Main Thought  God elects a descendant of Shem (10:26), ABRAHAM, to begin the story of creating Israel as his covenant people.

THE MAIN CHARACTERS (27-30).

• GOD – God is THE main character (50:19-20). He is present in his spoken word, physical appearances, visions, dreams, and messengers (2 Tim. 2:13).

• ABRAHAM – The reader travels with Abraham through the SCHOOL OF FAITH (Heb. 11:8-19 [12 verses!]):
  (1) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (12:1-3) where God enables him to see from a distance divine promises (Heb. 11:13).
  (2) COLLEGE where he faces the harsh realities of no children (15:2).
  (3) GRADUATE school where he learns radical obedience when asked to sacrifice Isaac (22:2; Heb. 11:17-19).
  (4) At the END OF LIFE he paid an enormous sum to bury Sarah in the promised land (23:19-20).

• SARAH – She matures from her bad advice (16:1-2) to good (21:12); from mocking disbelief (18:12) to motherhood; from jealousy (16:5-6) to being a role model for all women of all time (1 Pet. 3:4-6). Her barrenness (Isa. 54:1) would become a major theme in the story (Rebekkah, Rachel, Hannah, and Mary).

• LOT – He is the prototypical CARNAL man who believes in God (2 Pet. 2:7) yet chooses to live without an altar (13:4-5) and chooses Sodom (13:10).

THE GREAT MIGRATION (31-32).

• Terah, Abraham’s father, lived in Ur of the Chaldeans about 2,000 BC. Ur-nammu and his son Shulgi were kings then and built the ziggurat to worship Nanna (sin in Akkadian) the moon god (Josh. 24:2).
• They were very advanced in language (invented cuneiform writing), irrigation, building, mathematics (60 base system = 360°), and invented the wheel.
• He was told to leave those towers of Babel (ziggurats) and those gods (Acts 7:2-3) and migrate to “a city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God” – Jerusalem (14:18-20; Heb. 10:10; 13:14). This is the whole story of the bible as Babylon, the world system is destroyed (Rev. 18:21) and the New Jerusalem, the city of God comes to earth (Rev. 21:2).
• Today the church confesses our citizenship is not of this world but in heaven above (John 15:19; Phil. 3:20).
• However, he delayed his obedience by settling in Haran some 550 miles north of Ur – half way to Jerusalem. They also worshiped the moon god.
• After Terah died, Abraham continued his journey to Canaan at 75 years of age (12:4). Delayed obedience is better than no obedience at all.