

## Abraham: The Test of Faith

Hebrews 11:17-19

### Introduction

*Faith is acting like God is telling the truth. As we attempt to walk in faith however, there will be times when we face situations of great contradiction – times when God simply does not make sense. God will try our faith by giving us tests. He will give us a major exam when He wants to know if our faith in Him is real and when He wants us to have an experience with Him. That major test will often come in the midst of a contradiction – a situation in life where His promises don't line up with our reality.*

*God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac his son. However this request was a total contradiction to the promise that God had made to Abraham. How was Abraham supposed to sacrifice his son and still realize the great nation through Isaac, which God had spoken of? God was testing Abraham and that test involved what appeared to be an illogical request in light of God's covenantal promise, and indeed, God's very nature.*

*Abraham decided to trust God despite the contradiction. While he didn't know exactly how God was going to keep His promise, and still require a sacrifice, he decided to trust that God was capable of coming through on his behalf. Faith demands that you view things from God's perspective, especially during periods of testing. Like Abraham, we can trust that God's got it. We can choose to focus on God instead of our circumstances and offer Him our worship despite how difficult things may seem.*

*If we are steadfast, the test of faith will result in a supernatural provision. God did not show Abraham the solution to his problem, the ram in the bush, until Abraham had completed his act of obedience. Abraham did not hear from God until the knife was poised in the air, ready to slay Isaac his only son. We cannot be satisfied to obey in part; we must be committed to going all the way in order to experience God's full purpose and provision. It is through our faithfulness and our obedience that we will enter into a greater experience with God.*

### Getting Started

1. Can you think of other contradictions from the Bible? What other people in the Scriptures experienced a gap between God's promise and their circumstances?
2. Read Hebrews 6:13-18. This passage talks about God's promise to Abraham. What characterized Abraham during his time of waiting? What typically characterizes *you* during your time of waiting on God?
3. From that same passage, discuss what we can know about God's nature. How does this give you confidence?

### Let's Get Personal

1. Are you in the middle of a test? Are you facing an apparent contradiction in your life? Share with your group.
2. "Faith demands that you view things from God's perspective, especially during periods of testing." What does that mean to you?
3. The result of failing a test is that you will be called upon to take the test again. Has this ever happened to you in your walk with God? Share with your group.

### Take the Next Step

1. Read James 2:14-18. According to this passage, it is not good if someone claims to have faith but has no corresponding deeds. What can you do this week to "lift your knife"? How can you take action and move towards obedience?
2. How easy or difficult is it for you to "focus on God instead of (your) circumstances and offer Him (your) worship" in difficult times? What will you do this week to actively focus on God and offer Him your worship?

### Renew Your Mind

***"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen..." Hebrews 11:1***

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