

Faith and Deeds Part 2

“20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” (James 2:20-24 KJV)

Let us continue in this message speaking about the works of Abraham that accompanied his faith in God. Abraham saw Christ, met Him and he was glad; and this also what Jesus said, ***“56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.” (John 8:56 KJV)***

“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.” Christ might meant that Abraham desired to see the days of the Messiah when He will come to the earth as many kings, prophets or righteous men desired to see the days of the Messiah as we read here: ***“For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.” (Luke 10:24 KJV)*** Or possibly what Christ meant here that Abraham saw His days through the eyes of faith, or he saw the promise of God by faith, that in his seed, that is Christ, that all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

Not only that but indeed Abram met the Messiah, the second person, the promised Messiah in a human form, as we read in *Genesis 18*, ***“2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, 3 And said, My LORD, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:” (Genesis 18:2-3 KJV)*** and all this was matter of joy and gladness to him.

Now comparing ourselves with the life of Abraham and his works that expressed his faith, do we appreciate that Christ had revealed Himself to us? If our answer is ‘Yes’, then such it should be translated into actions and works that go along our faith in Christ as Abraham did.

**** Coming to Christ and having faith in Christ is accompanied by the new plan of God in our lives. * Also in Christ we are new creation, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17 KJV) * Our attitude and characters will be changed with the Word of God and our obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit.***

Let us read *Genesis 13* and continue to see the works that Abram did.

“1 And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. 2 And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. 3 And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; 4 Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD. 5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. 6 And the land was not able to bear them, that

they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. 7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. 8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. 9 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. 10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. 11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. 12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. 13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly. 14 And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. 16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. 17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. 18 Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.” (Genesis 13:1-18 KJV)

God had blessed Abram as we read here, ***“2 And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.” (Genesis 13:2 KJV)*** He blessed him with various material things. ***As you walk with God the blessings of God shall come across your life and will add new things to you.*** Lot who was sojourning along with Abram was also blessed with various material things and got an increase we read here, ***“5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.” (Genesis 13:5 KJV)***

Because of the blessings of God in their lives there was a new condition that had appeared as we read here, ***“6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.” (Genesis 13:6 KJV)*** That was not possible for both of them to dwell together. That can be normal, and they needed bigger place to occupy both of them because the land that they were living was congested with their possessions.

Because of such condition Abram faced a struggle with his nephew Lot, when both of them herdsmen started to quarrel, ***“7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.” (Genesis 13:7 KJV)*** That strife was not a good thing that would happen between the shepherds of both of them especially there were other nations around them who would be watching that and such will be not a good testimony to others about Abram and Lot. **** We need to be a good testimony to others around us especially to the non believers and avoid fighting or quarreling with one another. * Instead we should love another as Jesus instructed us, so others can see God through our lives, “34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” (John 13:34-35 KJV)***

In facing that situation, Abram took the matter seriously and tackled it. He took the initiative and did the good works that God would expect from him to do. ***“8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. 9 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.” (Genesis 13:8-9 KJV)*** Abram did the following good works in his speech with Lot:

1. He went directly, met him and spoke with the person concerned and opened the whole matter to him. ***In the same way if there is a situation similar to such, then you need to do as Abram did; go and speak the matter directly with the person concerned. Don’t speak at his back and don’t speak to others but speak with the person concerned.***

2. He requested that there should be no strife between them and their men. Abram aimed that there shall be no fighting between them and their workers. He had a wholesome mind that there shall be no fight. ***In the same way when such matter happen we need to work out and prepare our minds in action and secure that there should be no fight, because fight will bring more losses on every side.***

3. Abram told Lot, ***“for we be brethren.”*** Even Abram was older in age, and Lot was his nephew, and Abram had took Lot with him when he departed from Haran, but now he humbled himself and called him a brother, equal to him, in order for the strife to be settled and not to increase. ***In the same way we need to humble ourselves in such situations so that the strife will stop, and we need to overlook the grievances that others had done against us. When the believers behave with us as Lot to Abram, we still need to consider them as brothers by letting God deal with them while we do our part to avoid and move away from any strife.***

4. Abram gave the option to Lot to choose. He told him that the land was in front of him to choose. Abraham was willing to face the reality that it was not possible to keep company with Lot, so he gave the option and the command to Lot to separate himself from him as he said to him, ***“9 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.” (Genesis 13:9 KJV)*** He was aware that Lot would not be satisfied to stay with him, so he took the initiative to say that to him. Abram was the one whom God promised to give him the land, and here he offered to Lot to choose what place he wanted to live so that the strife to end up. It was expected from Lot that he will turn it back to Abram to let him choose first the place in the land to live because Abram was the owner, but Lot being the younger failed to do that.

