

Sunday May 13th
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Forty Four

1). Heb 11:13 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. 17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," 19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.*

a). We had seen last week how Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been covenanted the land of promise by an everlasting covenant, and how they dwelt in this same land during the course of their lives - Ge 17:5 *"No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. 6 "I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. 7 ¶ "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. 8 "Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."*

b). And yet we read that they 'all died in faith, not having received the promises'. Even though God had promised them the land and promised it to no other; even though God had covenanted the land to them and their descendants and it would never be given to any other – they all died without receiving these promises.

c). And in this we see testimony to their faith in the faithfulness of God. In their faith we see the very thing we are admonished to do in – Heb 10:23 *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.*

d). Abraham, Isaac and Jacob confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth and in so doing they declared plainly that they were seeking a homeland, a better country, a heavenly country – they were waiting for the city with foundations whose builder and maker is God – the New Jerusalem.

e). This then was the confession of their hope and their hope is exactly the same as ours as the New Jerusalem is inextricably connected to, and exclusively the province of, the coming 7th Day, the Millennial Kingdom of Christ – this is the city from which rulership over the earth will take place and which will be occupied by Christ and His Bride and all those who through their faith will have secured a position of rulership in the coming age.

f). Abraham, Isaac and Jacob knew that their possession of the land in fulfillment of God's promises must await that future Day, but they were absolutely assured of these promises and embraced them even though they were 'afar off'.

g). They then organized their lives in accordance with the faithfulness of God and patiently endured through their time on the earth. And during their time on the earth God demonstrated His faithfulness in tangible ways over and over – not the least of which would be through the birth of Isaac; born to a woman past the age of child bearing and an old man 'as good as dead' – they believed absolutely that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

h). And for ourselves here, the important key would be an obvious one – He who has promised is faithful – we may look at any Jew on the face of the earth to know that; we have the evidence of our own eternal salvation and the opening of the scriptures to our understanding just as the Lord had promised in - Joh 16:13 *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

i). He has promised those who conduct their lives in faithful obedience that they will rule and reign with His Son and has promised the 'so great salvation', the salvation of the soul to the same - Heb 6:17 *Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.*

j). Not only do we have God's promise, but He also confirmed His promise with an oath – the 'two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie' – and so if we have taken the advice given by the angels to Lot – Ge 19:17b....."*Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed.*"

And have fled for refuge on the mountain of God in order to lay hold of the hope set before us – our only consideration will be that God will fulfill His promise and His oath, no matter how long we might have to wait for it.

k). By now there is not much left of the physical bodies of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob than dust, but nothing is too difficult for the Lord, therefore He will gather their dust from where ever it may be so that they may receive their inheritance in the same body in which they believed. Job has put it most succinctly for us - Job 19:25 *For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; 26 And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, 27 Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!*

l). And this same thing is pictured for us in a type with Joseph giving instructions that his bones were to be taken by the children of Israel to the promised land when they were delivered from Egypt - Heb 11:22 *By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.*

Ex 13:19 *And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you."*

2). Theirs is the example that we are to follow realizing that whether we are old or young, whether we live or die, irrespective of our circumstances, God is faithful – And this kind of faith we are to have is spelled out in a verse from Hebrews that we have looked at many times but has now opened to us in such a way as to make it a key verse in our understanding of believing God to the saving of our soul. It is of course - Heb 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

a). As we have seen in past weeks, without faith to the saving of the soul it is impossible to please God. And we had seen that this kind of faith is based on believing that he is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

b). Now, because of what we learnt last week - Heb 11:16 *But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

c). Because of this we now know that God has made Himself known as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob - Ex 3:15 *Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'*

d). And so, believing that God is, is believing that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and along with this we must understand that He was not ashamed to be called their God because they believed absolutely that He would fulfill His promises to them, even though they would never see the fulfillment of these promises in their lifetime – or to put this another way they believed absolutely that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him – Heb 6:11 *And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

Re 2:26 *"And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—*

e). 2Ti 2:11 *This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. 12 If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. 13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.*

