

# LORD, INCREASE OUR FAITH

## Sermon Seven – “The Testing Of Your Faith”

Text: Hebrews 11:17-19; Genesis 22

**INTRODUCTION:** Abraham was called to faithfulness. Let’s observe Abraham’s call to faithfulness. There are principles in it for us to learn.

### I. THE ORDER TO FAITHFULNESS (Genesis 22:1-2)

#### A. Trials from God test and seek to reveal a man’s moral qualities or character to Him.

1. God already knows these things (I Samuel 16:7).
2. They aim at the man’s good, making him conscious of his true character.

#### B. The word “temptation” (*peirasmos*) can also mean solicitation to do evil.

1. It is a deception that leads to destruction.
2. Satan sends temptations.
  - a. He seeks to get us to act independently of God’s will.
  - b. Satan’s temptations are solicitations to do wrong.
  - c. His temptations deceive that they may destroy.
  - d. It leads man into sin (James 1:13-15).

#### C. God sends trials so that a man learns what his strengths and weaknesses are.

1. When we respond properly to a trial we learn to ask God for His wisdom to strengthen our weaknesses and to effectively use our strengths.
2. The result is spiritual growth and maturity in the form of patience, endurance or perseverance.
3. James 1:4 *“But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”*

#### D. We have to learn to distinguish between trials and temptations.

1. The Lord God Almighty tests us to bring out the best in us.
2. Satan tempts us to bring out the worst in us.

#### E. All believers are going to face trials.

1. I Peter 1:7 *“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:”*
2. I Peter 4:12 *“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:”*

F. God's trials for us are especially and uniquely designed by God for us (I Corinthians 10:13).

## II. THE OBEDIENCE IN FAITHFULNESS (Genesis 22:3-8)

A. Abraham's trial was designed for him.

B. When God sends us a test, it shows that God wants to use us more fully, but we have to be tested before He can use us.

C. Temptations seem logical while trials seem very unreasonable.

1. Why would God give Abraham a son and then ask Abraham to kill him? How unreasonable!
2. Isaac was the miracle child, the gift of God to Abraham and Sarah in response to their faith.
3. When God asked Abraham to offer his son, He was testing Abraham's faith. It looked like God was wiping out everything that He had promised them.
  - a. Abraham heard God's Word and immediately obeyed by faith (vs. 3).
  - b. Abraham believed God.
    - i. Genesis 21:12 *"In Isaac shall thy seed be called."*
    - ii. Hebrews 11:17-19

D. Faith does not depend on or demand explanations; faith rests upon God's promises and God's faithfulness.

1. It has been said: Abraham believed God and obeyed Him when he did not know *where* (Hebrews 11:8), when he did not know *when* (Hebrews 11:9-10, 13-16), when he did not know *how* (Hebrews 11:11-12), and when he did not know *why* (Hebrews 11:17-19).
2. Song: "Follow On" page 296.

## III. THE OPERATION OF FAITHFULNESS (Genesis 22:9-13)

A. Abraham and Isaac went where God told him.

1. *"And they came to the place which God had told him of . . ."* (vs. 9).
2. We want to know God's will, but we won't go where He tells us to go.

B. Everything was done according to God's order (vs. 9).

1. They came to the place.
2. They built an altar.
3. They laid the wood in order.
4. Abraham bound and laid Isaac on the altar.

**C. Abraham took up the knife to slay his only son (vs. 10).**

1. The angel of the Lord called out and prevented Abraham from slaying Isaac (vs. 11-12).
2. God provided a ram which became a substitute and a sacrifice for Isaac.
3. *"In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."* (vs. 14—This statement helps us understand some truths about God's provision).
  - a. God provides our needs in the place of His assignment (vs. 4, 9).
  - b. God provides our needs at the exact time of the need.
  - c. God provides for us in ways that are usually quite natural.
    - i. He allowed one ram to get caught in a bush where Abraham was.
    - ii. He did not send an angel with a sacrifice.
  - d. God provides for those who trust Him and obey His instructions.
  - e. God provides our needs for His glory (Philippians 4:19, 20).

**D. This event is a typology or picture of God the Father and Jesus Christ at the Cross:**

1. The Father and Son acted together (*"...they went both of them together* (vs. 6, 8). God loved sinners \*John 3:16), and Christ loved those for whom He died (I John 3:16).
2. The Son had to die (Isaac had a substitute, but nobody could take the place of Jesus Christ on the Cross).
  - a. Where is the Lamb (vs. 7)?
  - b. John the Baptist answered that question in John 1:29—*"Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."*
3. The Son bore the burden of sin.
  - a. Wood is mentioned five times (vs. 3, 6, 7, 8, 9).
  - b. The wood was laid upon Isaac (vs. 6) like our sins were laid upon Jesus Christ (Isaiah 53:6).
4. The Son was raised from the dead.
  - a. In a figurative sense Isaac died and was raised from the dead.
  - b. Hebrews 11:19.

**IV. THE OUTCOME OF FAITHFULNESS (Genesis 22:14-18; Hebrews 6:12-15; 10:36)**

**A. Abraham received the blessings of God because of his obedient faith and faithfulness.**

**B. There was a New Approval.**

1. God commended Abraham for his faithfulness (Genesis 22:12).
2. Will God commend you as being faithful (Matthew 25:21, 23)?

**C. There was a New Assurance.**

1. God reassured Abraham of His promises.
2. Genesis 12:1-3; 15:4-6; 17:1-9; 22:18

**D. There was a New Awareness.**

1. God revealed a new name to Abraham.
2. *Jehovah-Jireh* means "God will provide; or God will see to it."

**CONCLUSION:** Can your faith be trusted? Has it been tested? Abraham's faith was tried. He passed the test! Will you? By faith, Abraham, when he was tried, passed the test.