

**Journey of Faith - Abraham's Faith: Isaac Prefigures Christ**

*By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, . . . **He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.** (Hebrews 11: 17-19, ESV)*

Golf is, at times, baffling, bewildering, and just downright mystifying! One day, you cannot miss; the very next day, you cannot hit the “broadside of a barn.” Some days, the driver is automatic, but you cannot hit an iron to save your life. On other days, everything but the putter is working.

Arnie’s oft-quoted assessment is spot on: “Golf is deceptively simple and endlessly complicated; it satisfies the soul and frustrates the intellect. It is at the same time rewarding and maddening. . . .”

As followers of Jesus Christ, all of us are, at times, bewildered by the tests the Father sends our way. The testing of Abraham’s faith is a prime example of what faith in Christ is largely about.

Now, you might wonder, “Wait a minute;” Abraham existed thousands of years before Jesus’ arrival. How could he have faith in Christ?” That is certainly true, but consider the following two examples: In John 8, Jesus tells the Pharisees, “Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad” (John 8:56, ESV). Did you get that? Abraham saw Jesus’ day!

Paul tells us in Galatians, “. . .the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed” (Galatians 3:8, ESV). Do you see it? The gospel was preached to Abraham long before Jesus’ first arrival!

Peter says, “Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. . . .” (1 Peter 1: 10-11, ESV).

It is important to notice that the Old Testament Prophets, like Abraham, saw, by the Spirit of Christ in them, the suffering and subsequent glories of the Messiah. They saw that Messiah would die and rise on their behalf. And it is in him they placed their faith.

Abraham passed various tests because he trusted God’s promise(s)! We, of

course, look back to Christ Jesus’ suffering and resurrection and are saved. The Saints in the Old Testament looked forward to Christ’s death and resurrection and were saved.

Who Jesus is and what he has accomplished demands a radical commitment like Abraham’s— “The kingdom can be characterized as the in-breaking of God’s dynamic power to defeat all that stands against his rule. . . .That announcement calls for a response of radical allegiance. To those who respond in faith and repentance, the good news promises the gift of renewal: a restored relationship with the Father, forgiveness, the Spirit, a new heart that will renew their whole lives,” writes Michael Goheen.

Make today the day you investigate Christ’s claims and dedicate your life to him!

**Prayer: Jesus! Open the eyes of our hearts to see and understand your identity and salvation.**

**READING - John 8:31-59; Galatians 3:1-9; Hebrews 11:17-19.**

**1.** What do you do when you begin by making a string of bogeys in the early part of the round? Discuss the importance of persevering through tests/trials. Discuss those rounds when you made a comeback.

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**2.** From our reading, what do we discover fueled Abraham’s faith through various tests?

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**3.** How can we “walk in the footsteps” of Abraham in the tests/trials we currently face?

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