

7-9-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-6

Purpose: Provoke people to imitate the faith of Abraham when our faith is tested.

Truth for Today: Our faith in God will be tested; if we faithfully endure the test, we will receive God's promised blessing.

Text: Hebrews 11:17-10, Genesis 22

Topic: Faith, Abraham, Test, Obedience

Series Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives

Series purpose: Provoke people to have faith in God that is aligned with His will so we can obediently endure difficulty and receive what He promises in His timing.

Series Truth for Today: Faith that endures becomes faith that receives God's promise.

## Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-6

### I. Introduction

A. Review: Series: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, a vs. by vs. walk through Heb. 11.

B. Last week we talked about the faith of Abraham and Sarah. they taught us 5 Life App's.: #1: Genuine faith is always linked to obedience. #2: Sometimes it's not clear where our faithful obedience will lead us. #3: Faith, anchored in a promise from God opens the door to miracles. # 4: People can be still living by faith when they die, even if they do not receive the things promised. #5: Earth is not our home; we are to be like vs. 13, foreigners and nomads here on earth.

C. Today we'll continue talking about Abraham and focus on how he responded when his faith was tested.

D. Title: Faith Endures; Faith Receives, pt-6

### II. Abraham's faith was tested; ours will be, too.

A. [Heb 11:17 It was **by faith** that **Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice** when **God was testing him**. Abraham, who had received **God's promises**, was ready to sacrifice his **only son**, Isaac, <sup>18</sup> **even though God had told him, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted."** <sup>19</sup> **Abraham reasoned (NCV believed) that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again...**] Abraham's obedience proved his faith was real.

B. Def. faith, [Heb. 11:1 (NLT) Faith shows the **reality** of what we hope for; it is the **evidence** of things we cannot see...] Faith is proof to convince us that unseen hopes will become reality if we believe and act on God's

promise.<sup>1</sup> Faith/ believing/ trusting is how we connect to God. Pic link in the chain. [2 Cor. 5:7 (NCV) **We live by what we believe, not by what we can see.**]

1. Life App #1: Keep following the Lord; keep believing in Him even when life doesn't make sense.

### III. Abraham's ultimate test of his faith in God and His promise

A. Ge. 22:1 (NLT)...**God tested Abraham's faith.** (*ESV God tested Abraham*) "Abraham!" God called. "Yes,"... "Here I am."<sup>3</sup> **"Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering** on one of the mountains, which I will show you." Pic altar

1. God never intended him to sacrifice his son; child sacrifice was a pagan practice. God's request was a test of faith to see if he would obey when doing God's will was hard.
2. Def. spiritual test: To face a trial or difficult decision to prove if we really believe what God said.<sup>2</sup> Just like a test reveals what a student knows about a subject, a spiritual test reveals if our faith is a thought in our head or will we do what God asks. Our action or lack thereof reveals if we really believe God. E.g., lie or tell the truth, sexually promiscuous or pure, prayer life, read and obey God's word...
3. Life App #2: Our faith will also be tested by trials, difficulties and our own desires

B. This was not the 1<sup>st</sup> test. Abraham failed prior tests when his faith was not strong.

1. [Genesis 16:1–2 (NLT) Now Sarai... had not been able to bear children... But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar.<sup>2</sup> So Sarai said to Abram, "The Lord has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. **Perhaps** I can have children through her."]  
Ishmael was a disaster. Muslims believe he was a prophet and ancestor to Muhammad. [Genesis 17:15–17 (NLT) Then God said to Abraham, "Regarding Sarai... she will become the mother of many nations..."<sup>17</sup> Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, but **he laughed to himself in disbelief.** "How could I become a father at the age of 100?]

2. Life App #3: Even strong Christians struggle with doubt about God and His Word

C. [Vs 3 **The next morning Abraham got up early**... and took two of his servants... along with his son, Isaac...<sup>5</sup> "Stay here with the donkey,"

Abraham told the servants. “The boy and I will travel a little farther. **We will worship there, and then we will come right back.**”] Def. worship: to bow down and offer a sacrifice to God.<sup>4</sup>; to surrender our desire to God’s will.

1. Abraham’s response was staggering—he gave instant, unquestioning obedience. But how would they come back if he sacrificed Isaac? [Heb. 11:19 (NCV) Abraham believed that God could raise the dead...] All Abraham knew was that (a) God planned the future around Isaac, and (b) God wanted him to sacrifice Isaac. He could not reconcile the two, but he would obey anyway. That’s faith.<sup>3</sup>

2. Life App #4: Faith has a language. Faith sees before events happen. Faith speaks before it sees. “*We will worship there, and then we will come right back.*” Jesus and the cursed fig tree, [Mk 11:21–23 (ESV)..Jesus answered them, “Have **faith** in God.<sup>23</sup> ...whoever **says to this mountain**, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not **doubt** in his heart, but **believes that what he says will come to pass**, it will be done for him.

D. [Vs. 6 So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac’s shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife...Pic wood<sup>7</sup> Isaac turned to Abraham and said...“We have the fire and the wood,” the boy said, “but **where is the sheep for the burnt offering?**”<sup>8</sup> “**God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering**, my son,”<sup>9</sup>...Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood.] And Isaac didn’t run away or resist.

1. Life App #5: Faith acts and speaks trusting God to do what we can’t.

*God will provide* a sheep as he placed Isaac on the altar. This is how a man of faith acts.

