

# Faith: Suffering, Death, and Resurrection

- <sup>17</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son,  
<sup>18</sup> of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."  
<sup>19</sup> He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.  
<sup>20</sup> By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.  
<sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff.  
<sup>22</sup> By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.  
<sup>23</sup> By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.  
<sup>24</sup> By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,  
<sup>25</sup> choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.  
<sup>26</sup> He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than

- the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.
- <sup>27</sup> By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.
- <sup>28</sup> By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them."

Hebrews 11:17-28

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## The Problem of Evil?

IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE for most Americans to understand true suffering for the sake of Christ. The closest many of us come is seeing movies or watching videos or reading articles about others who suffer for his Name. Suffering exists all around us, and none of us ever totally escapes it. But compared to most of the world, even this kind of suffering is almost nothing in our country, yet.

Cross just over the boarder and visit a garbage dump in Tijuana, just past where all the tourists go for a fun day in the Baja. Go there and watch children picking for food in the garbage. Go there and wash the lice out of their hair. Go there and look at the shacks built upon the heaps. Go there and dig a latrine because they have no running water for

toilets, let alone the money to buy one. Go there and be changed by the suffering. And that is just a couple miles south of our border.

Of course, we could do the same thing in many places in our own country, especially on Reservation land, the worst of our land where the poverty, drunkenness, and misery have overtaken so many of those once proud people. Or go into an inner city ghetto and live with the people there. See the how the drugs, the violence, the absent fathers have left our cities desolate wastelands where kids join gangs just to stay alive. That's in our own country. But we could go all over the face of this earth and see conditions of suffering that would make every one of our heads spin if we really understood and beheld with our own eyes how so many billions of people are living at this moment.

And what about all of the murder and death that we see every day on the news. Recently, a friend of mine wrote this on her Facebook feed:

Hearing of a crazy shooter killing a bunch of people then having to watch my newsfeed go back and forth on whether it was real or a false flag.

Hearing of a woman in my home state being found murdered after her 3 year old was found abandoned at a store parking lot.

Hearing of another killing of a holistic provider.

Hearing of a toddler being killed by an alligator at Disney World.

Hearing of a man who stabbed someone in Texas for not getting a promotion.

Hearing of this nonsense about women potentially being required to register at 18 for the draft.

Like...seriously...what's next? Another hurricane Katrina? Is Big Foot finally gonna come out of hiding and eat everyone? Alien invasion? Meteors of fire? What the (bleep)?

Seriously, I'm trying very hard not to have a full blown panic attack. Can we all please just post pictures of cute babies and baby animals or flowers or food?

That is the problem of suffering, the problem of evil that causes so many to never trust in God. “A God that is all powerful could stop evil and suffering. A God that is all knowing would surely know that it would happen. A God

that is all loving wouldn't want evil and suffering to happen and would take needed action to stop it. Evil and suffering happen. Therefore, there is no all powerful, all knowing, and all loving God. He couldn't coexist with a world like this.

This is the reasoning of faithless people, those who do not understand why an all powerful God would allow suffering, yeah sometimes even cause it. They have absolutely no idea of the kind of God that God actually is. Of his patience, his kindness, his goodness, his mercy, his longsuffering with sinners, or of his plan to one day remove it forever. It is only the Christian who truly understands these things, and it explains why it is often the path deliberately taken for the sake of Christ.

## Suffering and Christ

Let's move into our passage today. As we have been looking at the specific examples of faith in Hebrews 11, we have looked at how some were **commended** for their faith (Abel, Enoch) and how others were **looking forward** to the promises—especially the promise of heaven--by faith

(Noah, Abraham, Sarah). As we continue, these continue, yet they also make room for another aspect of faith to come to the forefront. This is **faith in the midst of suffering and death**. Here is some of the language along these lines: “**offering up**” your only son (17), “**dying**” (21), “**end of his life**” (22), “**his bones**” (23), “**not afraid**” (23, 27), “**mistreated**” (25), “**reproach of Christ**” (26), and “**the Destroyer**” (28).

Rather than taking these in chronological order of person, I want to do something a little different. I want to look at them in chronological order of how they occur in our lives. In this way, perhaps it is best to start this with **Moses**. The entry on Moses begins at the beginning: “**when he was born**” (Heb 11:23). That starts at the very beginning. We are all born into this world. For most of us, the beginning of our life is the best. It is the time of greatest happiness, greatest ease, greatest comfort. This is what all parents want for their children.