5. Abram practiced faith in God and trusted Him that He will receive the best from God. He requested Lot his nephew to choose what he likes. So Lot chose what he liked, the ***“well watered”*** place as we read here ***“10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD.” (Genesis 13:10 KJV)***, and what was left was for Abram. Even the less favorable land was left to Abram; but that what was left was the best and was far better than what Lot chose and put himself in troubles. ***“12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.” (Genesis 13:12 KJV)***

Abram as man of faith trusted God and he was able to see and welcome the promise of God to him. ***Every time there is struggle or competition between you and others do not be tempted to focus on the common material things between you and others. God can and will give you more and better things than of what was taken away from you.*** We know ultimately Lot had taken the wrong choice, ***“10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. 11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. 13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.” (Genesis 13:10-11, 13 KJV)*** Sodom it looked like the garden of the Lord but we know the destruction that was in it by the kind of the evil men who were in that place, as we read here, ***“13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.” (Genesis 13:13 KJV)*** ***The material things that people are quarrelling on it bring destructions, therefore act and do as Abram did. Forgive those who took advantage of you and behave with you as Lot behaved with Abram; forgetting that Abram who took him with him in his journey to follow God, and now after he is blessed he started to quarrel with the person who was the instrument of God to receive the blessings of God.***

God wants you to open your eyes and see in your mind and believe in your heart what God had promised to you. God said to Abram, ***“14 And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:” (Genesis 13:14 KJV)*** God wants you to lift up your eyes from where you are and look and be able to achieve the following:-

A. Be able to see the magnitude of God’s promise: “15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.” (Genesis 13:15 KJV) The seed of Abraham is Christ and every work we do in the name of Christ will prosper and endure forever.

A. Be able to see the future blessings for your descendants: “16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.” (Genesis 13:16 KJV) Sometime we quarrel about material things because we are worried about what will be left for our children. But rather obey God and He will secure the good future to your children.

C. Take the step of faith to go forward and experience God’s promise: “17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.” (Genesis 13:17 KJV) Do not allow pain and suffering and bad experiences with unfaithful people hinders you from moving forward to receive and achieve what God promised to you and to the faithful people who are with you and who delight to remain and walk in the truth of God.

D. Respond to Jesus’ call: Who said to us, ***“19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:19-20 KJV)*** Let us continue to do the good works of faith.

It might be a painful experience for Abram to spent time and effort to build up Lot and now he is showing unfaithfulness and willing to leave Abram. But the truth is this: If Lot remains then he is a hindrance to Abram. And the evidence of that is clear, that when he left, Abram was able to see clearly God's promise. Lot, he was like a hindrance that was in front of the eyes of Abram. **The same thing for you, certain people that you had worked and labored hard would be better for you that they will leave you. Exactly, they are hindrances for you to see and receive God's promises.**

You might say that Abram need to start from the beginning again. Yes that is true, and you might be facing the same situation, that if you permit what you previously labored and worked hard to move away from you, you might experience losses and you might need to start from the beginning once again. You might experience losses but these are temporarily things, and you might start a new small start, but do not forget, that with such decision of yours to let those people who hurt you move away, the Lord had already placed you in the new way to receive His blessing and His promises that will enable you to do the good works of God.

There are examples in the Bible that they started from zero after they faced rejection. Among them was Joseph; he started from zero when his brothers sold him. He again started from zero when he was put in prison for the cause of that woman who falsely accused him. Jesus when came on earth he also started from zero and started to preach the good news and make new disciples. Both examples you can see that their humble start was rewarded and so prosperous their course became. ***"Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase."* (Job 8:7 KJV)** You too will experience the same as you trust God and be willing to forgive, fixing your eyes on Him and be willing to move on the new experience that the Lord had prepared for you, to do the good works of God, expressing your faith with deeds.

My dear and beloved: Let us now come to God, renew your mind, and be willing to do the same kinds of work that Abram did. Be willing to forgive those who hurt you and let it go. Be willing to offer peace and avoid strife. Be willing to part away company. Be willing to start the new start trust God that He will prosper you. Be willing to fix your eyes on Him that He already removed the hindrances in front of you and had opened to you new doors to go on and serve Him with abundant resources and much blessings.

Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that teaches me new things in my life and enable me to see better your blessings and the new doors and the new good opportunities that you had set before me.

Confess and renounce all your sins. Renounce greed, selfishness, ungratefulness, worldliness, non willingness to suffer and go through the narrow way. Renounce anger, fighting, unforgiveness, and non willingness to follow the plan of God. Repent of your lack of faith and lack of trust in God. Repent of your non willingness to commit yourself to do the good works that God had prepared for you to do. Lord I repent and renounce the following sins
_____.

Lord I bring into your hand the following struggle _____ . Lord give me as you give Abram the wisdom and the humility to handle the crisis he had with Lot.

Lord, thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented and had committed their lives to serve you and to do the very things that we had studied in this message. Lord guide them in the whole truth, and lead them to do your will. Lord protect them and provide all their needs and sustain them in the narrow way to persevere until they will harvest your promises.

Lord help us as a church and guide us to apply the teaching that we had learned from you in this message. Lord we are willing to forgive the following people _____, and willing to humble ourselves and give them the choices to choose so the strife will be ended and we will be moving forward into the direction that you want us to go and to have the new start as you are leading us to. Lord lead us to go on and evangelize, and make new disciples and train workers to go and plant more Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the Whole will of God.' Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

Faith and Deeds Part 2. James 2:20-24. John 8:56. Genesis 18:2-3. Luke 10:24. 2 Corinthians 5:17. Genesis 13:1-18. John 13:34-35. Job 8:7. Matthew 28:19-20.

Dr. Ramiz Khalaf
The Church Overseer
Church of God
United Arab Emirates
www.churchofgoduae.com
Email: thebread1@gmail.com
Mobile Tel #: 00971551902647

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