



Saturday, September 8, 2018

09 The Test of Faith: Editor's Notes (The Everlasting Covenant)

Theme Text from the article by E. J. Waggoner's [The Everlasting Covenant: 09 The Test of Faith](#), from [The Present Truth](#), July 2, 1896:

So "it came to pass after these things, that God did prove Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Genesis 22:1, 2.

Editor's Notes by John Foll:

This is such an amazing story, when God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son on a mountain in the land of Moriah! From a human standpoint, Abraham was asked to sacrifice his own eternal life! Or 'to put a knife to his own throat,' as Waggoner put it! ***Would he continue to believe God's promise, that he would personally have a possession in the land of Canaan, which could only happen for him through the * Resurrection, and that from one born to him would all the nations of the world be blessed? Or would he lose his faith in God's promise? This was the test!***

* We will post an article soon on this called: "[Abraham's Promised Possession Could Only Come Through the Resurrection](#)". E. J. Waggoner already covered the fact that Abraham was asked to sacrifice his own eternal life, and that Abraham could only gain the promised inheritance through the resurrection, but we want to go through it again and 'make it plain' in a separate article.
<https://whiteraimentevangelismfaith.blogspot.com/2018/09/abrahams-promised-possession-could-only-come-through-resurrection.html>

How many people are willing to go through the test of faith like Abraham went through? Without faith it is only natural to question how God could save the world through Jesus, if Jesus had to be born through Isaac, the child of the Promise, but then Isaac was slain! How could this even be possible? But this is not the path of faith!

How many are really willing to do whatever God asks, regardless of the cost to themselves? This was the strongest test that any human being has ever been asked to do by God, which was put on Abraham, but thank God he passed the test for all of humanity! **Did you know that what Abraham did here was for all of humanity?** Abraham was a type of 'Christ' here or a type of the 'Father.' **What would have happened to God's promise to save the world through the offspring of Abraham, if Abraham had failed?** God would have still found a way to keep His promise, but Abraham would have lost out, and it would have brought dishonor upon God. John the Baptist said, 'God is able to raise up children of Abraham from these stones.' Matthew 3:1-2, 9; Luke 3:2-3, 8. Another words, God can raise up someone faithful to Him from the very rocks if needed, like Abraham. How God would have kept His promise to Abraham, if Abraham had failed, we cannot tell. **Would Abraham believe that God is love, pure, just and holy? Would he believe God's promise to him of eternal life, through the offspring of his son Isaac, if he obeyed God's command to sacrifice his son?** But by faith Abraham did not fail! Yes he did believe! **WOW! That is faith!** Thankfully Abraham passed the test! This is why he is called the father of the faithful or the father of them that believe. Romans 4:11-16.

Abraham passing this test shows everyone that God does indeed keep His promises, and that He will save all to the uttermost who put their trust in Him for salvation! What God did for Abraham He can do for you too, and for everyone else who puts their full trust in His mighty power and promises to save! **The blessing of Abraham passing this test has been passed down to mankind, through God being able to keep His promise directly and literally to Abraham, that through his offspring (of Isaac) all nations of the world would be blessed.** Genesis 22:15-18. Does this really matter? You bet it does! This was when God sent His only Son Jesus to this world to die on the cross for our sins (John 3:16, 17), and when Jesus showed us how to live, have peace, and be full of love and joy and have eternal life! The result is an object lesson in faith, and that Abraham trusted God enough to be willing to sacrifice his own eternal life to obey God! Wow! **Do you see now why it was so important for Abraham to pass this test? It was so Jesus could be born through the offspring of Isaac and die on the cross for our sins!** **What is the big deal about Him being born through Isaac? It is because God promised it to Abraham! So what is the big deal about whether God kept His promise to Abraham or not, for us today? You had better believe it was a big deal!** In this world of evil and shades of grey in between good and evil, great hypocrisy and lies, it is a most wonderful thing to have someone to believe in who is perfect in love and purity, who always keeps His promises. **So where would we be now if Jesus had not been born and died for our sins?** Where would we be now if we couldn't trust God to keep His promises?

Isn't Abraham's struggle in passing the test of faith similar to what Jesus went through? Jesus had a great struggle too in the Garden of Gethsemane over the fate of all sinners. It tested His resolve to save humanity, and the fate of the entire world hung in the balance! **What if His sacrifice hadn't been accepted by the Father? What if He had sinned even once?** Perhaps these were some of the thoughts that Jesus struggled with before and after He came to this earth as a babe, grew up, was baptized and went through that great struggle in the garden and won it, and went through with His great sacrifice to save us, praise God! This in some ways was like Abraham's struggle to sacrifice his son, only much more severe! Matthew 26:36-46; Luke 22:44-46. **Jesus sweat great drops of blood during His great struggle in the garden of Gethsemane!**

