

## News & Notes

Sunday, November 8, 2009

**Remember in Prayer:** Mary Baily; Kenneth Campbell; Don Childers; Sue Daniels; Avery Frazer; James Grogan; Twyla Hanisco; Dot Ketchum; Dallas King; John and Deliah Mann; George McLeroy; Carl Perkins; Ann Ray; Curtis Ray; Shirley Rhodes; Katherine Shaw; Johnny Stacks; Becky Strickland; Ruby Tapp; Calvin Ursery; Joan Wilkerson; Alvie Williford;

**Pantry item** for the month of November is deodorant.

All lessons are recorded. If you would like a copy of a lesson in audio CD format or in mp3 format, please see Jeff Roberson.

**Ashland Events:** Today: Ladies Bible class at 4:00 PM in the dining hall.

**Area Events:** December 4: Lectureship at the Charleston congregation;

### Sermon in Preview:

AM: Satan

PM: Hymenaeus and Alexander

### For the Record (November 1, 2009):

Attendance: 76      Contribution: \$1073.00      Budget: \$1459.00

### *The Ashland Church of Christ*

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#### Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 5:00 PM

#### Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

#### Shepherds:

Barney King

Jeff Roberson

Carrol Street

# ASHLAND

## ANNOUNCER

*“Note Those Who So Walk”*

Philippians 3:17

2Thessalonians 3:14

*“Note Those Who So Walk”*

### *Isaac — A Faithful Patriarch*

**Hebrews 11:17-20**

Jeremy Northrop

According to Hebrews 11:17-20, Isaac (among Abraham and Jacob) is recorded to be one of the heroes of faith. Hebrews 11:1 describes faith: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Genuine biblical faith is not some blind abstract idea or feeling but rather a faith of reason based on the evidence available. Isaac is recorded to have had genuine biblical faith. The text under consideration says:

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.”

While the immediate context considers the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, there are some things stated directly and implied in the text which will serve as the focus of this article. They are things which show specifically the faith Isaac had.

Isaac was the one through whose line God had chosen to

bring Christ into the world. The promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 was going to be kept through Isaac. Though, at the time, Isaac had not yet been born. Abraham had a different idea. According to Genesis 17:18, Abraham wanted God to keep His promise through Ishmael. Yet in the following verses, God promised Sarah would have a son and the promise He made to Abraham would be kept through Isaac. Isaac was the one through whom Jesus Christ would come.

It is interesting, to say the least, that in Genesis 22, God commanded Abraham to offer his only son (through Sarah) Isaac in a sacrifice to Him. Abraham obeyed. This account also shows the faith of Isaac. Josephus and others record Isaac to be 25 years old when this happened. While inspiration does not confirm this, it is certain that Isaac was raised to be faithful to the Lord. He trusted in his father that the Lord would provide (Genesis 22:8).

The fact that Isaac was faithful in his youth is a sure sign to anyone, young and old, today to put God first and be faithful to Him. Paul exhorted Timothy to be faithful when he wrote, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity (I Timothy 4:12)." The writer of Ecclesiastes said, "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, 'I have no pleasure in them'" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Isaac serves as a suitable example in his youth that the young can be faithful.

Isaac's faith is also recorded in Hebrews, "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come" (Hebrews 11:20). While the student of the Bible today understands that God, through His providence, maintained the seed-line through Jacob, Isaac certainly did not have such an understanding when he blessed Jacob. In fact, Genesis 27 records that Isaac was deceived when he blessed Jacob. Jacob and his mother Rebekah conspired against Isaac and Esau so that Jacob would receive the blessing. The point of Hebrews 11:20 is not that Isaac blessed Jacob in faith but that Isaac had faith in God that His plan would work regardless of who received the blessing. Genesis 27 prophesies that Jacob and Esau would be the fathers of nations (a point confirmed in Genesis 25:23). Jacob's descendants became a

great nation. It was through Jacob's descendants that Jesus Christ would come into the world and the promise God made to Abraham in Genesis 22:18 would be fulfilled. Genesis 27:40 also tells of the future of Esau — that he would live by the sword. It also declares that the yoke around his neck would be broken. The promise eventually came to pass in Esau's descendants — the Edomites. It was during the time of Christ that Herod ruled Palestine and the fulfillment of Genesis 27:40 was complete. Isaac blessed his children in faith. He had faith that all would work out according to God's providence.

Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." There are so many challenges which face Christians today. The Christian must have faith that all will work out according to God will. Faith is knowing God's plan will come to pass. James exhorts God's children to think in terms of God's will:

"Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit'; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that'" (James 4:13-15).

Further, Jesus Christ exemplified this type of thinking so many times throughout His life on Earth. In Luke 2:49, He said, "I must be about My Father's business." He made several statements to the effect that he must do the will of God Who sent Him to the Earth (John 4:34; 6:38, 40). Perhaps, the point is most vividly seen in Luke 22:42, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

Christians today need to follow the faith of Christ and of Isaac and believe that God will work things according to His will. Further, while like Isaac, Christians may not always understand how God will do it, but He will complete His will (Romans 8:31).