It isn't that way for everyone, of course. Some are born into this world with great trials even from the beginning. **My niece** just celebrated her fourth birthday. But it almost wasn't so. When she was born, she quit breathing and her

heart stopped. They resuscitated her after a couple of minutes, but it happened again shortly thereafter. This time, they immediately understood that it was because she was born with no holes in her nasal cavity. But this time it was longer. It was such a long time that they were afraid when they did bring her back that she would have permanent brain damage. So they put her in a state of the art freezer, effectively taking her body down to the absolute lowest temperature she could live at for several days.

After making it through, it was discovered that she had a hole in her heart, tiny holes in her eyes, her hips had dysplasia, and she was not born with the necessary parts of her ear to be able to hear. She was deaf. She has what is called C.H.A.R.G.E. Syndrome, and many of the children born with it die either immediately or shortly thereafter. The little trooper has been through more in her short life than most of us will in our entire lives. She has suffered greatly since her birth. But perhaps her parents have suffered even more, as they are the ones who deal with it every day, who have to consider the many surgeries, the life-long impact of this, and so on.

**Moses' birth was accompanied with great suffering.** It

could have resulted in his own death, but he was spared by the providence of God. God didn't want him to die. Nevertheless, the king (Pharaoh) had made an edict that all of the Hebrew boys born under two were to die. What a great horror this would have been for his parents. To think that you simply had to give your infant over to the Pharaoh to have him put to death, just because he said so? I can't imagine such a thing!

But Moses' parents had faith. “By faith ... he ... was hidden for three months by his parents” (23). It then gives two reasons. First, it says they did this because they saw that the child was “beautiful.” The LXX, Philo, and Josephus all attach Moses' looks to the fact that he was saved. Josephus is especially interesting, “For God had taken such great care in the formation of Moses, that he caused him to be thought worthy of bringing up, and providing for, by all those that had taken the most fatal resolutions, on account of the dread of his nativity, for the destruction of the rest of the Hebrew nation.”<sup>1</sup>

Second, “They were not afraid of the king's edict” (23).

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<sup>1</sup> Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987).



The implication of this, of course, is that if they disobeyed and were caught, they would be severely punished, perhaps even killed. Right here we see a form of suffering. It is psychological. Worry about the future. In this case, the worry would have been a lot more real than what we often worry about in our own lives. Death vs. not being able to go on vacation this summer. Not exactly the same. It is also the opposite of what we saw last week about looking to [the future in faith](#).

So what is [the antidote](#) to worry and anxiety about the future? Faith. Faith in the promises as we saw last week. What is [the consequence](#) of this? It calms your fears. Is not worry and anxiety really just a manifestation of fear? Therefore, their faith cast out their fear. They were not afraid of what the king might do to them, even though it was a real possibility from their perspective that he could have killed them. Perhaps we need more than ever before in our country this kind of faith in the face of a nation that is moving quickly towards a form of government that is the opposite of what made us the envy of the world. If your faith is in a politician to save you from what is coming, then woe is you. Your faith had better be in the only one who has

the power of salvation in his hand.

Of course, Moses was spared and he actually lived a very, VERY good life in the palace of the king. God providentially saw fit to have him be adopted into the royal family. In this way, Moses didn't really suffer much at all.

But one day, Moses did a wicked thing and killed an Egyptian. He was caught and cast out of Egypt. It was at this point that he discovered who he was. God appeared to him in a burning bush. The Angel of the LORD spoke, and Moses knew him. This occurred when he was 40 years old. Hebrews simply says he was “grown up” (24). It was at this time that we learn Moses “Refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin” (25).

Perhaps the most amazing thing to me about this is that Moses deliberately chose the way of suffering. We mostly want to flee from it. Moses embraced it on purpose. He did two things worth noting. First, he gave up being called the son of Pharaoh. Have you ever heard of a prince of anything saying, “I renounce it all and I will become a beggar?” It rarely happens. Who does that? Why would they do it? You

have to be convinced of something better than the best this world has to offer. Most people think there is no such thing.