At the beginning of the world Jesus was asked by the Father to sacrifice His life for the sins of the world, which was like asking Him to sacrifice His own eternal life, because He could have failed in His mission when He was asked to die! Revelation 13:8; John 3:16, 17; Ephesians 1:3-4. **Jesus was tried and tempted in all points like we are, yet without sin.** Hebrews 4:15. *He could not have been tried and tempted in all points like we are without sin, if there was no possibility of His failure. Think on that!* **The Father asking Jesus to die on the cross for our sins was like Abraham telling his son that he was the sacrifice, and putting him on the altar and getting ready to slay him.** Isaac could have easily overpowered Abraham, who was quite old when this story took place! **So Isaac cooperated with his father to be the sacrifice, like Jesus did when he cooperated with His Father to be the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world! Beautiful parallel!** Jesus had eternal life and power within Himself, and could have changed His mind, and backed out of His Father's plan to save the world if He had wanted to. **But like Isaac he cooperated with His Father to be the sacrifice! He could have called 10,000 angels or 1 Trillion angels to save Himself from the cross, and could have easily slain all of His accusers and those who nailed Him to the cross. He had the power to do this! But He did not, because He loves you and me!**

He could not have saved you and me, if He had saved Himself. The priests and rulers said, 'He saved others, but He cannot save Himself.' "Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, **He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.**" Matthew 27:41-43 KJV. **Little did they realize the truth behind their mocking statement! - He wasn't trying to save Himself, but all of mankind! There was no way to save Himself from the death on the cross, and save us too!** Oh how most of us, if we had been in this position and had the power He had, would have really given it to our accusers and to the ones torturing us, and would have let them have it and destroyed them all! But thankfully Jesus was not like us! **What Jesus did, especially after all of those unholy taunts that were hurled at Him, showed His infinite love and pity for us!** The test for Jesus to get revenge on His torturers and abusers would have been very great, considering His Godly power and ability of issuing payback and punishment! This was Satan's goal in all the abuse that was heaped upon heap upon Jesus.

It has been said that Jesus died 'the second death' of unrepentant sinners, to pay the price for our sins, for Him who knew no sin! He died as someone who will die who is lost, without hope. We deserve to die as a lost sinner without hope, but Jesus took our place so we don't have to, if we believe in Him. **He died the death that we deserve, in our place, just like the ram that God gave to Abraham to die in the place of his son Isaac too! Beautiful parallel!**

From a human standpoint, all hope was cut off for Jesus when He died, and so His disciples and the world thought. But Jesus had to lose His life in order for God to keep His promise to Abraham! He had thought He was cut off from His Father when He was dying on the cross and said, '*My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken Me?*' Matthew 27:46 KJV. From a human standpoint, all hope was apparently cut off to Abraham too, by God's request that he sacrifice his son Isaac! Abraham was probably tempted with the thought that if he sacrificed Isaac's life and God didn't resurrect him back to life, then he would lose his son and the promise of eternal life for himself, and for everyone else in the world! Think about that!

Abraham had to have great faith to do what God had asked him to do. Abraham had to believe the promise of God, against the command of God! Wow! God's command seemed contrary to His promise. If he had taken his own son's life that would have been murder, which is sin! **Wow! What a test! Jesus could not save the Jews from the hated Roman government rule if He died.** This was what the Jewish nation was expecting from the Messiah. But He did die. **From a human standpoint at the time of His death, He had failed in His mission, but from God's promise and plan He had succeeded! His goal at this time was the salvation of the whole world from sin, suffering and death – for all who would believe, not saving the Jews from the Roman rule!** So the hopes of those who hoped in Jesus died when He died, or so they thought. But it was only through His death and resurrection that He is able to forgive our sins and impart eternal life to us! **It was only through His death that God was able to keep His promise to Abraham!**

“And Jesus answered them, saying, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.’” John 12:23-25 NASB. This was not only what Jesus taught His disciples to do, it is also what He did Himself! He lost His life for our sake, and gained His own life back again and thus helped us gain eternal life too! Don't you love Him? He had to trust in the Resurrection, just like Abraham did and we do. But He is the Resurrection and the Life! John 11:25; 10:17-18. **From a human standpoint, it was foolishness for Christ to die on the cross for our sins!** “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:18 KJV. **But thank God, Jesus did just that – dying on the cross for our sins! Otherwise we would have no hope.** So Jesus went through a very great struggle to save humanity, and won it for our sakes! Amen.

So now we see more clearly why Abraham had his big test of faith, where God asked him to sacrifice his only son. It was a type of what God and Jesus went through, when Jesus agreed to die on the cross for our sins, all the way until His death on the cross! Note what Abraham told Isaac, when Isaac asked him where the lamb for the sacrifice was: he said, ‘God will provide.’ Genesis 22:7-8. And that is exactly what God did! Genesis 22:10-13. *God provided!* What faith this was! **God did provide, not just the ram caught in the thicket to die in the place of Abraham's only begotten son Isaac, but He also provided His only begotten son Jesus too, as ‘the lamb of God’, to die in the place of every believing sinner in the world, including Abraham and Isaac too!** Praise His name forever! Amen!

May the grace of God, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all! Amen.

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