



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Study 06:

## **SUPREME EXPRESSION OF FAITH** **Hebrews 11:17-19**

Among all the expressions of Abraham's faith, nothing was more remarkable than the offering up of his son, Isaac. It is the most wonderful submission in faith, the most illustrious of all examples of faith. It shows the power of faith that helps a man to perform a very difficult duty so as to obtain a very important blessing.

What a great faith! The depth and great value of Abraham's faith are revealed in his willingness to give back to God everything he had received by faith, including the son of promise. God's demand was a test of Abraham's faith. It was a test of his submission to God, his loyalty to God, his love and affections for God. Who did he really love more: God or Isaac? God's promises to Abraham concerning his "**seed**" centred on Isaac. Ishmael had been cast out and Isaac's posterity alone was to be reckoned to Abraham. Isaac had been given to Abraham after he had waited for a long time. There was no likelihood of his having any more sons through Sarah. Isaac himself had not got any child – not yet married. To offer him up to God looked like cutting off all his hopes. Yet, he was willing to obey God. He knew that God would do whatever was necessary, including raising Isaac from the dead, to keep His covenant. He believed in resurrection from the dead even before God revealed the doctrine.

### **THE TEST OF FAITH**

Hebrews 11:17-18; Genesis 21:10-12; 22:1-4,9-10; James 2:21-23; 1 Peter 1:7; John 6:5-6; Deuteronomy 8:2; 13:1-4; 1 Kings 19:19-21.

This was test, a great test. God had declared unto Abraham that He would establish an everlasting covenant with Isaac and with his seed after him (Genesis 17:9). It was through him that all nations should be blessed (Genesis 17:7) and therefore it must be through him that Christ, according to the flesh, would proceed. Now the accomplishment of those promises depended upon the preservation of Isaac's life. This Isaac, Abraham was called upon to sacrifice unto God. Abraham was to slay, not all his bullocks and herds, not one of his servants, not even Ishmael, but his loving, beloved, faithful son! Abraham was bidden, not to send him away from home but to cut him off out of the land of the living! To obey God and sacrifice Isaac appeared to render all His promises to Abraham null and void, making their fulfilment impossible. A severe trial – a serious trial of faith.

**"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac"**. He had faith in the wisdom, power and faithfulness of God. He closed his eyes to all difficulties, trusting in the power of Him who cannot lie. He consulted not with flesh and blood, not even with Sarah. There was no delay or disputing with God, questioning the apparent discrepancy between the present command and the previous promises. Great faith in a great God passed a great test and obtained great blessings.

## THE TESTIMONY OF FAITH

Hebrews 11:19a; Genesis 22:5-8,13-14; 2 Corinthians 4:13; Romans 4:20,21; Job 19:25-27; Psalm 23:4; Matthew 16:21.

It is faith that causes us to yield to God, to respond to His claims, to answer His call, to obey Him joyfully. Faith carries its possessor through the greatest of trials, singing and testifying of God's goodness and greatness while going through. There is a cheerful submission and joyful obedience to the will of God when we really and fully believe Him. Faith has a mighty influence to support and sustain the soul in time of trial. He who walks by faith, in the light of God's eternal Word, goes on calmly and happily through the mists and fogs of time.

What a testimony Abraham had in the midst of his trial of faith! **“And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you”** (Genesis 22:5). He believed and testified that after the sacrifice, God would raise Isaac up and they would both **“come again”**. What a faith, what a testimony! He was so **“strong in faith”** that he believed God would raise him from the dead. **“Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead”** (Hebrews 11:19). Yes, our God is able. That is the testimony of faith (Hebrews 7:25; 2:18; Romans 11:23; 14:4; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Matthew 3:9; 2 Chronicles 25:9; Daniel 3:17; Romans 4:21; 2 Timothy 1:12; Ephesians 3:20; Jude 24; Philippians 3:21).

## THE TRIUMPH OF FAITH

Hebrews 11:19b; 2 Corinthians 2:14; Genesis 22:11-12,15-18; Daniel 3:16-17,24-28; 6:19-23; Mark 14:27-28; 16:4-7.

Abraham received what he believed; he obtained what he confessed. **“And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering”** (Genesis 22:8). And did God provide? **“And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram... and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering”** (Genesis 22:13). The outcome of the whole test of faith was a wonderful triumph of faith. No regrets, no disappointment. There was divine intervention in the nick of time - promptly. Trusting firmly in the Lord brought God's all-sufficient power to act on his behalf. He got his beloved Isaac back again. God returns again to us what we offer to Him. Hannah gave up Samuel to the Lord, and she had many more children in return (1 Samuel 2:20-21). Abraham also obtained a fuller revelation of God's name: he now knew Him as **“Jehovah-Jireh”** (Genesis 22:14). And God confirmed His covenant with him again (Genesis 22:16-17). The quickest road to triumph and full assurance is complete obedience in total trust in God.

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