The **second thing** is that he refused to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. This tells us two things about sin. **First**, it is pleasurable. Why do we sin? Because we *like* it! It feels good to sin. The emphasis on “feeling” is quite important, because feelings do not always correspond with reality. Sometimes they do. When you fall in love with the right women, you feel it. And it is good and wonderful. But in the case of sin, feelings actually deceive you. The feeling leads you to commit sin.

The **second** thing is that sin and the feelings that come with it are **fleeting**. That means they come and they go, they ebb and they flow. Passions are strange beasts, for they make men do the greatest of heroic acts, but they also drag them down to hell. Faith understands that these pleasures are temporary and it says, “**No, I would rather be mistreated with God’s people than to live a life that will keep me from Him.**”

Notice here **the emphasis not on himself** and his personal salvation (though that was implicit). The emphasis is on suffering **with God’s people**. God had a plan that is greater

than just Moses and his suffering. It involved his church. The implication of saying it this way seems to be that God's plan works like this for all of us. We suffer together; we are not alone. We stand as one. We suffer as one. Certainly, this is what happened to the Israelites, and Moses was the special recipient of a kind of suffering he did not expect: the suffering that came from his own ungrateful complaining brothers. Nevertheless, all of Israel suffered in those days and they did so as they were making their way to the Promised Land out of the land of slavery.

**Vs. 25** is basically a parallel to this one. Notice that it ends with Moses looking forward to the reward. Notice he had given up the treasures of Egypt to do this. Gold and silver, diamonds and myrrh, nothing can compare with God. That is easy to say, until you actually have to do it. Just ask the rich young man who could not follow Jesus because he loved the world and his great wealth. Moses did it.

Now, we know that Moses did all of this **because of faith**. But in **vs. 26** something new and remarkable is added. It is one of the most amazing things said in the entire NT. Taking it slowly, he **considered the reproach** that was set before him. "**Reproach**" means **expressions of disapproval or**

scorning from others. So Moses is choosing to suffer--actually choosing it--over pleasure and sin. That is remarkable enough. But why?

It says he considers the reproach of Christ. What does “of Christ” mean? The “of” is notoriously difficult to translate. Is Moses choosing to suffer for the Messiah, or he is choosing to suffer like the Messiah,<sup>2</sup> or is he perhaps even contemplating the reproaches that Christ endured? The ESV leaves it undecided. Other translations say things like, “an account of the Anointed” (NOR), “on behalf of the Messiah” (CJB), “for the sake of Christ” (NIV), etc.

What I want to focus on for a moment is that Moses considered the reproach of Christ. Let that sink in. It uses the word *Christos*, which the OT used to translate *mashiach* (Anointed One, Messiah). Ps 2:2, “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed [against his Messiah, his Christ].” And what are they doing? They are raging against him (2:1). In other places, they are reviling or reproaching him. In a passage that many think was in the mind of the

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<sup>2</sup> Paul Ellingworth and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Letter to the Hebrews*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 273.

writer of Hebrews it says, “Remember, O Lord, the reproach of your servants, which I bore in my bosom, *even the reproach* from many nations; from which your enemies have reproached, O Lord: from which they reproached the ransom of your anointed [Christ].” (Ps 89:50-51 LXA).

Who is being reproached here? It is **both David as anointed and Christ as Anointed**. David writes elsewhere, “For it is for your sake that I have borne reproach, that dishonor has covered my face. I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons. For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me” (Ps 69:7-9). The people are reproaching Christ (God) and thus they reproach David. This seems to be what is in mind with Moses. If you love Christ, you will not escape such things. It is simply impossible. He couldn't. You can't.

Moses is told by the Angel—by Christ—to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let the people go. But Pharaoh said, “**Who is the LORD that I should obey his voice and let Israel go?**” (Ex 5:2). **He mocks the LORD.** “**That miracle is nothing, Moses. We can do that.**” “**We can do that one too. Is that all your God can do?**” “**Well, we can't do that one,**



but I don't care about your God. You can't leave." Later in Joshua, the LORD said, "I removed the reproach of Egypt from you" (Josh 5:9). Clearly, Egypt is reproaching Christ.

Yet, *Moses* is the intercessor. Thus, Pharaoh mocks Moses. Moses suffers the rebukes, revilements, and reproaches for Christ's sake. This is a continual theme of the Apostles. "We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, 'The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me'" (Rom 15:1-3). "For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2Co 12:10). "If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you" (1Pe 4:14).