2. Isaac was a type/ picture of Christ who willingly submitted to the cross.

E. [Pic knife Vs. 10 And **Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice.**<sup>11</sup> **At that moment the angel of the Lord** called to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!”...<sup>12</sup> “Don’t lay a hand on the boy!”...“Do not hurt him...for **now I know that you truly fear God**. You have not withheld from **me** even your son, your only son.”] The angel of the Lord describes a manifestation of God as if God appeared in a relatable human form.<sup>4</sup> (Me vs. 12)

1. To *fear God* means to reverence Him as sovereign, trust Him implicitly, and obey Him without question.<sup>3</sup>

2. *Now I know* doesn't mean God didn't know what he'd do but that his actions reveal his faith is real. [Ja. 2:18 (NCV)...I will show you my faith by what I do.]
3. Life App #6: We show our faith in Jesus is real by loving and honoring our spouse, telling people about Jesus, getting baptized in water, stop sinning, giving tithes and offerings, loving our enemies, etc.
4. Life App #7: Nothing or no one can be more important than God to us. Jesus [Lk 14:26 (NCV) "If anyone comes to me but loves his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, or sisters—or even life—**more than me**, he cannot be my follower.]
5. Life App #8: God is never late, rarely early but always on time.

IV. [Vs. 13 Then Abraham looked up and saw **a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son.** <sup>14</sup> Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means "**the Lord will provide**")...] Pic ram

A. Life App #9: Faith opened the door to God's supernatural intervention. God acts in response to faith throughout the Bible: The red Sea opened for Moses, the walls of Jericho fell down for Joshua, a baby was born to the virgin Mary, an angel let Peter out of prison, an earthquake opened prison doors for Paul, etc.

## V. Conclusion

A. [Vs 15 Then the angel of the Lord called again to Abraham from heaven. <sup>16</sup> "This is what the Lord says: **Because you have obeyed me** and have not withheld even your son...I swear...that <sup>17</sup> I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, **like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore...**<sup>18</sup> **And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.**"

1. Life App #10: Faithful obedience releases God's blessing. It happened to Abraham, and it can happen for us.

## VI. Response

- A. Prayer
- B. Souls

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Hodges, Z. C. (1985). [Hebrews](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 808). Victor Books.

2. Theological Workbook of the OT, 1373
3. Ross, A. P. (1985). [Genesis](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 64). Victor Books.
4. Reyburn, W. D., & Fry, E. M. (1998). [A handbook on Genesis](#) (p. 355, 490). United Bible Societies.

## VIII. Supplemental material

A. Romans 4:16–25 (NLT) ...For **Abraham is the father of all who believe.**

<sup>17</sup> That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, **“I have made you the father of many nations.” This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.** <sup>18</sup> Even when there was **no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, “That’s how many descendants you will have!”** <sup>19</sup> And **Abraham’s faith did not weaken**, even though, at about **100 years of age**, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah’s womb. <sup>20</sup> **Abraham never wavered in believing God’s promise.** In fact, **his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.** <sup>21</sup> **He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises.** <sup>22</sup> And **because of Abraham’s faith, God counted him as righteous.** <sup>23</sup> And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn’t just for Abraham’s benefit. **It was recorded** <sup>24</sup> **for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.** <sup>25</sup> He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.

B. As a test it was designed to prove faith. And for it to be a real test, it had to defy logic; it had to be something Abraham wanted to resist.<sup>3</sup>

C. This was a test of how much Abraham would obey God’s word. Would he cling to the boy now that he had him, or would he still obey and return him to the Lord? In other words how far would Abraham go in obedience? Did he really believe that God would still keep His word and raise the seed of promise?<sup>3</sup>

D. Background: promise of a son Isaac at 75, he was born 100, now maybe 16+/- Summary of Abraham’s life: He was called by God at 75, (his wife, Sarai, was 65) to have a son, Isaac, who would give birth to the Jewish people and establish their homeland. It was 25 years before God’s promise was fulfilled. His faith was tested as he faced the test of time, but he

became the example to the world of the role of faith in receiving God's promises and His righteousness. His faith was tested along the way.

- E. Genesis 18:9-15 (NLT) <sup>9</sup> “Where is Sarah, your wife?” the visitors asked. “She’s inside the tent,” Abraham replied. <sup>10</sup> Then one of them said, “I will return to you about this time next year, and your wife, Sarah, will have a son!” Sarah was listening to this conversation from the tent. <sup>11</sup> Abraham and Sarah were both very old by this time, and Sarah was long past the age of having children. <sup>12</sup> So she laughed silently to herself and said, “How could a worn-out woman like me enjoy such pleasure, especially when my master—my husband—is also so old?” <sup>13</sup> Then the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh? Why did she say, ‘Can an old woman like me have a baby?’ <sup>14</sup> Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.” <sup>15</sup> Sarah was afraid, so she denied it, saying, “I didn’t laugh.” But the Lord said, “No, you did laugh.”
- F. He even got an early start! However, the three-day journey (v. 4) was probably silent and difficult. The distance from Beersheba to Mount Moriah was about 50 miles<sup>3</sup>
- G. And worship: the Hebrew word means to “bow down.” The verb is sometimes used in the literal sense of bowing down before a superior; for example, see Gen 43:28. However, when God is the object (whether this is stated or not) the sense is to “praise,” “pray to,” “worship.” In this context it is to make a sacrifice, and we may translate “and offer a sacrifice to God.”<sup>4</sup>
- H. It has the sense of God’s presence being shown to someone; that is, it describes a manifestation of God. People see the visible presence of God in this manner, because seeing God himself was believed to result in the death of the one seeing. The Lord appears also in Genesis 18; Judges 13, Luke 1 to announce the birth of a child. In each case the formula follows much the same pattern as here. In verse 13 **the Lord** replaces the expression **the angel of the Lord**, giving the understanding that the two expressions mean the same in this passage, that is, an appearance or manifestation of God to a person. As von Rad says, “The one who speaks, now Yahweh, now the messenger . . ., is obviously one and the same person. The angel of the Lord is therefore a form in which Yahweh appears. He is God himself in human form<sup>4</sup>