

## “THE FORBIDDEN CASTLE”

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I think all of us have felt that moment where we longed to go to a place where we were told we did not belong. This leads me to this week’s adventure book.

### This Week’s Book was 1982 “The Forbidden Castle”

- **Back of the book** - The Cave of Time whirls you back to medieval England. You must solve the riddle that leads to the Forbidden Castle, where riches await - and maybe a way home.
  - Three things I want to focus on in this synopsis... The Cave of Time, the Riddle, and the Forbidden Castle.
- 1) I want us to imagine the Cave of Time, an enclave that tries to transport us back in time to understand a riddle that invites us into this forbidden castle which houses a king and a way home.
    - a. i.e. The Church, Starbucks with a friend who helps us dive in
  - This was such an amazing metaphor to me about how many of us feel about the Bible. Many of us feel it’s the mysterious enigma that we have to solve in order to go to the forbidden castle where the King and Home is.

### Even the Bible admits this at points:

*Romans 11:33-36 “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?”<sup>35</sup> “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.”*

- So how can we even approach the Bible?
- My goal for today is to remove some of the mystery of what the Bible is in order to help us understand what the Bible actually is and how it leads us deeper into who God is.

### This is a great launch point to state what the Bible is.

**It’s actually a library of 66 individual pieces of literature that unify to tell a singular story.**

- We divide it into two parts 39 works in the Hebrew Bible or the OT which all look toward this coming king (or Messiah in Hebrew) who will restore all that went wrong in creation.
- 27 works of the NT which all claim Jesus of Nazareth to be that King who has and continues to restore God’s creation.

The Bible was originally written by

- 40 Different Authors
- In 3 Continents
- In 3 Languages
- Over 1500 years
- Let me tell you how unprecedented this!!!! Most other religious texts are either written or told by one person, or written or told by a ton of people without much of a unified story. If I asked the folks in this room to write a story about a cat...

**And this all culminates into what the Bible Project will state,  
"The Bible is a Unified Story that Leads to Jesus"**

- That's just it, the Bible is a story which culminates in Jesus and ALL that He represents.

**So let's first talk about story, and then let's talk about all that Jesus represents.**

- In Luke, Jesus discusses after the resurrection, Luke 24:27 "27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."
- Jesus basically states here, that the whole story beginning with the books Moses wrote throughout the rest of the story was about HIM! All of it. Was a story leading to and flowing from HIM.
- Tuck the word Scripture there in the back of your head, we will come back to that.
- Let me give you a quick example of what I mean, if you have your Bible, turn to Genesis 22: "1 After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." 3 So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him."
- So this takes place in about 1800 BC, as in 1800 years before Jesus is born. God comes to a guy named Abraham, a father and tells him to sacrifice his PROMISED son after 90 years old without children. Go to MORIAH (2 Chronicles 3:1) "4 On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. 5 Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you." 6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. 7 And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" 8 Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together."
- So this Father places the wood that his son will die on his shoulders as they head up the mountain. Notice Isaac's question! WHERE is the LAMB? Notice Abraham's answer.

*"9 When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.*

*10 Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 12 He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."*

- This story ENDS on a cliffhanger. IT WILL be Provided... As in it had not yet been provided as Moses was writing. They were looking forward to the day that a Father would bring his Son up a mountain in Jerusalem and sacrifice Him 1800 years before it would happen.
- This is one of the many many stories, poems, parables, and promises that point to Jesus and all that He represents.
- Going back to Jesus describing that this whole story leads to Him in Luke 24 "27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."
- Remember that word Scripture, it actually in Greek is "Graphe" which means Writing. As in the story itself is not the only important part, but what is WRITTEN DOWN for them, for us, and for YOU!

**As that written story of Isaac and Abraham points to Jesus and what He will do, it was written down for YOU and for ME**

- Hebrews 11 says, "39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. 40 God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect."
- This means that all the characters in the Bible, and their written stories were not FOR them, but FOR YOU and ME.

### **Conclusion**

- The Bible is a letter of the love of a God who is pursuing us culminating in the person of Jesus. It is the story of How time and time again God pursues you and me. This love is for you and me.
- This book is the letter of God's pursuit of you and all of humanity this is all revealed in a God who would give up everything for you. He would bleed His veins dry for you, and He did just to win you by His love, and ultimately this book is a letter reminding us through story, poetry, parable, and promise of his pursuing love for you.

**Adventure Verse**

1 John 4:16-19 *"God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. 17 This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day—our standing in the world is identical with Christ's. 18 There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life—fear of death, fear of judgment—is one not yet fully formed in love. 19 We, though, are going to love—love and be loved. First we were loved, now we love. He loved us first."*

**MESSAGE APPLICATION QUESTIONS****PONDER**

1. What about the message did I feel...
  - Inspired about?
  - Convicted by?
  - Sadness, grief, or loss about?
  - Curious about?
  - Hopeful for?

**EXPERIENCE**

2. Did anyone have a "Wow!" moment during the message that resonated in you? If so, what was it? (Could be a new scripture/Bible story you've never heard, a profound concept, etc.)

**LEARN**

3. What new/fresh thing did I learn about God? What new/fresh thing did I learn about myself?

**APPLY**

4. How can I challenge myself this week with what I've learned? What might responding well look like?