

Introduction – history

James I the 1st king of united England, Scotland, and Ireland, under the church of England had severe dispute with the Christians who sought the purity which is the Bible & the Holy Spirit. The Christians were called as Puritans. In 1620, they (102 passengers) in the faith of Pilgrims on the earth, emigrated by Mayflower ship in July from England to New England in September at Plymouth in Massachusetts. In the first year about 50% of the pilgrims had been dead through hunger & cold weather. In the next year, 1621, surviving 50% had the 1st harvest and gave thanks celebration to God. This is the origin of the Thanksgiving Day in USA. The founders established USA as the 1st nation in God we trust among any human histories.

Philippians 4:4-7 (Thanksgiving)

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is* at hand. ⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with **thanksgiving**, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

“Heavenly Country”

Hebrews 11:13-22 11/12/17

Today, we'd like to see the title of “Heavenly Country” in the book of Hebrews 11:12-22

To Online Word's people on the earth, we'd like to suggest 3 Questions.

Q1. In verse 13, “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth,” what does it mean?

Q2. In verse 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,” what is a better, that is, a heavenly country? And what attitude to our life should we have?

Q3. In verse 17, “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*,” what kind of faith did Abraham have when he offered up Isaac in a figurative sense?

(Background) In the last time, we studied the general definition of faith (11:1), and the specific definition of Christian faith (11:3), and the requirement of faith to please God (11:6), and the forefather believers – Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah.

(11:1, 3, 6)¹Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ³By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. ⁶But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

(Text)

<p>¹³<u>These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.</u> ¹⁴For those who say such things declare <u>plainly that they seek a homeland.</u></p> <p>¹⁵And truly if they had called to mind <u>that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.</u></p> <p>¹⁶But now they desire <u>a better, that is, a heavenly country.</u> Therefore God is not ashamed to be called <u>their God</u>, for He has prepared <u>a city for them.</u></p> <p>¹⁷<u>By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,</u></p>	<p>13 = Q1 These all (the forefather believers – Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah); not having received the promises (what are the promises? The promise of coming Messiah & God's promises therefrom); seen them (visions of the promises); were assured of them (without doubt or unwavering faith); strangers and pilgrims on the earth (travelers toward a holy place, e.g. 102 pilgrims in USA ¹ <i>Peter 1:1</i>)</p> <p>15= that country from which they had come out (where they were born on the earth); had opportunity to return (e.g. ^{1st} 102 pilgrims opportunity to return to England)</p> <p>16= Q2 better, that is, a heavenly country (the kingdom of God; citizenship is in heaven <i>Phil 3:20</i>; (1) even if we don't achieve a certain earthly goal, don't be discouraged because we live by faith, not by sight, with the desire to inherit the heavenly country; (2) don't be so attached to this world's desires and possessions because those are temporal and ultimately used for God's glory); their God... a city (New Jerusalem <i>Rev 21:1-2</i>)</p> <p>17= Q3 By faith... offered up Isaac ... his only begotten son (How about Ishmael through Hagar the handmaid of Sarah? The product of human effort or the work of the flesh by Sarah's suggestion to Abraham – God does not recognize it but the work of the Spirit; Isaac 13 years old; Abraham 113 years old; on Moriah Mount; Jehovah-Jireh "God will provide..." <i>Gen 22:1-2,8, 14, 17-18</i> — this author says Abraham's faith to raise Isaac up, even from the dead, verse 19 – Isaac is a type of Jesus Christ; 2,000 years later Jesus was crucified on the Moriah Mount)</p>
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¹ *1 Peter 1:1* To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

² *Phil 3:20* For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

³ *Rev 21:1-2* 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.

⁴ *Gen 22:1-2,8, 14, 17-18* ¹ Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ² Then He said, "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."

⁸ And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together. ¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of the place. The-LORD-Will-Provide/Jehovah-Jireh: as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided." ¹⁷ blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore: and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸ In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

<p>¹⁸ of whom it was said, <u>“In Isaac your seed shall be called,”</u></p> <p>¹⁹ concluding that God <i>was</i> able to <u>raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.</u></p> <p>²⁰ <u>By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.</u></p> <p>²¹ <u>By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.</u></p>	<p>18= In Isaac your seed shall be called (Isaac was the son of promise; not the son of flesh <i>Gen 15:5-6; Gen 17:17</i>⁵)</p> <p>19= raise him up, even from the dead (That’s Abraham’s faith while he was offering Isaac to God); he also received him in a figurative sense (Abraham also received Isaac in a symbolic sense from raising Isaac up even from the dead --- Isaac is a type of Jesus)</p> <p>20= By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau... things to come (because faith is the substance of things hoped for; How about Isaac’s faith? Isaac was deceived by Jacob & Rebekah his wife at the time of blessing his children, but Isaac did not foresee any deceit because he was blind. Here his faith is solely between himself and God – faith in personal relationship with God, not with any others, e.g. a donor had given money to a beggar by faith in the commandment to love neighbors as himself, but he was later discovered as a rich man <i>Gen 27:1, 22-23</i>⁶)</p> <p>21= By faith Jacob ... blessed each of the sons of Joseph (Manasseh 1st son & Ephraim 2nd son – Jacob crossed his hands, putting chief blessing on Ephraim the 2nd son, who later became leading tribe of Israel the northern kingdom, and the 2nd blessing on the 1st son <i>Gen 48:1; 16-19</i>⁷); leaning on the top of his staff (Jacob’s crippled leg <i>Gen 32:25-28</i>⁸)</p>
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⁵ *Gen 15:5-6* Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”⁶ And he believed in the LORD. and He accounted it to him for righteousness. *Gen 17:17* Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed. and said in his heart. “Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”

⁶ *Gen 27:1, 22-23* ¹Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see. that he called Esau his older son and said to him. “My son.” And he answered him. “Here I am.”²² So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, “The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.”²³ And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands; so he blessed him.

⁷ *Gen 48:1: 16-19* ¹Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, “Indeed your father is sick”; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.¹⁶ The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; Let my name be named upon them, And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.”¹⁷ Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father’s hand to remove it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head.¹⁸ And Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head.”¹⁹ But his father refused and said, “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.”

⁸ *Gen 32:25-28* Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob’s hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.²⁶ And He said, “Let Me go, for the day breaks.” But he said, “I will not let You go unless You bless me!”²⁷ So He said to him, “What is your name?” He said, “Jacob.”²⁸ And He said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.”

<p>²² <u>By faith Joseph</u>, when he was dying, made mention of <u>the departure of the children of Israel</u>, and gave instructions <u>concerning his bones</u>.</p>	<p>22= By faith Joseph ...the departure of the children of Israel... concerning his bones (Joseph's faith to the thing hoped for – the land of Canaan – promised by God to Abraham <i>Gen 15:13,16; Gen 50:24-25⁹</i>)</p>
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⁹ *Gen 15:13,16* ¹³ Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. ¹⁶ But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete." *Gen 50:24-25* And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying: but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." ²⁵ Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."