They Saw Jesus . . . Centuries in Advance!

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After Jesus left them, the two said:

“Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

What did Jesus say to those two disciples?

We want to make some suggestions based on hints in the NT and important passages in the OT.
Abraham Saw My Day

When Jesus’ opponents charged that he was demon-possessed, he responded:

“Our father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.” (John 8:56)

What did Abraham see, and when did he see it?

We suggest he saw it during his lifetime and it was recorded in the Bible.
In Genesis 15, we have an unusual event. Abraham asks God how he may know that God’s promise of his inheriting the land will come true. God has him bring three sacrificial animals and cut them in half. That evening, a smoking firepot & blazing torch pass between the pieces and God repeats the promise.
The Covenant Confirmed

- This peculiar event is in fact a covenant confirming ceremony, common in the ancient Near East.

- We see a sample in Jeremiah 34:18:
  “The men who have violated my covenant and have not fulfilled the terms of the covenant they made before me, I will treat like the calf they cut in two and walked between its pieces.”
But here in Genesis 15, it is God that passes between the pieces, not Abraham. God is saying, “I will die rather than let this covenant fail.” He did! Jesus died on the cross so that God could be just and still keep his promises to us sinful humans.
The Sacrifice of Isaac Stopped

In Genesis 22, Abraham is commanded by God to sacrifice his son:

- His only son
- The son whom he loves

He is just about to do so when an angel stops him.

A substitute is sacrificed instead.
The Sacrifice of Isaac Stopped

- This incident ends with an unusual statement in Genesis 22:14:
  “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.’”

- Jesus was crucified as a substitute on that very mountain!
David Saw His Crucifixion

Why did Jesus cry out from the cross:
“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”

He was quoting Psalm 22; it tells of one who is:
- Abandoned by God
- Surrounded by enemies
- Hands and feet pierced
- Clothes gambled away
- Thirsty
- Bones out of joint
- Laid in the dust of death
Why Have You Abandoned Me?

- The psalm goes on to note that God does answer him and rescue him.
- The events will be remembered all over the world and down thru the generations.
- This is just what happened in the crucifixion & resurrection of Jesus!
Isaiah Saw His Glory

- In John 12:41, the evangelist tells us:
  “Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus’ glory and spoke about him.”
- Where does Isaiah do this?
- We have time here for two passages only.
In Isaiah 49, the prophet gives us the speech of God’s servant:

- Called before his birth
- God’s secret weapon, his special arrow
- Though called Israel, he will rescue Israel
- He will be a light to the Gentiles, to bring God’s salvation to the ends of the earth.
- Though despised by the nation, even rulers will bow to him.
A Light to the Gentiles

* This perfectly fits Jesus!
  - He is the only person claiming to be Israel’s Messiah who has founded a world religion of Gentiles!
  - He has been despised by his own nation!
  - Even rulers have bowed down to him.
The Suffering Servant

In Isaiah 53, we have the most famous prophecy of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

God’s servant:
- Rejected by humans
- Despised by Israel
- Dies for their sins
- Is raised to life again
- Is exalted by God
Putting It All Together

- Abraham saw his day
  - God’s promise to die rather than let the covenant fail
  - God’s substitute, the lamb provided
- David saw him
  - Forsaken by God, mocked by men
  - Yet later delivered, good news for the world
- Isaiah saw his glory:
  - A Light to the Gentiles
  - The Suffering Servant
Our Response

✦ Should not our hearts, too, burn with joy when we realize:
  – Jesus really is the fulfillment of OT prophecy
  – He really is who he claimed to be
  – He really has died for our sins
    • if we are trusting in him
  – He really did rise from the dead!
✦ May God be praised!