham believed that God was going to raise his son back to life. Abraham believed that he was going to follow through with killing his son, and that somehow, somehow, God was going to bring Isaac back to life.
 - d. That is what the Scriptures indicate to us. In our text we read in verse 19 that Abraham had concluded that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead. And in Genesis we even get that sense as before Abraham departed from his men and his donkey he said to them, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." (**Gen. 22:5**)
 - e. Abraham was going up that mount knowing he was going to sacrifice his son, and yet his word to his men was "we will come back to you."
9. Abraham believed the promise of God. God had confirmed that it was going to be through Isaac that He fulfilled the promise of descendants

like the stars in the heaven, and so Abraham concluded that if God wanted him to kill his one and only son, that God must have had a plan to raise him back to life because there was no way for Isaac to fulfill the promise of God as a dead man.

- a. That is amazing faith. Abraham believed God for the impossible. No one had ever been raised from the dead before. Abraham was believing and trusting God to do something that had never been done before, believing and trusting that God was going to be faithful to His promise no matter what.
- F. At the end of verse 19 of our text we read that Abraham received Isaac back from the dead in a figurative sense.
1. Though Abraham didn't end up going through with killing his son, in his mind, he was already dead. He had yielded to the fact that he was going to be obedient to God and kill his son, and in his heart, Isaac was already dead.
 2. But Abraham received him back from the dead when God stopped him from killing Isaac and instead provided a sacrifice that was found right behind him in the form of a ram according to Genesis 22.
 3. But there is another way this event was meant to be figurative. For we know that this event pointed to something that would transpire many years into the future from the days of Abraham.
 4. For God would take His one and only son, the son whom He loved, and He would take him to that same land Abraham brought Isaac to, and there the Son would yield to the Father's plan and He would take the wood upon His back, and He would willingly lay down His life as a sacrifice to God. But when God did this, there was no angel of the Lord to call out saying, "STOP!".
 5. The Son was sacrificed, His life was shed, but the amazing thing is, the Son rose back to life. Just as Isaac was in essence risen back to life and presented to Abraham, so too the Son of God, Jesus Christ, rose back from the dead and ultimately was united with the Father in heaven where He intercedes on our behalf and prepares a place for us with Him in heaven.
 6. The entire account of Abraham and Isaac is meant to point to and foreshadow for us, the sacrifice of God's one and only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who died to take away the sins of the world.
 7. Such a beautifully rich and powerful account.
- G. So, what can we learn from Abraham's incredible test of faith? What lesson would God have us walk away with as way of application to our own lives?
1. I don't believe God is asking us to offer up any of our children as human sacrifices. In fact, I know that isn't what God's word is teaching us.
 - a. God isn't into human sacrifices and he isn't going to ask us to kill off our loved ones.

2. But again, there is a figurative lesson here. I wonder if God isn't wanting to teach us a lesson on being willing to sacrifice the things we hold most dear in our lives.
3. Perhaps God is wanting to challenge some of us to surrender something to Him that we may even feel was a gift from Him.
4. Are we willing to surrender that thing, to let it go, to give it back to the Lord and trust that He will still be faithful to His promises?
5. Abraham was **willing to surrender that which he held most dear** in his entire life. He did so believing God would still be faithful to His promises, even when it seemed humanly impossible.
6. Perhaps God wants to challenge some of us today, to surrender what you hold most dear in your life, completely over to him. To trust God and His plans and His promises for your life. This could be the most challenging test of your faith yet. Will you be willing to surrender what you hold most dear into the hands of the Lord? That's a question only you can answer, and I hope it is one you will take to heart and allow God to work in you and through you.

H. Well, we looked at Abraham and his amazing example of faith, one of the greatest tests of faith you'll ever come across. Let's see what the author highlighted for us in the life of **the next patriarch, in Abraham's son, Isaac**. Read with me verse 20.