But Moses is *Old Testament*, not New Testament. Yet, this is precisely why what is said here is so stunning. No, Christ as Angel did not undergo reviling in the same manner as he did in human flesh. Nevertheless, he *was* reviled. And this points us towards his future sufferings, even as various prophecies in the OT point to them. What happened in the

OT got worse in the NT as they led to his crucifixion. “All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads; ‘He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!’” (Ps 22:7-8; cf. Matt 27:43). “Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?” (Matt 26:68). Nevertheless, Christ was there. “And the rock was Christ” (1Cor 10:4). And Moses knew him.<sup>3</sup> Amazing!

And this leads us into the heart of the first point this morning. The sufferings of Christ and suffering for him. For some reason, Moses considered that it was better to enter into the reproaches of Christ than to partake in the treasures of Egypt. Why? Unbelievers only mock here. They can’t give an answer. But two reasons are given. First, “He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt.” Scripture says, the Lord (Wisdom; Prov

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<sup>3</sup> Many do not like this idea. So they will say things like the anointed one is Moses--not Christ--in the same way that David was the anointed one (the MIT translation: “the stigma of being the anointed”). Others will say that no, Moses is not the anointed one, but this is only typological. Moses certainly didn’t know Christ. He was merely suffering like Christ would suffer. Yet, it says Moses considered ... Christ. Some say that Moses, because he was a prophet, knew about the coming Christ in some vague way, and as such chose to act like he would [See the options in Harold W. Attridge and Helmut Koester, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989), 341].<sup>3</sup> But do you see how these are all dancing around the obvious?



3:15) and obeying his law (Ps 119:72) is more precious than silver or gold. Nothing we desire can compare with him.

The next verse is similar. “By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible” (27). We can see that Moses’ faith produced action: He led the people out of Egypt. We can see that his faith supplanted his fear: He was not afraid. We can see that he endured the potential anger of Pharaoh because he saw him who is invisible. This refers to Christ whom he saw at various times in his life, most prominently at the Burning Bush and on Mt. Sinai when he saw the Lord’s backside. The point is, both verses teach that Moses knew Christ, rested his faith upon him, endured whatever hardship would come his way, and boldly went forward in obedience.

Do you see God as so beautiful, so precious that entering into suffering for his sake is worth more to you than silver and gold? If you do, it must radically change your life. Moses considered this, considered the sufferings of Christ and deliberately chose to suffer for the sake of the Name. NT Christians do the same, counting themselves worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name (Acts 5:41). “Consider it all

joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete” (James 1:2-3).

Christians and the church are called to this. “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church” (Col 1:24). To bring people into the kingdom, we suffer revilement of others. There is no way around it. We enter into a holy war and are taking people out of the kingdom of Satan through the gospel. We endure this to be conformed into the image of the Suffering Servant, of our Christ, our Messiah who underwent these things so that we might be saved.

This is the **second** point, “He was looking to the reward.” The reward, as we saw last time, is heaven. It is the Promised Land. But today, I’m thinking more about Christ himself, about our union with him, about becoming like him, about spending eternity with him. What is heaven without the Savior? And thus we see that Moses’ faith was placed in Christ, endured suffering, and was looking to the reward because faith understands that the reproach of Christ

is greater than the all the wealth of Egypt.

## Death and Christ

The end of the Moses story transitions us backwards into previous portions of our text today. “By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them” (Heb 11:28). He’s been moving chronologically through the life of Moses from birth to adulthood, seemingly from the plagues to and now to the Passover which took place at during that horror in Egypt—the Tenth Plague.

God had promised that he would kill the firstborn of Egypt and the hands of the destroying angel. Death becomes the theme that now rises to the surface. It ups the ante. Death to those who did not trust in the Lord. But God promised Israel that if they would obey the law of this special meal on that sacred night that the Angel would pass over their houses and let them live. There was no reason to believe that a Destroyer would come, let alone that he would spare anyone, save for the promise of God alone. Moses believe God and so gave the commandment not to eat

unleavened bread that night for they would be in haste to leave Egypt quickly. Pharaoh would let the people go. They were to kill the animal and put its blood on their doorframes, God would see the blood and spare the people.