3). Then this kind of faith is exemplified once again from the verses of our opening scripture this morning - 17 *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," 19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.*

a). Immediately we will note that Abraham's faith is tested, and faith must always be tested as it is only when put to the test that we would know if we really believe God or not - 1Pe 1:6 ¶ *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,*

b). Jas 1:2 ¶ *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.*

c). God had told Abraham 'In Isaac your seed shall be called' – Isaac was the son of promise and the son who would receive the promise. Abraham had other children, but only Isaac was heir to the promise – only Isaac and his descendants could receive the inheritance. And we will also remember that it was only through Divine intervention that Isaac was born in the first place.

d). Now because Abraham believed that which God had said concerning Isaac he concluded 'that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead'. And there can be no doubt that if events had not transpired differently Abraham would have sacrificed his son and God would have raised him from the dead.

e). Then in another sense Isaac did die that day in the substitute death of the ram and was raised from the dead 'in a figurative sense'.

4). Now, this whole incident with the sacrifice of Isaac is not given here in Hebrews solely for the purpose of exemplifying Abraham's faith, but to draw us back once again to the overall type that we have studied in previous weeks.

a). Hebrews 11:17 – 19 begins with the sacrifice of Isaac which speaks of death and shed blood which is exactly where we started in Hebrews 11:4 with the sacrifice offered by Abel and just as Hebrews 11:8 brings us to a place of new beginning pictured in Abraham leaving Ur of the Chaldeans, so Hebrews 19 ends with the picture of a new beginning with the 'figurative' resurrection of Isaac.

b). So Hebrews 11:4-8 covers a complete dispensational period of time and Hebrews 11:17-19 covers the exact same period of time – and both have their focus as the coming 7th Day.

c). That which we see referenced in our verses 17-19 is originally recorded in Genesis Chapter 22.

d). And all of that surrounding the offering of Isaac forms a type of the sacrifice of Christ some 2000 years later, probably on exactly the same mountain in exactly the same place.

e). Now Genesis Chapter 22 is the second of 5 consecutive Chapters that picture for us in typological form the complete history of Israel and the Church from the birth of Israel's Messiah to that future Day when Israel's Messiah returns and restores the land of promise to Israel and Israel to the land of promise.

f). And so the reference to the offering of Isaac in Hebrews must be taken back to the picture given in Genesis Chapter 22 and this Chapter of

Genesis must be seen within the whole panorama given through Genesis Chapters 21- 25.

5). The sequence begins in Genesis Chapter 21 with the birth of Isaac – Ge 21:1 ¶ *And the LORD visited Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him-whom Sarah bore to him-Isaac.*

a). Isaac is born through the supernatural intervention of God to a woman past the age of child bearing and a man as good as dead.

b). Ga 4:4 *But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

c). The birth of Christ was also brought about through supernatural intervention at a set time.

d). Israel, like Sarah was barren – pictured here in Matthew in the fig tree - Mt 21:19 *And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away.*

e). But through God's supernatural intervention, as seen in the type with Sara, Israel gave birth so to speak to God's Son. God Himself became flesh in the person of His Son - Joh 1:14 *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

f). Mt 1:18 ¶ *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.*

6). From here we go to Genesis Chapter 22 where, as we have seen, we find the offering of Isaac - Ge 22:1 ¶ *Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."*

a). It was some years after the birth of Isaac that God instructed Abraham to offer his son as a burnt offering upon a particular mountain in the land of Moriah. As we have seen in Hebrews 11:17 Isaac was Abraham's 'only begotten son' – Abraham did have another son of course, Ishmael, but Isaac alone was the 'only begotten son' – Isaac alone was born after the Spirit

through supernatural intervention and was thus, the only son recognized by God as fit for the sacrifice.

b). Then, following the type, God's Son, some 2000 years later, was offered at a particular place in the land of Moriah. He was God's only begotten Son - Ps 2:7 ¶ *"I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.*

Joh 3:16 *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

c). Now God did have other sons – angels, Adam, Israel are all sons of God through a special creative act, but Jesus alone, as with Isaac, was the 'only begotten Son' and thereby the only Son recognized by God as fit for the sacrifice - Ro 5:18 *Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.*

d). As we noted earlier the mountain in the land of Moriah upon which Abraham offered Isaac would be the same place that God later offered His Son. The land of Moriah was in the region of Palestine where Jerusalem was later built - 2Ch 3:1 ¶ *Now Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.*

e). Abraham at the time he was instructed to offer Isaac was living in the land of the Philistines at a place called Gerar - Ge 20:1 ¶ *And Abraham journeyed from there to the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar.*

f). The geographical location of Gerar, about 60 miles south west of where Jerusalem would be built, would have required Abraham to make about a 3 day journey from Gerar to the mountain in the land of Moriah – Ge 22:4 *Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.*