IV. Hebrews 11:20; The Faith of Isaac

- A. This is an interesting verse to me. If I were the one writing the book of Hebrews and I was tasked with highlighting the greatest acts of faith by these people listed here in Hebrews chapter 11, I don't know if I would have picked this act of Isaac as the one to highlight.
1. Considering the limited amount of Biblical narrative on the life of Isaac, I think I would highlight the same event that the author did in the life of Abraham. Because, as we already noted, Isaac had to have been a willing participant in that incredible demonstration of faith both he and his father Abraham showed up upon a hillside in the land of Moriah.
- B. But no, the author here chooses to highlight the event where Isaac by faith, blessed his two sons, Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.
1. Now, on the surface that sounds really nice doesn't it?
 2. If you weren't familiar with the account you may think that Isaac gathered together his sons for some special family celebration, or some special time of worship and there before their friends, perhaps extended family and other loved ones, Isaac called up his sons and prayed over each one of them, lifting them up to the Lord, and pouring out blessings upon them and speaking prophetically over them concerning their future and the goodness of God that was going to be upon them.
 3. Like a modern day baby dedication of sorts. Where we pray for our children and pronounce blessings upon them in front of friends and church family, seeking God's favor upon them and their future.

4. That sounds great, doesn't it? Such a lovely time as one big happy family worshipping God and loving one another.
 5. Too bad that isn't anywhere near the truth of what really was going on when Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.
- C. The details of this event are recorded for us in the book of Genesis chapter 27, if you want to turn there you can.
1. Let me set the scene a little bit here. After Isaac had survived his act of faith with his Father Abraham up on Mt. Moriah, he eventually was wed to a woman named Rebekah and the two of them came together and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. She bore Isaac two sons, the firstborn was named Esau and the second born was named Jacob.
 2. As you read through the Genesis account you come to understand that these were not identical twins, these were fraternal twins, we know that because they were very different from each other.
 - a. Esau grew up to be a kind of man's man. He was hairy and he was strong. He was the rugged outdoorsman type; he liked to hunt game and spend his days wondering through the wilderness.
 - b. Jacob, on the other hand, if I may say this without offending anyone, was a bit of a mama's boy. He didn't care for going outside much, and he preferred living a quiet peaceful life. He is described as a mild man, who preferred to stay at home in the tents with his mom.
 - c. The Bible tells us in Genesis 25:28 that Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. (**Gen. 25:28**)
 - d. And this would play a huge part in the details pertaining to Isaac's blessing of Jacob and Esau concerning their futures.
 3. Now in regard to this particular blessing, this was somewhat of a tradition that had developed at this time. Father's before they passed away would often pass along their blessings to their children, and set matters in order for how the Father wished things to be handled after he was gone. He would pass along what was called the birthright. This was something typically given to the eldest child as a way to show that he would assume all the responsibilities and authority that the father had while alive. It's a passing of the baton in some ways.
 - a. Almost like a will of sorts that we have today. As people get a little bit older they start to think about those things a little bit more regularly. You want to set your things in order and prepare things for your family after your time here on earth is expired.
 - b. This was something kind of like that. It was an opportunity to pronounced blessings upon your children and inform them of how you wanted things to be after you were gone. Who was going to run family affairs and be the new authority figure within the family.
- D. In Genesis 27 the account picks up with Isaac being rather old whose eyes were growing dim, he couldn't see all that well. And he wanted to take this

time before things got any worse to pass along his final blessings and to instill what was referred to as the birthright.