One of the most remarkable things about this meal is that Jews still keep it to this day. But so also do Christians—in its fullest, truest form. For it was on that same night that our Lord Jesus took the bread and the wine and gave the Disciples the **Eucharist**—*give thanks* for your redeemer the Lamb will die in your place. God will see the blood of his Firstborn Son and all who believe in him will not be destroyed. That's over 3,000 years of unbroken history. First in the type. Then in the antitype. Surely, the climax of each of our Lord's Day meetings is the Supper we share together knowing that the Lord Jesus has saved us from the Destroyer.

But now, let us go backwards in our story. We will see how this theme of death pervades not only the end of the Moses story, but of the Patriarchs as well. “**By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones**” (**Heb 11:22**). What I want you to notice here is how first, Joseph's

life came to an end. He knew he would die. He gave directions about his bones.

Though the Destroyer will not take our lives in vengeance and retribution, God nevertheless, this teaches that God brings all of our days to an end. Every person in this room will die—unless the Lord Jesus returns in Glory. Joseph has the most material of any of the Patriarchs. Yet, Joseph dies. Joseph is probably the strongest in faith of all the Patriarchs (if his life is any indication). Yet Joseph dies. If there was suffering that we have already looked at, [death is at the end of that suffering](#). It was the same for Joseph. It was the same for Moses. It was the same for Jesus, though not for the same reasons.

And yet, the focus isn't really on death. No, this is the hall of faith. By faith Joseph made mention of the exodus. He was a prophet. This leads us into the Moses story. But it does more. *He* foresaw and believed that God would one day bring his people out of this land that he had sold into as a slave himself. *He* knew the promise of the Land of Canaan and he believed. Therefore, though mummified like an Egyptian prince, though exalted to the high house of the Pharaoh, Joseph was not an Egyptian and he would not

remain in Egypt even if he was dead. “Bring my bones ‘cross the Jordan. I’m going to the other side.” Joseph’s eyes were on the future, on the Promises, on the land, on his God, on eternity. This is where faith looks even in the face of death.

Notice next his father Jacob. “By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff” (11:21). “When dying.” It is the same theme. The destroyer. The end of life. When dying. Do you think it is trying to tell us something about faith? You need faith when you are getting ready to move into glory. How many wobble, teeter, or even lose it there?

This verse is dependent upon Genesis 48:21, “Israel said to Joseph, ‘Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you and will bring you again to the land of your fathers.’” Ah, now we see the promise that Joseph believed! It was told to him by his father at his death. “God will be with you.” This is a remarkable turnaround for the man Jacob, who spent so much of his life running from God and trying hard not to believe in him. But finally, God overcame his unbelief. God always gets his elect. And here, Jacob is showing the true test of faith, for faith that believes in the midst of death when there is no more that you can do, when

you are utterly dependent upon God because you are totally powerless—this is the faith that pleases God.

Notice, it adds that Joseph bowed in worship. Jacob wasn't worship his sons. He was worship his God whom he trusted would be with his sons and would bring them back to the Promised Land. Jacob's focus at death was on the same place Joseph's was—the future, the land, the promises, and worshiping the One True God.

Taking it back a step, we come to Isaac. “By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau” (Heb 11:20). He is doing the same thing Jacob did. This is where Jacob learned it from. He emulated the faith of his father. Children, this is what God desires and commands of you. Do you see your fathers acting strong in faith? Emulate them. Be like them. Trust in their God. Look forward to the future of heaven like they do. God made it to be this way. Fathers, make it easy on your children to see your faith. For how can they emulate it if they don't see it in your life?

## Resurrection and Christ

The most powerful story of death in our text today is



probably the first and it takes us back to the last thing we are told about Abraham in Hebrews 11. “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son” (Heb 11:17). This is such an incredible story of faith. Abraham had been told that he would have a son come from his own body after he and his wife were well past the age of childbearing. God gave them their son. Then, God tells Abraham to kill him, offering him as a sacrifice.

The language used here: “his only son” is the same word used for Jesus. The word is *monogenes* and it is regularly translated as “only begotten.” This is obviously not quite accurate, since Abraham had a son named Ishmael. The word comes from two terms: *monos* meaning “one” and the noun *genos* meaning “kind.”<sup>4</sup> It literally means “one of a kind” or “unique.” Isaac is the unique son of Abraham, for he is the son of promise, the son borne out of the impossible.

