

## **Waiting for a Better City** **Hebrews 11:8-10**

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Just about a week ago people were waiting in line outside thousands of stores, some for days in order to be one of the first people to own the I-phone. Something that will be replaced within two years by another i-phone.

We live in a world where people are impressed with some of the least impressive things while they scorn the things that are the most significant.

2Co 4:18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

It is true that Abraham waited for God to give him the land of promise. And he waited patiently all of his life. God did eventually give him and Sarah a son but never any land. When Sarah died Abraham had to buy a field to bury his wife in for he owned nothing.

Gen 23:16 And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed out the silver for Ephron which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, currency of the merchants. 17 So the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was in it, and all the trees that were in the field, which were within all the surrounding borders, were deeded 18 to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city. 19 And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. 20 So the field and the cave that is in it were deeded to Abraham by the sons of Heth as property for a burial place.

So all of his life he wondered around waiting on God.

Acts 7:5 (NKJV) 5 And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him.

But we see from Hebrews chapter 11:10 that Abraham's full gaze was on another city, another country, another land. A land we call heaven.

- I. A city
  - A. As I read through the various commentators I discovered several that give us the benefits of living in an ancient city as opposed to living in a tent.
    - 1. Walls for safety.

2. A place of plenty
  3. And so on
  4. But what I have discovered about modern cities is that they are just about the un-safest places on earth.
- B. It was not because it was a city that he longed for.
1. For we find several words used to describe heaven.
  2. Many mansions.
  3. A heavenly country.
- C. But the most significant is because of who is there.
1. Now our saved loved ones will be there.
  2. All the great saints will be there.
  3. The people of the Bible that we have all read of will be there.
  4. But it will be because of the Lord being there that will make the difference.
    - a. In a vision of Ezekiel we see this.
    - b. Ezekiel 48:35 (NKJV) 35 . . . and the name of the city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE."
  5. I have always wanted to sing that song "I dreamed of a city called glory" because as everyone is meeting him as he goes to heaven, saints and loved ones but he just keeps saying, "I want to see Jesus."
  6. The old church members used to sing "Beulah Land"
- II. Whose maker is God.
- A. It is of no earthy designer.
1. The implication is that everything will be good.
  2. Remember the six days of creation. At the end of each God says and it was good.
  3. Mankind has put together every type of government possible but never one that produced all things good.
  4. But the heavenly Jerusalem will be better than all the best of all the best this world has to offer.
- B. It will be worth waiting for because of what we will find there.
1. Our inheritance.

a. The Christian has also been begotten “to an inheritance” (1 Peter 1:4), but he does not fully enter into it the moment he is called from death unto life. No, instead, he is left here (very often) for many years to fight his way through an hostile world and against an opposing Devil. During that fight he meets with many discouragements and receives numerous wounds. Hard duties have to be performed, difficulties overcome, and trials endured, before the Christian enters fully into that inheritance unto which Divine grace has appointed him. A.W. Pink

b. 1 Peter 1:3-4 (NKJV) 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you

2. Beside the Lord our saved loved ones will be there.

3. It will be beautiful.

4. It will be a place of peace.

5. It will where our needs will be supplied.

a. The tree of life will be there.

b. Living water will flow there.

6. We will find our heavenly body waiting for us.

a. 2 Cor 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

C. It will be a great place because of the things that will not be there.

1. Rev. 21:1 ¶ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud

voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

2. Rev 21: 8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

"From God's training up Abraham in a course of difficulties, we see it is no easy matter to go to Heaven; there is a great deal of ado to unsettle a believer from the world, and there is a great deal of ado to fix the heart in the expectation of Heaven. First there must be self-denial in coming out of the world, and divorcing ourselves from our bosom sins and dearest interests; and then there must be patience shown in waiting for God's mercy to eternal life, waiting His leisure as well as performing His will. Here is the time of our exercise, and we must expect it, since the father of the faithful was thus trained up ere he could inherit the promises." Manton quoted by Pink

Abraham did not conduct himself as the possessor of Canaan, but as a foreigner and pilgrim in it. To Heth he confessed, "I am a stranger and sojourner with you" (Genesis 23:4). As the father of the faithful he set an example of self-denial and patience. It was not that he was unable to purchase an estate, build an elaborate mansion, and settle down in some attractive spot, for Genesis 13:2 tells us that "Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold"; but God had not called him unto this. Ah, my reader, a palace without the enjoyed presence of the Lord, is but an empty bauble; whereas a prison dungeon occupied by one in real communion with Him, may be the very vestibule of Heaven. A.W. Pink

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NKJV) 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Heb 11:15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

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

Php 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

In one sense it is possible "to be so heavenly minded that we are of no earthly good." But in a much deeper sense, it is impossible to be of any real earthly good unless we are heavenly minded.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary –  
Hebrews.