God was very particular about the exact place that Isaac was to be offered.

g). Ge 22:14 *And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of The LORD it shall be provided."* We see here the name given by Abraham to the location for Isaac's offering [Jehovah-Jireh in the original language] – so putting all this together we would have to conclude that at some point in the course of Man's history, God would 'provide for Himself a Lamb' on this very same mountain.

h). And we would note that particularly with regards to Abraham's faith there was no delay on Abraham's part having received the command to sacrifice his son – but as we know this is sharply contrasted to the Abraham who left Ur of the Chaldeans in Genesis Chapter 12 – in this there is great encouragement for us all in our race of faith.

i). Abraham, as a result of his various experiences, his trials and his testing, had been brought to a place of complete obedience – as we previously noted, he was perfectly willing to sacrifice his son in accordance with God's command – not forgetting of course that by this time he was absolutely assured that God was faithful.

j). Then of course, Jesus the Christ, God's only begotten Son, was set aside for sacrifice by His Father and was to be slain upon a particular mountain of God's choosing. We know from - 1Pe 1:20a *He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world,*
And that He was - Re 13:8b...*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

k). The Jews and the Romans of the day of our Lord's crucifixion did that which had been predetermined and set out in typological form from the very beginning of scripture - Ac 2:23 *"Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;*

l). What we may conclude here once again and still most remarkably, is that the experiences of Abraham and Isaac in Genesis Chapter 22 actually looked back to decisions and determinations made in the council chambers of God in eternity past that preceded the existence of the ages and then forward in time to the events of Calvary, which themselves anticipate events that still remain yet future.

m). It was as we have seen, after two days – on the third day – of travelling that Abraham lifted up his eyes and 'saw the place afar off' where Isaac was to be offered. It is from this point that Abraham and Isaac leave the two men who were with them and continued on alone - Ge 22:5 *And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." 6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.*

n). The 2 men who had accompanied them on their journey stayed a sufficient distance away from the mountain that they neither had a part in nor witnessed the events that took place there – in like manner, in accordance with the type, God the Father and God the Son went together to the place of

sacrifice; and when it was time for the Father to place on the Son 'the iniquity of us all', as the Son became 'sin for us', so they were alone also –

Mr 15:33 ¶ *Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.*

n). The wood that Isaac carried to the place of his sacrifice is a picture of the cross that Christ carried to the place of His sacrifice. Wood within scripture is used to symbolize 'humanity', which would be characterized by Man's sin and it is Man's sin that made necessary the wood that Isaac carried and the cross that Christ carried.

o). We will also note from Genesis 22:6 that Abraham 'took the fire in his hand and a knife' and the fire and the knife symbolize God's judgment of sin and the Word of God respectively – therefore in the picture we can see that God was about to judge sin on the mountain in accordance with His revealed Word – exactly what happened at Calvary some 2000 years later.

p). Fire in scripture is used as an emblem of God's judgment upon sin – we might remember the flaming sword at the entrance to the Garden of Eden, the destruction of the cities of the plain that we have looked at in recent weeks as well as the furnace of fire in the Matthew 13 Parables and the lake of fire – and what we will also note is that God always judges sin in accordance with His revealed Word; Abraham's knife being a picture of the 'sword of the Spirit' – Eph 6:7 *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;*

Re 1:16 *He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.*

Re 19:15 *Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations.*

q). So we will realize then that in Genesis Chapter 22 God judged sin in accordance with His revealed Word and then 2000 years later, in fulfillment of the antitype, God judged sin on the cross of Calvary also in accordance with His revealed Word. In the antitype of course with God's Son dying on the cross, God was judging sin in the person of His Son – the 'Living Word' who 'became flesh and dwelt amongst us'.

r). Perhaps as we think on all of this we will come to understand the enormity of what took place when - Heb 11:17 *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac.....*

s). We will pick this up again next week, if the Lord is willing.