1. Well, we already know who Isaac loved most. He loved Esau and he wanted to give his blessing and pass along the birthright to him.
2. But there was just one major problem with that. You see, back in Genesis 25, Rebekah found out she was pregnant but didn't feel so great, things didn't seem right to her, so she went to inquire of the Lord.
3. And it was then that the Lord informed Rebekah that she was having twins and the Lord told her that "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." (**Gen. 25:23**)
4. Rebekah, no doubt, told her husband Isaac what the Lord said to her, how they were going to have twins and how the older would serve the younger. Meaning the younger would get the birthright, the younger would be given the authority because the older was going to serve the younger according to the word of the Lord.
5. But Esau tries to go against what God clearly said about the older serving the younger, he wants to do things his way, he wants to try and undermine what God is doing and instead of doing what God said should happen, he tries to pass on the blessing and birthright to Esau, the one he loved, the one he liked to hunting with, the one he liked to go outdoors with. That's the one he wanted to bless.
6. So, he calls Esau to himself and tells him that basically he's getting old and doesn't know when he'll die and that he wants to pass along the blessing to him. He tells Esau to go out and hunt some of that savory game that they both love, to bring it back and prepare a meal so that Esau can eat and then pass along the covenantal blessing that had been passed down to him from his father Abraham.
7. Oh, but guess who was also listening in on this conversation Isaac was having with Esau? It was Rebekah. And Rebekah wasn't going to stand idly by and let this happen under her watch.
8. So what does she do? Well she goes and gets Jacob and starts scheming a plan of her own. She tells Jacob about his dad's plan to pass on the blessing to Esau and convinces Jacob to go along with this huge charade in order to trick Isaac into blessing him instead of Esau.
 - a. She tells him to go get a couple goats from their own flocks and to bring them to her and she will make his father the savory food he likes. In the meantime he was going to put on a disguise, wearing Esau's clothes so that he would smell like Esau, and even putting goat skins on his arms and the smooth part of the back of his neck to give him the tactile effect of being hairy like Esau. For Jacob was a smooth skinned man and he didn't want Isaac his father to touch him and figure out he wasn't Esau.

- b. So much scheming and deception going on. It's quite crazy to consider that this entire family is trying to manipulate, deceive, and flat out lie in order to secure a spiritual blessing. It makes no sense.
 - c. Talk about a dysfunctional family, none of these people were doing right by the Lord. They were all trying to do whatever possible to get their own way, and to use whatever means possible to ensure they got their own way; lie, steal, cheat, deceive, everything is on the table, no holds barred.
9. When Rebekah finishes preparing the meal, Jacob takes it to his father and presents himself as Esau. Isaac is a little skeptical, and probably for good reason, it seems like trust was a big issue in this household.
- a. He questions Jacob a few times, he asks him to draw near to him that he may embrace him and smell him and touch him because the voice is the voice of Jacob, but the smell and touch of him is that of Esau. Well, ultimately Jacob and Rebekah pull off this great deception and Isaac blesses Jacob. He pronounces all the blessing and birthright upon him, giving him the double portion and stating how he will assume the position of authority over all others.
 - b. Well, as soon as Isaac finished blessing Jacob and Jacob had exited the tent, low and behold who should show up, but Esau, and he's ready for his dad to partake of the meal he's made and to give him his blessing. Isaac asked him who he was and Esau says "its me, your son, your firstborn son, Esau."
 - c. And this is where things I believe turned for Isaac. For we read in Genesis 27 that when Isaac heard those words from Esau that he "trembled exceedingly". Isaac was shaken to his core. (**Gen.27:33a**)
 - d. He had tried to circumvent God and go against God's will, he tried to do things his way and God turned the tables on him.
- E. Now this begs the question, how is this an example of faith. Why on earth would the author of Hebrews highlight this web of deception and conniving and falsehood as an act of faith?
- 1. Was Isaac acting godly? Was Rebekah acting godly, or Jacob, or Esau? No, they were all trying to usurp one another and manipulate one another through lying and scheming.
 - 2. Our text says, "By faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come."
 - 3. Isaac came to faith, when he realized that he had actually blessed Jacob instead of Esau and that despite all of his determination to circumvent and defeat the announced plan of God, God beat him at his own game.
 - 4. When he found out that he had pronounced blessing upon Jacob instead of Esau, Isaac trembled exceedingly; he was shaking like a leaf because he knew that God had beaten him. He knew and understood in that moment that no amount of planning or scheming or manipulating

can ever get by the Lord. God was going to see to it that his will was done, whether Isaac was on board or not.

