

Lesson 7 **Blessed Are Those Who Believe**

Memory Text: John 20:29, NKJV **“Jesus said to him, ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed’ ”**

- Thru/out his Gospel, John presents = diversity of people—people w/ different backgrounds/ beliefs / experiences—all testifying to who Jesus was.
- This week we’ll look into few more of these testimonies
 - see what they proclaimed = about identity of Jesus

- John/ Baptist = Behold the Lamb of God!
- Andrew = We have found the Messiah
- Philip = We have found Him of whom Moses . . . wrote
- Nathaniel = Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!
- Woman at well = Could this be the Christ?
- Samaritans = We ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world
- Peter = Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life
- Martha, sister of Lazarus = I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world
- Man born blind, whom Jesus healed—Though I was blind, now I see

SUNDAY

Harking Back to Abraham

- Jesus openly declared who He was = not shy in calling on witnesses to testify who He was – even witnesses who were long gone
- When some Jews accused Jesus of being demon-possessed, He said:
 - **John 8:56** “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad”

SET UP HISTORY OF ABRAHAM

- Came from pagan nation – witnessed idol worship/home
- Abraham true believer in Creator God = followed God w/ all his heart, God knew it = had divine confidence in Abraham/trusted him
- Abraham /Hebrew = **not Jew** = Jewish people did not exist as distinct ethnic group during Abraham’s lifetime
 - Term comes from tribe of Abraham’s great-grandson JUDAH
- Abraham considered = father of Jewish nation
- Don’t know how old he was when God called him out of Ur
 - Or how long journey paused in Haran
 - but he was 75 when God repeated His call to promised land
- **Genesis 12:3** God promised Abraham “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”
- Reveals God’s salvation plan spans = ethnic/ geographic boundaries

God ratified everlasting covenant of RBF w/ Abraham in vision

Genesis 15:5–6 The Lord ⁵brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants [seed] be.”

- “Seed” reflects promised Seed /**Genesis 3:15**- God’s announcement of Deliverer = Messiah born thru Abraham’s lineage

⁶And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. [Paul quotes in Romans 4:3]

- **Genesis 15** = in vision God ratified everlasting covenant of salvation by grace/ RBF w/Abraham
 - Had Abraham prepare sacrifices = Symbols of God's divine presence—smoking oven/ burning torch—were only presence to pass between covenant sacrifices.
- God alone made the promises = He alone would keep them.

Years later **Genesis 17:1–2** ¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. ²And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.”

Genesis 22 Take now your son, your only son Isaac [covenant language = Isaac younger than Ismael, but Isaac only begotten covenant son of Abraham]= offer him there as a burnt offering = offering for sin = the Lord provided Ram (male sheep) offered in the place of Isaac = represented the Son of God = window into plan of salvation

Why did Abraham readily go along w/ God's plan?

Hebrews 11:17–19 ¹⁷By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, ¹⁸of whom it was said, “In Isaac your seed shall be called,” ¹⁹concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

- Likely Abraham saw Christ's day = at time God ratified covenant RBF
 - form of a vision = Genesis 15.
- Abraham knew God's *only unique one-of-a-kind covenant Son of promise* would be crucified /resurrected = trusted God would likewise raise his son. Surely, he had taught Isaac this.

Galatians 3:6–9 ⁶just as Abraham “believed God, and **it was accounted to him for righteousness.**” ⁷Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. ⁸And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, **preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand**, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” ⁹So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

- Abraham had everlasting gospel of righteousness by faith preached to him
- Abraham entered into everlasting covenant w/ Lord = made righteous by faith = became spiritual father to all who believe

Romans 4:1–3 ¹What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

Romans 4:16 Abraham, who is the father of us all

Galatians 3:29 ²⁹And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

ABSG John 8:56-59 When Jesus said, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day” = leaders responded, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?”

Jesus’ answer was astounding. “ ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM’ ” = Jesus uses language reminiscent of what God said to Moses at the burning bush.

This was a claim to be God, the self-existent one.

No question, the leaders understood the implication of what He said because they then “took up stones to throw at Him”