

Faith and Deeds Part 13

“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)

We will continue in this message to study the faith and the deeds of Abram as God was leading him. We will continue to read in ***Genesis 17*** to ***18***, explain and observe how Abram obeyed God and walked with deeds to fulfill the call of God in his life.

“2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.” (Genesis 17:2-5 KJV) Here the Lord announced to Abram that He is making a covenant with him, and He will multiply him and will make him a father of many nations, and his name no more to be called Abram which means the exalted father, but Abraham which means the father of multitude, for God will make him the father of many nations.

“6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.” (Genesis 17:6 KJV) God promised Abraham that will make him fruitful, and nations and kings will come out from him and that was truly happened that out of Abraham nations come out who believe that Abraham is their father in faith, and those nations are the Jewish, Christians and the Muslims nations that believe that Abraham is their father in faith.

“7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.” (Genesis 17:7-8 KJV) God here announced to Abraham that He will keep His covenant with him and his descendent and that He will be a God to them, and God promised that He will give the land of Canaan that he was a stranger on to be a possession for him and for his descendents, and the Lord shall be their God and they will be His people.

“9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my

covenant.”(Genesis 17:9-14 KJV) The Lord here explained to Abraham how he will keep his covenant with God, and that is by circumcising every male child in his house, including the strangers that were bought with money, to circumcise every male child on his eight days. Anyone who is not circumcised shall be cut off from his people because he has broken the covenant with God.

“15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.” (Genesis 17:15-16 KJV) God here informed Abraham that He is going to exalt Sarai which means princess and will change her name to Sarah which means noble woman, and that He will bless her with a son, and she will be a mother of nations, and kings of people shall come out from her.

“17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?” (Genesis 17:17 KJV) Here Abraham laugh on what he heard from God and asked if it will be true that he will have a child at the age of one hundred years and whether Sarah who is ninety years old can be pregnant at this age.

“18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!” (Genesis 17:18 KJV) Here Abraham requested that Ishmael will be his heir. Most likely the question of Abraham to God whether he and Sarah can have a child at their age was not out of doubt for we know what the Scripture says about the faith of Abraham when God made him a father of many nations in ***Romans 4***, ***“17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. 18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. 19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.” (Romans 4:17-21 KJV)*** Abraham and Sarah had strong faith in God, but it was out of emotion that Abraham asked God to bless Ishmael and make him his heir. **Certain times emotions may motivate you to ask God not to do what He had promised in His Word. That is why we need the Scriptures to remind us, to teach us, to admonish us and to correct us when we are not aware that we are not in line with the Word of God or the will of God.**

The other possibility for this request of Abraham was to spare Sarah the pain of the pregnancy and labor. ***“19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.” (Genesis 17:19 KJV)*** God here reinstated Abraham and corrected him and assured him that Sarah his wife will bear and can bear a son and he will call him Isaac and that God will establish his covenant with Isaac, instead of Ishmael.

You need to understand that you cannot dictate on God your wishes, but you need to comply with God. Ishmael and the way he was born to Abraham were not in the plan of God, because

that was not the example that God wanted Abraham to follow to have family and children. Even for us today, a man is bound to his wife as long as she is alive and he needs not to go to other women to have children from them.

“20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.” (Genesis 17:20 KJV) God here assured Abraham that He will also bless Ishmael and will make him fruitful and twelve sons will come out from him as we can read here, *“12 Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham: 13 And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, 14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, 15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah: 16 These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. 17 And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. 18 And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria: and he died in the presence of all his brethren.” (Genesis 25:12-18 KJV)* Now if you had done and taken wrong step, you don't need to insist on God to follow what you did, but to surrender yourself to God and to follow Him and comply with His plan to you.

“21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. 22 And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.” (Genesis 17:21-22 KJV) Here the Lord after He promised that He will also bless Ishmael; once again, before He left, confirmed to Abraham that His covenant will be with Isaac.

