

## ABRAHAM REASONED

### “Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead” (Heb 11:19 NIV)

Generally speaking, faith comes by hearing. Apparently, however, Abraham came to believe in the resurrection by reasoning. As far as we know he had never heard of a resurrection. This placed him at a great disadvantage. To illustrate the point, consider that at one time the world's most brilliant thinkers denied the possibility of supersonic flight. It had never happened before. Once it did happen, it was much easier to believe that it could happen again. Today, all educated people “believe” in supersonic flight. The same principle is true regarding the resurrection. Since Abraham had never “heard” of a resurrection he became a pioneer and paved the way for others. He “reasoned” that God could raise the dead. We shall see, however, that God was still very much involved in his reasoning.

Abraham, as you know, received a series of promises from God and believed these promises before they came to pass. Here are a few examples:

- God promised that Abraham and Sarah would have a son named Isaac (Gen. 17:19).
- God promised that Abraham would have numerous descendants like the stars of the heavens (Gen. 15:5). These descendants would come through Isaac.
- God also promised that through Isaac and these descendants all the people of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3).

Then God commanded Abraham to kill Isaac. He commanded him to take Isaac to the region of Moriah and sacrifice him there as a burnt offering (Gen. 22:2). Since it was a three day journey Abraham had time to ponder this great dilemma. First, he knew that God clearly intended to bless the world through Isaac. Secondly, he knew that God clearly commanded him to kill Isaac. Abraham solved this dilemma by reasoning that God was going to raise Isaac from the dead. Here are some facts God gave Abraham that made this reasoning possible:

- First, Abraham had the evidence creation. The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork (Ps. 19:1). It was by observing the stars that Abraham came to believe that God could create Isaac in a dead womb (Gen. 15:4 - 6). If God could create the stars, and if God could create Isaac in a dead womb, surely God could also raise the dead.
- Next let us consider the evidence of seeds. Abraham certainly knew about seeds. God created them on third day when he first made living things (Gen. 1:11). It is by means of seeds that life is propagated on the earth. When a seed falls to the ground it dies (John 12:24), yet it comes to life again. This “death” is actually the key to abundant life. Some seeds produce a hundred fold, some sixty fold, and some thirty fold (Matt. 13:23).
- Next let us consider the witness of the seasons. Abraham had seen over 100 winters. Every year he had seen the leaves fall from the trees. Every year the trees seemed to die. Every year the trees that seemed to be dead sprang to life again and were covered with buds and blossoms.
- Next let us consider the witness of day and night, and the miracle of sleep. Every day Abraham had seen the sun disappear in the west. Every day he had grown tired. Every night he had closed his eyes and slept. Every morning he had awakened refreshed and renewed. Surely such thoughts are meaningful to a thinking man.
- We may never know all of the things that Abraham thought about, but we do know that Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead.

Now let us focus on our own faith. What do you believe about the resurrection? In addition to the evidence that God gave Abraham, we now have many historical examples of dead people coming back to life again. The most important example, of course, is that of Jesus Christ. After His death He appeared to many witnesses and gave them convincing proof that He was alive (Acts 1:3). This men proclaimed His resurrection throughout the world and died as “martyrs” because of what they preached. Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, what about you?