



## Lesson 51

**Lesson 51: What Is Faith? (Part 7) Faith of Abraham (Part 2)**

**Scripture: Hebrews 11:11-12**

### Difficulties with the Text

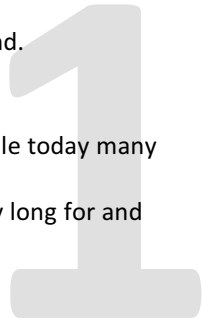
- **NO GREEK MANUSCRIPT HAS THE NAME “ABRAHAM” IN VERSE 11.**
- καταβολή katabole {kat-ab-ol-ay'} - “the ability to deposit semen or seed” or “foundation” (see Revelation 13:8; Ephesians 1:4; 2 Peter 1:19-20; John 17:20) **BUT** the NOUN is feminine.
- The absence of a pronoun for the verb ἡγέομαι (hegeomai {hayg-eh'-om-ahee} “to think, consider, regard”) Is it Abraham or Sarah? Since the closest antecedent is SARAH it is wise to use the pronoun “she” instead of “he”.

### Lessons from Sarah’s Faith of Sarah (v. 11)

- ① The GREAT POWER of a God-given faith.
- ② Faith that is exercised in the presence of most discouraging circumstances.
- ③ Faith that perseveres against GREAT obstacles.
- ④ Faith that TRUSTS God to do as He said though it *seems* by human reasoning impossible.
- ⑤ Faith that is exercised by an “old” and “frail” woman. Old age is NO excuse!
- ⑥ Faith that TRUSTS God for the beginning and the end.

### Sarah’s Faith and the Faith of Many Today

- Sarah’s faith was expressed in DEEDS or WORKS while today many have a faith of only words.
- Sarah’s faith was powerful and effectual while many long for and active and powerful faith.



- Sarah's faith produced fruit for the glory of God for generations to come while today many have a faith that is short sighted and self-centered.
- Sarah's faith was a God-given faith ("the faith of God's elect" - Titus 1:1) while many today have only a "human" faith.
- Sarah's faith was SUPERNATURAL while many today have only a NATURAL faith.

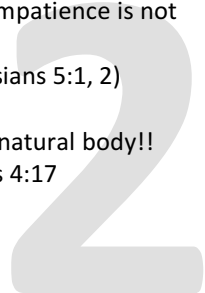
## Sarah's Faith Was Not a PERFECT Faith

**NOTE: ONLY CHRIST HAD A PERFECT FAITH AND IT IS BY HIS FAITH THAT WE ARE SAVED!**

- The faith of God's elect:
  - ① It is subject to GROWTH. (2 Thessalonians 1:3)
    - Full maturity is NOT reached in this life time, but the "elect" press forward! (Philippians 3:12-14)
  - ② Faith is not always in exercise, nor can we command its activities. See Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 4:7.
  - ③ The faith of **every** saint fails at times. Consider Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Peter, all the apostles, etc..
- Like any **grace**, we are to call out unto the LORD for His help. We need to pray, "Lord, increase our faith." (Luke 17:5; Matthew 9:24)

## Lessons from Verses 11-12

- ① Obstacles of Sarah's faith: barrenness, old age, and unbelief.
  - Her barrenness: see Genesis 11:30; 16:1; 17:17
  - She was now 99 years old
  - Her GROSS sin of UNBELIEF. See Genesis 18:9-15.
    - When the PROMISE was spoken she laughed in unbelief and **then** lied about!! (v. 15) Consider Hebrews 4:13.
  - **NOTE** We need to see God's AMAZING grace HERE! In this Hebrews' account this GREAT SIN is NOT mentioned (see Hebrews 8:12)
    - Rahab's lie is not mentioned in 11:31; Job's impatience is not mentioned in James 5:11!!!
    - **WE NEED TO BE IMITATORS OF GOD!** (Ephesians 5:1, 2)
- ② The effect of Sarah's faith: She gained strength.
  - She received SUPERNATURAL restoration of her natural body!!
  - He "DEAD" womb became "ALIVE". See Romans 4:17
  - Meditate on Isaiah 40:31 and 1 Timothy 4:8.



- Some might say, “I am unworthy, I am helpless, I am weak!” **SO WAS SARAH!!!**
  - “By faith, she received strength.” **FAITH LOOKS AWAY FROM SELF AND SETS ITS SIGHTS ON GOD!!**
- ③ The constancy of her faith: She trusted God for conception and delivery of the baby.
  - She ***lived*** by faith. It was a ***life style***.
  - The reminds us that the “faith of the elect” perseveres to the end. See Hebrews 3:14 and 10:36.
  - **EVERYDAY** we must “Trust in the LORD with all your heart (mind, will, and emotions) and lean NOT on your own understanding.” (Proverbs 3:5)
- ④ The foundation of her faith: The WORD of GOD.
  - OR better – GOD Himself. “She considered **HIM** to be faithful. . .”
  - Her focus was not on the promise but the One who made the promise.
  - The OBJECT of our faith must ALWAYS be GOD!
    - Satan works to get saints to focus on the blessings and gifts of God!
  - Sarah’s faith was on the One who **CANNOT LIE!**
    - See Titus 1:1-2; Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Hebrews 6:18-19.
  - Those who FIX their minds on GOD will be at PERFECT PEACE. (Isaiah 26:3)
- ⑤ The fruit of her and Abraham’s faith:
  - It brought forth Isaac, then Jacob, . . . . Christ . . . the salvation of the elect!!
  - There would be an *earthly* fruit (the physical nation of Israel) and a *heavenly* fruit (the spiritual nation – 1 Peter 2:9).
  - Who can estimate the fruit of one’s faith? It is GOD at work in us to accomplish His eternal plan and we are part of that plan. (Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 2:10)



