

# *Howards Corner*

## Knowing the Scriptures

### Chapter 7

#### **Abraham's Faith**

In chapter 6 I ended with the Seed line going to Shem's family. His line then went on to produce the next major person in in the seed line. Abram was called by God out of the land of UR. He was called to leave his family and go to a place God was to lead him. He made this journey on faith that God would lead him to the land which was promised to him and to his descendants forever and that the world would be blessed through him.

You will find that the Seed line will be all through the Old Testament and God worked many events to make sure that the Seed line was kept pure. This Seed line was to become the Nation Israel and God has kept Israel separate from the world and one day will once again establish Israel as a separate nation.

Abram's name was changed to Abraham for he was to be the father of many nations. Abraham was led to Canaan where he wandered for many years and was told this would be the land, He would give to his descendants forever. This journey had many difficulties and was by faith even when he could not see the fruit of promise. You will see all the details in Genesis.

God made Abraham many promises and one of these was that his descendants would inherit the land but as he progressed in years, he still had not produced a son to carry on the Seed line. So, he and his wife Sarah tried to fix the problem by themselves. This is often what we do today. We try to help God out by taking it into our own hands instead of waiting on God to provide. So, Sarah had not yet had a child and she gave her maid to Abraham, and they conceived a son. This son Ishmael became the father of the Arabs, but he was not to become the Seed line heir. Their plan of producing an heir produced many difficulties which still produce an enemy for Israel even today.

Finally, when Abraham was approaching 100 years old, and Sarah was about 90. God visited Abraham in the form of man but were angels and told him that this time next year Sarah would have a son. Abraham had believed God through all this waiting even though he did try to hurry up God by going into Sarah's maid. Finally, Sarah did conceive and had the son of promise, and he was named Isaac in their old age which was the result of God's hand. He brought it about that all would know it was by His hand and He would receive the Glory.

All his journey was in faith even in the ultimate following of God's requirement that Abraham offer up his promised son as a sacrifice to the Lord. This is a step of faith that the most dedicated believers would hit a stumbling block of trust. Abraham however trusted the Lord that even in this that God would provide the sacrifice and He did at the last moment stop Abraham's killing His promised son and provided the sacrifice. Because of this In Genesis 15:6 God reckoned Abraham's faith as righteousness.

Many do not understand that because of Abraham's faith in offering up Isaac as the sacrifice to God is showing that now God is also obligated to do the same. So, without this sacrifice by Abraham there would not be a like sacrifice of God's son for yours and my sins. And through this act of the sacrifice of Jesus for our sins we would not have the blessed gift of salvation. Jesus' blood shed on the cross is now our redemption for the faith of Abraham to shed the blood of Isaac is now the type/image of Christ's death on the cross for our salvation.

## **The church of today and faith**

Taking God at His word is a problem in today's churches. We often do not trust God's word and say we don't believe certain things that are in the Bible, or we believe the things we want to believe and leave the rest out. In doing this we are not working in faith. Faith is trusting in God that He knows what He has promised and has the power to bring it about in the time He decides. His words and teachings are recorded in the Bible, but we have many that don't believe the Bible completely. The problem is how do we know what to keep and what to throw out. Once you do that the Bible is not in harmony. We must trust that God gave us His word as a witness and guide for following Him. If we have faith (trust) in His written word we will be led to the truth.

So now we are also required to follow in faith **alone** in the shed blood of Jesus for our salvation. This is not a mixed faith of trust in keeping the Mosaic Law or any of our acts of behavior (doing good deeds) or even our membership in a church organization or any other thing that is based on our performance. It is only in the shed blood of Jesus on the cross that we are to receive salvation. Therefore, we must surrender to Jesus alone and leave it up to Him and the Holy Spirit. He will send into our hearts the gift of the Holy Spirit to bring about our righteousness.

When this happens in our life, we will be born again which is the infilling of the Holy Spirit for we have then received a new heart and will want to follow the Spirit's leading in our lives. He will nudge us to live a righteous life. For if we are in Christ, He has become our righteousness and our trust is no longer in our works or any other source of righteousness. Jesus has become our sabbath of rest. We can completely trust in him for our rest and not in ourselves.

There will be a day when **"The Sabbath"** will come to Israel when on Christ's return He will set up His kingdom on earth for a thousand years. There will be no gentile rule on earth any longer and Christ will reign from Jerusalem and then the **Sabbath of rest** will be manifested to the whole world. In the meantime, ours is a spiritual rest of assurance in Christ by faith.

I see however that today a lot of people are not trusting in the shed blood Christ for their rest but are instead trusting in church membership and in keeping the Mosaic Law and their own works for their rest of salvation.

Many churches and denominations are encouraging its members to trust in them for their salvation. We are being led to think that joining these organizations bring about salvation, but organizations do not have the power to save. It is a personal relationship with Jesus and receiving a personal salvation through our repentance and surrender to walk in His word and Spirit. I am concerned that many churches are more interested in adding to their congregations than to the kingdom of God.

So, we come down to the bottom line. We must have this trust that our righteousness is brought about by our Lord Jesus alone. We do not earn it we do not deserve it but like the faith of Abraham we receive this mighty salvation even though after all those years he still believed even though he had not seen the promises come to fruition.

The choice is yours today! You can not let anything stand between you and trusting Jesus alone for your salvation. It is a personal decision. Receive your salvation with excitement and Joy!

Your Brother in Christ if you will receive it.

**Howard**