“23 And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. 24 And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 26 In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. 27 And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.” (Genesis 17:23-27 KJV) See the obedience here of Abraham that goes along his faith, that in the selfsame day that God spoke to him to circumcise, he circumcise Ishmael, and all the males in his house and including himself, even he was ninety and nine years old. See here the diligence of obedience that God would please to see in us as Abraham did to obey God immediately. Circumcision is a painful process and is a skillful process but Abraham accomplished that. We too should do the same today toward God to be willing to be diligent, willing to bear the pain and suffering to obey God, and to use all the skills we have to accomplish what God is requesting from us to do.

About circumcision now it is no more required to those who come to believe in Christ, because the Word of God had annulled it as we read here: *“2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” (Galatians 5:2 KJV)*

But today in Christ all of us required to be circumcised from our sinful nature by Christ, *“12 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” (Colossians 2:12 KJV)* and by the Holy Spirit, *“28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” (Romans 2:28-29 KJV)* God wants us to be totally changed and transformed by getting rid of our sinful nature and from our sinful attitudes and behaviors that are contradicting to the Word of God and the will of God.

Now we will continue to read and meditate on *Genesis 18*, when the Lord God visited Abraham after the event of the circumcision, were Abraham made for the Lord a feast, and on that visit the Lord confirmed to him that his wife Sarah will bear him a child. At the departure of the Lord we can read the following and what God spoke about Abraham:

“16 And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. 17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” (Genesis 18:16-19 KJV) The good thing here about the faith and the deeds of Abraham that we need to adopt in our lives is this statement from verse 19: *“that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment.”* Abraham was not only committed to keep the ways of the Lord and obey God, but as well as Abraham will command his children and his household after him, after his death and departure that they will keep the way of the Lord to do what is right and what is just and to take the right decision that will please God. In the same way, every one of us need to be careful to impart to his family the ways of the Lord in doing what is right and just and keep taking the right decision. We need to endeavor to do that by keeping ourselves living in the right example to our families, our households, and the people under our care and the people around us. In doing so, then we are also committed to command our new disciples to keep the ways of God and to obey His Word. In doing so the next generation will live in obedience to God and such will move God to fulfill all His good promises, and what He had promised us in blessing our children, our disciples, our ministry, our church and the next generation.

God said about Abraham that the nations of the earth will be blessed through Him, *“18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him” (Genesis 18:18 KJV)* The reason behind such because of his obedience to God by keeping and disciplining his children and his household and keeping them walking in the ways of God. In the same way God will bless the rest of the nations in the world when we who are followers of God learn to discipline ourselves, our children and our households, the people under our care with the Word of God and the ways of God, and so in such set a good example to others.

“17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;” (Genesis 18:17 KJV) Based on the above fact, God was compelled to open up to Abraham of what He was about to do in dealing with the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah as we read here: *“20 And*

the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; 21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.” (Genesis 18:20-21 KJV) God went down to check closely what was taken place in Sodom and Gomorrah before He will bring His final judgment on them. Therefore for such reason the men who were with Him moved to Sodom as we read here, *“22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.” (Genesis 18:22 KJV)* As Abraham heard what God will do, he stood firm before the Lord to plead the cause of those cities of Sodom and Gomorrah who were far away from God, and to plead the cause of his brother Lot who was still in the wrong place and did not learn from his previous lesson to leave that place.

We are called today to express our faith with deeds that shows our love and our compassion toward the lost souls, the wicked, who does not know God, and the backsliders of our brethren who left the right way and the sound teaching, seeing in the spirit the coming judgment of God on them, that would move us to earnestly to pray and intercede for them to repent and to come back to the Lord by coming out from the wrong spiritual situation that they are in and back to the Lord, to His church and to the ministries of God.

“23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?” (Genesis 18:23 KJV) Abraham asked God a question if God will destroy the righteous with the wicked, challenging God and made Him accountable that He should not allow any righteous person to perish while he was judging those cities. Abraham had moved with compassion toward the human souls that were dwelling in those cities and toward his nephew Lot and his family.