- 5. And so he declares to Esau that he already gave out his blessing, he said, "I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed." (**Gen. 27:33b**)
 - 6. It was Isaac's moment of surrender to God's will and plan. No more scheming, no more trying to circumvent God. No more trying to get his own way. Isaac in that moment came to the realization that he would always lose whenever he tried to circumvent the will of God.
 - 7. By faith, **Isaac could see that his puny attempt** to circumvent God was futile and was cognizant enough to finally acknowledge the Lord and basically say, "Ok, God, you win! No more scheming, no more manipulating and trying to get my will done. You said Jacob would be greater, you said, Esau would serve his younger brother, and so it will be."
 - 8. Maybe some of us here have been trying to do the same in your own life. You know what God's will is for you, but you're trying to put your own spin on it, you're trying to manipulate things so that you can have your way and God is calling you out. He's wanting you to learn just as Isaac did, that you can't circumvent God and His plan for your life.
 - 9. It's time to stop trying to get your will done, and to yield your life completely over to His will. By faith, you can surrender today, to the will of God for your life and stop trying to fight against God. You're never going to win when you are fighting against the Lord.
- F. Well, let's move on, we have two more guys to look at, and not a lot of time. Take a look at verse 21 as we consider **the faith of Jacob**.
- V. Hebrews 11:21; The Faith of Jacob
- A. If you were to look over the life of Jacob and try to highlight one particular great act of faith, it would be a bit challenging. Jacob was a schemer, and we don't have any question as to where he learned that kind of behavior.
 - B. Throughout his life he seems to always be trying to outmaneuver people, to try and use his wits to get by, to turn situations into opportunities for his own gain.
 - C. But here the author speaks of the faith of Jacob in regard to when he blessed the sons of Joseph, his two grandsons, while leaning on the top of his staff and worshipping God.
 - 1. This was at the end of Jacob's life. He had lived a long hard life. Had experienced some scheming from the hand of his uncle Laban as well (it definitely ran in the family). He had experienced the pain of loss when his wife Rachel died soon after given birth to his 12th son. He experienced the pain of losing a son, fearing he had been torn apart by wolves, not knowing the whole story (which we'll highlight next). He has experienced great joy as well, and God's grace.

2. And here he is at the end of his life, he is dying and he is going to pass along his blessing upon Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.
 3. If you are familiar with the account you'll know that just as there was a switch of the traditional birthright upon his own life, so too he did upon the lives of his two grandsons.
 4. Manasseh was the eldest and by all traditions and customs of the day, he should have received the greater blessing. And Joseph even tried to get his father to bless Manasseh by placing Manasseh on Jacob's right hand side, but Jacob knowingly laid his hands upon Ephraim the younger when he pronounced his blessing upon the two of them.
 5. Joseph tried to even stop Jacob in the midst of his blessing to correct him and let him know he had his hand on the wrong child, that he needed to put his hand upon Manasseh to which Jacob responded, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations. (**Gen. 48:19**)"
 6. And so Ephraim was placed above Manasseh just as Jacob was placed above Esau.
- D. By faith, Jacob went against cultural norms and traditions, blessing the younger over the elder.
1. It was supposed to be the firstborn who received the blessing. But Jacob had learned through his life of faith that sometimes we are called to go against the culture. Sometimes we need to do things different from what the rest of the world does.
 2. Jacob learned **to trust God even when it goes against the culture** or family traditions. Jacob worshipped God, and wasn't concerned with cultural norms as much as he was concerned with honoring God.
 3. Maybe that is a lesson for some of us today. Maybe God wants us to learn from Jacob about the importance of living for God and not being controlled by culture or by traditions of men.
 4. Jesus was counter-culture. He did things that were taboo, but He didn't care because He was more concerned about doing His Father's will than with fitting in.
 5. May we live with the same sort of approach; not being concerned with what the culture says, or what tradition says, but simply being obedient to what God says and trusting God to see us through.
- E. Let's take a look at the last of the patriarchs and **the faith of Joseph** in verse 22.
- VI. Hebrews 11:22; The Faith of Joseph
- A. The crazy thing about the life of Joseph is that if I were asked to highlight one thing that stood out to me as a highlight of faith, I would find it very difficult to do so. Not because there aren't many to consider like with Jacob, but the exact opposite. Joseph lived in exemplary life of faith. He

