

Faith: Seeing Past Death

Heb 11:20

1. Intro

1. Faith faces its greatest test at the time of death when one has not experienced the fulfillment of the promise.
2. These three men, as did Abraham, died without seeing the fulfillment of the promise given by God.

2. Seeing Past Death

1. These three men died in faith, they died in confidence that the promise would be fulfilled even though they had not yet received it.
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2. When a mature godly person comes to the end of their life, there should be peace. (Psalm 139:1-12)
 1. Did they have weaknesses in times of their lives? Yes.
 2. They all lived by faith in a promise they had never seen.
3. Abraham had been promised the land, the nation, the spiritual blessings to the world. He never saw any of it at all. (Gen 12:2-3)
 1. Abraham died in faith, passing on the promise to Isaac, knowing Isaac would be the next step in the divine plan.
 2. Isaac does the same thing, passes it to Jacob. Jacob does the same thing, passes it to Joseph.
 3. They all knew that God was faithful.

3. Isaac

1. When we look at Isaac's life we see some things that don't seem right to us.
 1. Covenant recalled (Gen 26:3)
 2. Favouritism in the family (Gen 25:28)
 1. Isaac and Esau
 2. Rebekah and Jacob
2. Tells Abimelech that Rebekah is his sister (Gen 26:7)

4. Jacob

1. We see something similar in the life of Jacob.
 1. Covenant recalled (Gen 28:13-15)
 2. Get's Esau to sell his birthright. (Gen 25:31-34)
 3. Deceives his father into a blessing of the first born. (Gen 27:1-29)
 1. Conspires with his mother.
 4. Deceit between both him and Laban. (Gen 29-31)

5. Joseph

1. Joseph seems to get it right.
 1. Covenant recalled (Gen 50:24)
2. Dealt with badly by his brothers. (Gen 37)
3. Sent to Egypt where he saves his family. (Gen 45:5)

4. Covenant passed on (Gen 48)
 1. Jacob blesses Joseph's sons. (Gen 48:13-15)
5. Had a promise made that his bones would be buried in Canaan. (Gen 50:22-26)

6. Application

1. These are people of faith. Their whole lives were built around the promise that had been given to Abraham.
 1. They had confidence that God would do what He said He would do because God could be trusted.
 2. They never saw it
2. But we look at their lives and seem to see the dark side of their character.
 1. Were they:
 1. Sinful? Sure.
 2. Deceitful? Yes.
 3. Weak, sometimes immoral? Yes
 2. Are we any different?
3. We live at a time where we have the full revelation of Scripture and the indwelling Spirit.
 1. Did not God show them grace?
 2. Do we get to receive God's grace day by day?
4. Any believer who dies with a heart having hope brings honor to the Lord and a testimony to the life of faith.
 1. That is how we should believe also, because the heaven that holds us to Christ is a heaven we have never seen.
 1. That's what it means to live by faith.

7. Conclusion

1. As we come to our end of life do you think our faith will be as strong as the Patriarch's?
2. It is easy for us to look at the unsavoury parts of life.
3. It is how we finish that counts.