“24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?” (Genesis 18:24 KJV) Abraham put a figure before God, and asked Him the question, that if there are fifty righteous people in that city that He would seriously not consider sparing the whole city for their sake? What a love in the heart of Abraham to plead with God for the lost souls not to be perished if still the foundation is not yet destroyed. The love and the compassion and the mercy in the heart of Abraham enabled Abraham to speak the following with God, *“25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18:25 KJV)* Abraham challenged God to do right, to forgive and give another chance for the wicked to repent, and the Lord responded to Abraham’s pleading and answered him, *“26 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.” (Genesis 18:26 KJV)* That encouraged Abraham to continue to plead with God asking for mercy upon the cities if there are less number of righteous people, and God was pleased to grant him his requests as we can read here: *“27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes: 28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. 29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. 30 And he said unto him, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. 31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. 32 And he said, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak yet but this once:*

Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.” (Genesis 18:27-32 KJV) Abraham continued to plead with God asking Him mercy up to the point that if there were ten people righteous to spare the cities, and God agreed to grant him his request. After that God went to His way after He replied to Abraham’s request and Abraham went to his place, *“33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.” (Genesis 18:33 KJV)* **In the same way God wants us to be full of love and compassion toward the lost souls, toward the non believers of the people around us and toward the backsliders of our brethren and to pray to God to give them chance and opportunity to repent of their sins.**

The next day, God fulfilled what He agreed with Abraham, and since there was less than ten people righteous, God over threw those cities, but He saved Lot and his two daughters who were willing to go out with the angels. That was the true fruit of Abraham’s prayer and intercession as we can read here, *“27 And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: 28 And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. 29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.” (Genesis 19:27-29 KJV)*

My dear and beloved: Let us come now to the Lord and examine ourselves and see from the life and deeds of Abraham of what we need to do and of what we need to abstain from. Be willing to be circumcised from your sinful nature and be willing to surrender your plan and your will toward God, and be willing to do whatever you need to do to please God.

Are your deeds goes along with your faith in God? Are you directing your children, households and your disciples along the law of God and His ways? Are you good example for others to follow God? Are you full of love and compassion and have mercy on the loss souls? Are you keeping praying and pleading with God to save the lost souls and the backsliders of our brethren?

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 showed me what are the things that I need to cut and remove from my life, not to pursue my own will and emotions, and to direct my children and household into your ways, and to have compassion on the lost souls and those who went far from you.*

Now confess and renounce all your sins. Confess your own will, plans and emotions. Confess your lies, corruptions, immoralities, your lack of commitment to God and to His Word and will. Renounce your bad example and your non willingness to direct your children and household to walk in the ways of God. Renounce your pride and arrogance, you stubbornness and delay obedience. Confess your anger and resentment against your enemies and your lack of love and compassion towards the lost souls. Repent of your lack of prayers and your lack of intercession for the lost souls and those who went away from God. Lord I repent, forgive me the following sins _____.

Lord I commit myself to walk after your Word and will and not after my emotions and plans. Lord I commit myself to direct my children, my family and my disciples into your ways. Lord I commit myself to pray and to intercede for the lost and those backsliders who went away from you. Lord I pray for the following people _____, to save them and take them out from the miry clay and out of the sin that they are falling in. Lord I pray and intercede for the people of this city and the nation that you had placed me with _____, Lord reveal yourself to them in visions and in dreams and do miracles in the name of Jesus so they will know you are the true God. Lord I cry out to you to give them new opportunity to repent and to come out of their sins.

Lord, thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who responded to the message that we received today from you. Lord use them mightily and use their testimonies to attract others to come to you and to know you Jesus that you are the true God. Lord answer their prayers and lead them to continue to do your will and the assignments that you entrusted to them. Lord help them in their lives, protect them and provide for them so they will continue to serve you.

Lord lead us as your church with the Holy Spirit to do the very will of you to direct our disciples and all our ministries according to your will, and in your ways. Lord we commit ourselves to be the people of compassion that we will pray for the lost souls, for the backsliders to repent and for the cities and the nations that you placed us with to come to you and to know Jesus is the way and the truth and the life. Lord we commit ourselves to evangelize and preach the gospel. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the Spiritual gifts that we need to go and serve you. Lord lead us to go and make new disciples and train new 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 13. James 2:20-24. Genesis 17:2-27. Genesis 25:12-18. Romans 4:17-21. Galatians 5:2. Colossians 2:12. Romans 2:28-29. Genesis 18:16-33. Genesis 19:27-29.

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