

Topic: Genesis Faith Expanders
Text: Hebrews 11:1-2 (NIV)
Theme: “The Genesis faith expanders reveal some of the ministries of Jesus”

Introduction

- Hebrews 11 hails the Faith Hall of Fame: 1) Enoch: The first person to be raptured; 2) Noah: The ark builder; 3) Abraham: The father of many nations; 4) Isaac: The promised son; 5) Jacob: The original Israel; 6) Joseph: The Dreamer who saved the Israelites from famine; 7) Moses: The Red Sea Conqueror; 8) Rahab: The prostitute who hid the spies; and 9) Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets: Special achievements.
- What a remarkable effort, but there's a down side: None of them received any of the promises the Christians are enjoying today like salvation by grace, healing, prosperity, Holy Spirit (Hebrews 11:39).
- But definitely, they've got an advantage: Their faith was enhanced by mouth-watering entrees called faith expanders.
- A faith expander is like yeast that causes expansion to dough. See how God propelled their faith through incidents or “mundane” things that He used to foretell about the coming Messiah

I. THE ANIMAL SKIN THAT COVERED ADAM AND EVE'S NAKEDNESS REVEALS THE COMING DELIVERER

Genesis 3:21 “The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them

A. *The skin covering/dress came from an animal.*

1. The animal skin was used to cover their shamefulness or sinfulness.
2. The animal had to die to “donate” its skin to dress up Adam and Eve (in other words, sacrificed) to “COVER” (atonement) for their sin.

B. *The blood was shed when the animal was sacrificed.*

1. Why didn't God use big leaves of plants or bark of trees (ouch!), and instead an animal life was necessary?
2. When it died (or killed), its blood was shed.
3. God gave more importance on the blood of the animal that was sacrificed, than its skin.

C. As fulfilled in the NT, Jesus shed His blood and gave up His life at the cross to pay for the penalty of our sin.

II. THE RAM CAUGHT IN A THICKET REVEALS THE COMING PROVIDER

Genesis 22:7 "Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" V8 Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together.

V12 "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

V13 Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.

V14 So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

A. Facts about Abraham and Sarah

- Abraham was 100 years, Sarah was 90 years old when Isaac was born, the promised son; Abraham's first son was Ishmael from Hagar, but was not the promised son.

B. Abraham's test of his life

1. God told Abraham to offer Isaac.
2. Abraham believed in his heart that God would raise Isaac from the dead (foreshadows the death and resurrection of Jesus).

C. God provided a ram for burnt offering. (Genesis 22:14)

D. Jesus is Jehovah Jirah, the Provider. (Philippians 4:19)

- "All your need." Jesus is the source of all blessings:
Spiritual (He gave us life), Physical (He is our Healer);
Prayer partner/Intercessor (He prays for us in Heaven);
Creator (Col 1:16 "For by him all things were created...")

III. THE STONE IN JACOB'S DREAM AT BETHEL REVEALS THE COMING CHURCH BUILDER

Genesis 28:18 Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it.

V19 He called that place Bethel, though the city used to be called Luz.

A. Facts about Jacob

1. Jacob was the son of Isaac. He stole the birthright of his elder twin brother Esau.
2. Later in his life, he wrestled with God (angel of God, Jesus) for the whole night, God touched his hip and changed his name to Israel.
3. After him and Rebekah cheated Isaac to officially pass on the birthright to Jacob (instead of Esau, the elder twin brother) he ran away from Esau.

B. Jacob's dream of God's stairway at Bethel

1. While resting from running away from furious Esau, he took a stone and made it as a pillow, fell asleep, and had a dream.
2. He saw a stairway from the earth touching heaven where the angels of God were descending and ascending on it. At the top of the stairway was God who renewed His covenant with Abraham and Isaac.
3. When he woke up, Jacob felt the presence of God in the place and thought *"Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it...How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven."*

C. Jacob anointed the stone. (Genesis 28:18-19)

D. Jesus is the Rock and Head of the Church. (Matthew 16:18)

IV. THE DREAMS OF JOSEPH'S SUPREMACY THAT MADE HIS BROTHERS JEALOUS REVEALS THE COMING RULER

Genesis 37:6 He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had:

V7 We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it."

V8 His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" ...

V9 Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

A. Facts about Joseph

1. Jacob's favourite son; like his father, Joseph was a dreamer too.
2. Jacob made a colourful robe for him that made his brothers more jealous.

B. Joseph's dreams of being a ruler

1. When Joseph revealed to his brothers about his past two dreams, that led them to sell him to slavery.
2. His dreams were revelations of what God was planning in his life, family, and country—to save them from famine when he became Egypt's prime minister.

C. *Jesus the Ruler, as King of kings and the Lord of Lords*

1. Revelation 1:5 "... the Ruler of the kings of earth."
2. Joseph's dream of supremacy was also the fulfilment of Philippians 2:9-11.