continued in the faith through some of the hardest circumstances, he never faltered in his faith and God did amazing things through Him.

- B. Joseph had faith to boldly share the dreams and visions God had given to him when he was young. He kept the faith even when his own brothers turned against him and sold him into slavery. He kept the faith when presented with great opportunities of temptation, choosing to honor God instead of indulging the flesh. He kept the faith when he was falsely accused and thrown into prison. He kept the faith when he was forgotten by those he helped. He boldly declared his faith in God before Pharaoh and God's ability to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. His entire life was a life of faith and boldness and simply and incredible example for us all.
1. Do yourself a favor a do a character study on the life of Joseph. You will be blessed.
- C. And so, you can imagine my surprise that the author, as he had opportunity to share about any of these amazing things Joseph did, that he focused upon the fact that by faith Joseph when he too was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.
1. Of all the things you could choose from, that is the one we're going to highlight here in the hall of faith? What was it that made this something so noteworthy?
 2. I think it is this. Joseph had become a very successful person. He had become second in command over all of Egypt. Only Pharaoh himself had more power, more authority, than Joseph. Pharaoh entrusted everything into the hands of Joseph.
 3. Joseph brought his family into Egypt and gave them a taste of the good life. They were able to dwell in the very best of the land, and the Scriptures tell us that they had possessions in the land of Goshen and that they grew and multiplied exceedingly. (**Gen. 47:27**)
 4. All was good, they were living the best life. But Joseph knew something and with his dying words he reminded his family and the people of Israel, that Egypt was not their home. Egypt was not where they needed to be. They needed to be in the place where God had called them. And by faith he mentioned the departure of the children of Israel, how they would one day leave Egypt and enter into the land God promised them. And he gave instructions to the people that they not bury his bones in some pyramid like they did all the other Egyptian leaders. He wanted his remains brought with the children of Israel upon the day they departed the land of Egypt and entered into the place God had called them.
 5. Joseph's faith reminds us that this too is not our home. We are living for a city and country whose maker is the Lord. **By faith Joseph told the next generations** about the calling upon their lives and the inheritance that awaited them.
 6. And for us, I think this is something God is wanting to hit home for us as church. I made this same point on Wednesday in our study of the book

of Numbers, but I believe the greatest thing we can be doing is leaving behind a godly heritage to the generations after us.

7. I didn't grow up in a Christian home, so I didn't have the influence of a godly heritage with me in my youth and I made a lot of foolish decisions and did a lot of foolish things.
 8. Joseph had it all, he had land, he had possessions, he had wealthy, he had all sorts of prosperity, but his biggest concern was not setting up his family for continued living in Egypt, he pointed them to the Lord and the inheritance they had with the Lord. That is what is most important and that is the lesson we learn from each of these patriarchs. Each of them were faithful to pass on their faith to the next generation.
 9. Parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, sisters and brothers, may I encourage you to live our your faith in such a way that you prioritize passing on a godly heritage to the next generation? You will not regret investing in the kingdom of Heaven and building a godly heritage that goes multiple generations deep.
- D. May we either continue the generational faith hat was passed down to us, or may we be those who start that generational faith for those who come after you. By the grace of God and through faith, we can pass on the greatest inheritance ever imaginable; a place with God in heaven for all of eternity. Let's pray.