



Lesson 46

Lesson 46: What Is Faith? (Part 2) Faith of Abel

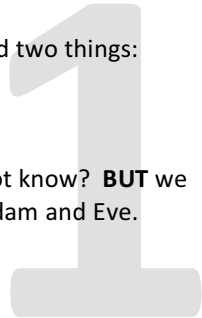
Scripture: Hebrews 11:4

Faith from Verses 1-3

- ① Faith gives a REALITY or FOUNDATION to those things which the Word of God warrants us to hope for.
- ② Faith gives its possessors a GOOD REPORT.
- ③ Faith gives PROOF to the heart of spiritual things that cannot be discerned by our natural senses. (v.1; 1 Corinthians 2:14)
- ④ Faith enables its possessors to understand that which is incomprehensible to reason, imparting knowledge to which philosophers and scientists are strangers.

The Beginning of a Life of Faith (v. 4)

- FAITH must have a foundation to rest on.
- Romans 10:17 tells us that faith **comes from** hearing the Word of God.
- There are two kinds of **hearing** . . .
 - ① The outward hearing – which simply informs.
 - ② The inward hearing – which transforms!
- There are two kinds of **faith** . . .
 - ① An acceptance of mere facts.
 - ② Something that **“works by love”** (Galatians 5:6) It changes the mind and the heart, and therefore, the will.
- With ABEL offering up his offering we must conclude two things:
 - ① God **revealed** His will.
 - ② Abel **acted** on that will.
- **FAITH** presupposes divine revelation.
- How God spoke or revealed Himself to Abel we do not know? **BUT** we can assume that he did receive instruction from Adam and Eve.



- READ Genesis 3:16-21. Four things can be learned from this passage:
 - ① In order for a sinner to stand before a holy God, he needs a **covering**.
 - ② Human works *or coverings* are worthless.
 - ③ God Himself must provide a suitable covering.
 - ④ The God-given covering was obtained by the shedding of blood of an innocent substitute.
- A sinner's wages for his sin is **DEATH**.
 - ① Either the sinner must pay that price, or . . .
 - ② An **innocent** substitute must pay those wages.
 - ③ There must be a link between the innocent substitute and the sinner.
- **FAITH** is placing a **Substitute** between my guilty self and a holy God.

Abel's Faith (Genesis 4:4)

- Abel's faith is in contrast to his parents' actions when they realized that they had sinned. "Abel **brought** [to God]" whereas Adam and Eve "**hid themselves**."
- Abel's faith demonstrated:
 - ① That God was righteous.
 - ② That he, himself, was a sinner and deserved death.
 - ③ That God was holy and must judge sin.
 - ④ That God was merciful and had provided a way in which an innocent substitute could be accepted on his behalf.
- The **BEGINNING** of **FAITH** is the acknowledgment that we are sinners and that God's judgment on sin is **death**.

Abel's Excellent Offering (Hebrews 11:4)

- ① Abel's offering was offered in **obedience** to God's revealed will. God accepts NOTHING that He has not stipulated or commanded. Everything else is consider "will worship." Colossians 2:23
- ② Abel's offering was **by faith**. This means that it was much more than just a performance. It was NOT by imagination, feelings, or customs.
 - Faith and obedience always go together. Consider Romans 1:5; 16:26; Acts 6:7; 2 Corinthians 10:4-6; Hebrews 3:18-19; 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9.
 - Faith looks at **promise** and obedience looks to **command**.
 - Anything not done in faith is sin. Romans 14:23
- ③ Abel brought the **first-born** of his flock (which God would take for Himself in Exodus 13:12) and the **fat** of this offering (which God would reserve for Himself in Leviticus 3:16; 7:25)

Abel Was Assured by God (Hebrews 11:4)

- God gave witness; God testified; God gave the report that Abel was righteous.
- Those who HEAR God and ACT faithfully according to His precepts (His Law) can have the assurance that they are righteous in the sight of God. (1 John 2:28-3:10)
- God honours those who honour Him! (1 Samuel 2:30)
- There is a GREAT REWARD in keeping God's commandments. (Psalm 19:11)
- In His own way, God *testified* of Abel's gifts. Perhaps by sending fire from heaven as He will do in Leviticus 18:38; Judges 6:21; 13:19, 20; 1 Chronicles 21:26; 2 Chronicles 3:1; 7:1; 1 Kings 18:24, 38.
 - Certainly, by preserving his example in Scripture for all God's people to learn from. (Romans 15:4)

Abel Still Speaks (Hebrews 11:4)

- ① To serve and/or worship God we must set aside all human ideas, opinions, understanding and traditions and live by what God has revealed in His Word. (See Deuteronomy 29:29)
- ② Whatever we do we must do **by faith** because without faith it is **impossible** to please God. (Hebrews 11:6)
- ③ We must give God our BEST because LOVE gives its BEST.
- ④ The only hope for sinners is **not** their good works, but God's **innocent substitute** sent by God to take their place.
- ⑤ As Abel was **persecuted** by his brother (religious though a hypocrite) we see the first incident of the **seed of the woman** being persecuted by the **seed of the Serpent**.
 - Those who **LIVE** by faith must accept that they will be despised and persecuted by men, even those of the professing church.
- ⑥ "the voice of thy brother's blood cries unto to Me from the ground"
 - There will come a day when God **will** avenge the deaths of His saints. (See Revelation 6:9-10)