This word is used for a reason, probably more than one. We can see the first reason as it is attached to the next phrase. “Of whom it was said, ‘Through Isaac shall your offspring (seed) be named’” (Heb 11:18). The promise was that Isaac

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<sup>4</sup> They used to think the second part came from the verb *gennao* meaning “to beget, bear.”



would be the father of many peoples. *This* unique son, not another would be the son of the future generations. This helps to explain why Abraham could actually go through will killing Isaac. It is the purest act of faith I've ever read. Abraham was going to kill his son for God. Isaac would not carry on the seed.

But as with the others, so also with Abraham. He was not looking only to the act itself, the act of obedience. He was looking to the **future**. That is why it mentions the promise to Isaac. And this promise cause Abraham to look to an even greater possibility. “**If God is going to give Isaac children, then if I kill him, it means he will raise him from the dead!**” he reasoned. Thus it says, “**He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back**” (**Heb 11:19**).

This leads us to a **second** reason that Isaac is called the *monogenes* son. The entire story is a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ. Our Lord Jesus **suffered** greatly at the hands of rulers, politicians, soldiers, and ordinary people. In our story today, in this way, he was most like Moses. Our Lord Jesus was put to **death**. In this way, he was like everyone in our story. The Passover is a continual symbol of his death. The

deaths of the Patriarchs and the future blessings foreshadows his own death. And the killing of Isaac to figuratively receive him back from the dead is the completion of the types.

If we began our time today with Moses actually knowing Christ, we end it with Christ being the Person that all of our heroes of faith today looked forward to in their lives, in their actions, and in their hope for the future. Curiously, the story of Abraham sacrificing Isaac is also the story of the Angel of the LORD staying Abraham's son. He knew that there could only be [one resurrection from the dead](#) of a sacrificial son, and it would have to be Him.

This is what faith beholds. This is what faith apprehends. This is who faith looks upon. In the midst of suffering and death, we have the resurrection. The atheist cannot understand, for he has no faith. Unbelief sees no purpose in pain, no reason for evil. But our Lord knows that from the ashes of evil comes the phoenix of new life to those who trust in Christ. And in the resurrection, all things are made new. Suffering is gone. Death is conquered. Eternal life begins.

Recently, I was having lunch with a friend down in

Denver. He told me a story of being over in a Syrian refugee camp in eastern Turkey a year or so ago. He came to meet a remarkable young lady and her story of faith in the midst of suffering is how I would like to end today. This is what he told me:

Her name is Myriam, and she is ten years old. Myriam was from Qaraqoush, which is right next to the ruins of the ancient city of Nineveh in northern Iraq. In late 2014 she fled to the camp after The Islamic State sacked her city, putting many Christians they found to a brutal horrible death. Most fled and can never return. The suffering was extreme. Many lost parents, siblings. All lost their homes, their land. They became homeless and to this day still are.

Myriam had lost much, suffered much, but began to tell others that in the camp that she does not hold anger towards the men of ISIS. She was interviewed and you can see her story online.

“Thank God, God provides for us. God loves us, and wouldn’t let ISIS kill us.”

“What are your feelings towards those who drove you out of your home?” she is asked.

“I won’t do anything to them, I will only ask God to

forgive them.”

“And can you, forgive them?”

“Yes.”

“I hope you get a better home.”

“If God so wants. Not what we want, but God, because He knows.”

“Are you sometimes sad? Do you feel Jesus had forsaken you for example?”

“No, Sometimes I cry because we left our home, and Qaraqoush, but I’m not angry at God because we left Qaraqoush. I thank him because He provided for us. Even if we’re suffering here, He provides for us. Sometimes I sing songs.”

“Would you like to sing the song you like the most for us?”

How Joyful is the day on which  
I believed on Christ  
My joy was made complete at dawn  
And my voice sang with gratitude  
My love to my glorious Savior  
Day by day it will grow

A new life, a joyful day,  
When I reunite with my Beloved

Motivated by love, He came,  
Oh what an awesome love!  
He restored me to righteousness,  
On account of an honest covenant  
My love to my glorious savior  
Day by day will it grow  
A new life, a joyful day,  
When I reunite with my Beloved

This is the forward looking faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and his parents. It is faith in the resurrected Christ in the midst of suffering and death. It transcends this early realm, for its origins are not of this place. Only a gift granted from above can say such things. May God be pleased to give you this faith through his Word.