

FLAWED, BUT CHOSEN - Part 1

Abraham

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Part of Flawed But Chosen The Imperfect Road to Redemption

January 30, 2021

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January 31, 2021

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When we look at Jesus' genealogy, we see that it's made up very imperfect, flawed people, even in individuals like David or Abraham, yet God ___ these *flawed* individuals to be Jesus' ancestors, and to even point us to Christ and his ministry.

God has always had a purpose for each of our lives, and taking a life seemingly broken beyond repair and restoring it to something ___ is often how God works.

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham: Abraham was the father of Isaac...

—Matthew 1:1-2 (NIV11)

The LORD had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.' So Abram went, as the LORD had told him....

—Genesis 12:1-4 (NIV11)

Abram demonstrated his faith in God by doing what he was

told, and that's really the only real proof of faith - not words but ____.

But Abram replied, 'O Sovereign LORD, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son? Since you've given me no children, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. You have given me no descendants of my own, so one of my servants will be my heir.'

—Genesis 15:2-3 (NLT)

Then the word of the LORD came to [Abram]: 'This [servant] will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.' He took him outside and said, 'Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

—Genesis 15:4-6 (NIV11)

It sounds so routine - “Abram believed the Lord” - and often we say we believe but we're not really sure; we're not really willing to ____ on that promise.

We're told that the result of that *believing*, of that ____, is that God “credited” or awarded “righteousness” to Abram.

What does Scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.' Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.

—Romans 4:3-5 (NIV11)

For those who want to say the Old Testament is all about Law and wrath and an angry God, we need to see that this “righteousness” was “credited” to Abraham hundreds of years before Moses and any ____ - it was completely **an act of grace.******

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—
and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not
by works, so that no one can boast.*

—Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV11)

*It was not through the law that Abraham and his
offspring received the promise that he would be heir of
the world, but through the righteousness that comes by
faith. For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith
means nothing and the promise is worthless*

—Romans 4:13-14 (NIV11)

**Abraham isn't just part of Jesus' genealogy but also ___ the
work and ministry of Christ.**

Some time later God tested Abraham....

—Genesis 22:1 (NIV11)

**Most folks don't like the idea of ____, and yet ____ is a
regular part of life, including in our spiritual lives.**

**God is constantly striving to ____ us in faith, and testing is
one way He does that.**

***testing** - an ordering of circumstances by God to reveal
his people's supreme love for him, fortify them against
sin, and do them good*

—(Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible)

*Jesus: '... Well done, my good and faithful servant. You
have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I
will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate
together!'*

—Matthew 25:21 & 23 (NLT)

**God is, at various times, testing us to see if we will be
faithful with what He has ____ to us, and He honors those
who are.**

**In Genesis 22 we read that what God is about to do is test
Abraham - that's the ____ that we, the reader, know, but
Abraham doesn't know this.**

Then God said, 'Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.' Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.

—Genesis 22:2-3 (NIV11)

The text tells us Abraham simply got up “early the next morning,” made his preparations, and ___ set out on the journey God had sent him on.

By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, 'It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.' Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.

—Hebrews 11:17-19 (NIV11)

The amazing thing about our God is that He's never limited by only the solutions ___ see, which is why having faith in Him and living by it really does makes sense.

Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, 'Father?' 'Yes, my son?' Abraham replied. 'The fire and wood are here,' Isaac said, 'but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?' Abraham answered, 'God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.' And the two of them went on together.

—Genesis 22:7-8 (NIV11)

When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

—Genesis 22:9-10 (NIV11)

But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, 'Abraham! Abraham!' 'Here I am,' he replied. 'Do not lay a hand on the boy,' he said. 'Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.'

—Genesis 22:11-12 (NIV11)

Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, 'On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.'

—Genesis 22:13-14 (NIV11)

“The LORD Will Provide” is the Hebrew name *Jehovah Jireh* and tells us so much about our God - He will always provide ___ needed to do ___ He calls us to do.

This is the first time in the biblical record where we see what Christianity would later understand to be the principle of ___ atonement.

...John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'

—John 1:29 (NIV11)

Jesus: 'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.'

—John 3:16 (NIV11)

Just as God called Abraham to so believe that he acted on those beliefs, Jesus calls us to also believe in God's love for us so much that we ___ on that belief.

Not only does Abraham demonstrate for us that from the very beginning we've always been saved by ___, but also that faith is only faith when we act on it, and not simply when we mouth the words.

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by

action, is dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith; I have deeds.' Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.

—James 2:17-18 (NIV11)

Even in the midst of our flaws, there is hope, because it's not by works but by ___ that we are saved, and the Apostle Paul tells us all this was written for ___ sakes.

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why 'it was credited to him as righteousness.' The words 'it was credited to him' were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

—Romans 4:18-25 (NIV11)

We continue to live in challenging times, but maybe these are just tests that can become our ___ of all God has done for us, if we have eyes to see.

Next Week: Rahab/Bathsheba

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