

ABRAHAM'S FAITH JOURNEY #4

F.F.(Faith Friend) #13 PATIENCE / DEATH OF A VISION - Genesis 22

At age 75, Abraham received the promise from God about a future son. He had to wait patiently 25 years for God to fulfill that prophetic word.

'We do not want you to become lazy, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises - Hebrews 6:12 NIV

One great thing about the Bible is that it not only presents the faith of its heroes but also their faults. Abraham had a promise from God that through his descendants the nations would be blessed. However, his wife Sarah had not conceived since that promise was made, so she suggested that he have a child through their Egyptian maidservant Hagar. When Abraham was age 85, Hagar gave birth to Ishmael. This would not become an answer to God's promise but an open door for a long-term animosity between the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael which continues to this day. Abraham's impatience led to this perpetual conflict. When one experiences the seeming death of a vision, it is a time to remember the initial promise from God.

Abraham faith was tested later on Mount Moriah. God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac on an altar. According to historian Josephus, Jewish tradition suggests that Isaac was about 25 years old when he was taken up on Mount Moriah to be sacrificed (this is the same area where Jesus was crucified). Imagine the test of faith for both Abraham and Isaac. Both were willing to submit to God's directive, for they feared and reverenced Him. God had kept the covenant promise he had made and Abraham's faith in God prevailed. Isaac's birth finally took place when Abraham was 100 years old. The vision had come to pass for the glory of God and the blessing of generations to come. Abraham lived to the ripe old age of 175 so God allowed him to see some fruits of that promise. All of God's promises will come to pass, but some will have to wait until we reach our heavenly home. Hebrews 11:13. We please God when we cling to His promises in faith as we wait patiently in faith for the answer.

F. F. #14 Hope Hope in the Bible is not a 'hope so'. It is based on solid promises and is 'a favorable and confident expectation' - Vines Dictionary. It is an anchor to the soul and has to do with the unseen realm and the future. - Hebrews 6:19, Romans 8:24-25. Usually anchors are thrown overboard to secure a boat in the water. Instead, our anchor is thrown up to the throne of heaven and is anchored securely there with Jesus. Faith is like the rope that is attached to the anchor and also to our soul. - Hebrews 6:18. Faith is in the present tense ...'Now faith is...' Hebrews 11:1; although faith can be directed to the past, present or future. We look back in faith to the cross and to what Jesus accomplished on our behalf, to our present situations and also with hope to our future inheritance.

'All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.' Hebrews 11:13

'Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations.' - Romans 4:18

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- **FAITH'S ADDITIVES** - 2 Peter 1:5-8

We receive faith through Christ's righteousness (1:1) Faith includes 'divine power' (1:3). We are to be diligent (make every effort, do one's best) 'intense effort' - Wuest Greek; to add to our faith (add = to supply in abundant measure, to supply more than generously) The Greek also means to 'develop one virtue to the exercise of another.

RICHLY ADD TO YOUR FAITH IN JESUS

- **Virtue** Energy from God to be shown / manifestation of divine power
When a woman with a bleeding issue touched Jesus, he felt virtue/power (Greek - dunamis) leave him - Mark 5:30
- **Knowledge** We are to grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus
- **Self- Control** Refers to mastery of desires, passions and sensual appetites
- **Patience** Greek='to remain under'. It brings glory to God when we endure trials and pressures without complaining
- **Godliness** A God-ward attitude and piety pleasing to God
- **Brotherly kindness** Fondness /faith without kindness is rough, selfish
- **Love** Agape sacrificial love / faith works through love and dispels fear

As we have seen, there are many companions of faith that assist us in our beliefs. However, just as important, it is good to be aware of the many enemies of our faith. In our next lesson, we will look at the many enemies of faith.

Thanks for continuing with us on this faith journey.

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