

Another Proper Response to God's Promises

by Bob Hoekstra

Abraham's faith in God's promises is a model for us to trust in God's ability to fulfill His promises, even when it seems impossible.

Scripture: Genesis 16:3, Genesis 17:17, Genesis 21:1, Romans 4:20, Hebrews 11:17

Topics: "Faith And Obedience", "Gods Promises"

Description

Bob Hoekstra delves into the story of Abraham and Isaac, highlighting Abraham's unwavering faith and obedience in offering up his only son, Isaac, as a sacrifice, trusting in God's ability to raise him from the dead. Despite initial stumbling and doubts, Abraham and Sarah eventually received the promised son, Isaac, through God's faithfulness. The ultimate test came when God required Isaac to be placed on the altar, symbolizing the surrender of the promised son back to God, showcasing Abraham's remarkable faith in God's power of resurrection.

Transcript

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. (Hebrews 11:17-19)

As demonstrated in our previous meditation, Sarah eventually responded properly to God's promise of a son (to be given in her old age). "By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised" (Hebrews 11:11). In our present verses, Abraham represents another proper response to God's promises.

The setting was, undoubtedly, the greatest testing of Abraham's spiritual pilgrimage. God had made great promises to Abraham. They included a land, a great nation, a great King (the Messiah), and blessings available to all nations (salvation through the Messiah). In order to have these promises fulfilled, Abraham would have to receive the promised son. Like Sarah, Abraham stumbled somewhat along the way. He cooperated with Sarah in fleshly scheming to bring the promised son through their servant maid. "Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram . . . So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived" (Genesis 16:3-4). Also, like Sarah, he later laughed in unbelief. "Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, 'Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?' " (Genesis 17:17).

Nevertheless, God proved faithful and gave them Isaac. "And the LORD visited Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had spoken. For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age. . . And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him . . . Isaac" (Genesis 21:1-3).

Finally, after many years of waiting, the promised, necessary son had arrived. Yet, the Lord required that Isaac be placed upon the altar of God. This was the only son that could fulfill the promises: "his only begotten son, of whom it was said, 'In Isaac your seed shall be called'. " Isaac must now be given back to God. By faith, Abraham did the impossible, placing his son on the altar. The ability of God was the truth upon which this act of faith depended: "accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense."

Lord God of resurrection, concerning the Isaac's in my life that You want upon the altar of Your will and Your timing, please help me to focus on Your ability to resurrect that which seems to be dead or dying, in Jesus name, Amen.

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