

The Sight of Faith

APART FROM THE FAITH displayed by God's Son, Abraham is the great pattern of obedient faith. There were deflections in the course of Abraham's faith, but it had many references and always moved into obedience out of its failures. Starting, as it did, with the call to come out into a place, which he was to obtain as an allotment, his faith came to focus eventually on the promise of a seed, culminating, in the birth of his son, Isaac. The years during which his faith was exercised in this regard came to a total of twenty-five, ending in the birth of Isaac, the LAUGH-causer. The climax of faith, however, was not reached until Abraham had been probed, when he was asked to take his only son to the land of Moriah, and there sacrifice him as an ascent offering. In his faith obedience to this, Abraham was reckoning that God was able to be rousing his son from among the dead. Hitherto, his body, which was as good as dead, had been invigorated by faith, and now Abraham's faith is equally potent.

Many of those who think upon faith rarely move away from that aspect which sees it as a faculty within human capacity. From the Scriptures we ought to get a much more vivid understanding of it. An illumined insight realizes that a declaration of God must be the basis of one's faith. This is the point made in regard to those mentioned in Hebrews eleven. They are men who received a declaration made to them by God. They acted on that declaration. To be without a declaration of God would be fancy rather than faith. Nor could faith be obedience unless related to God's declaration.

When God's declaration was heard, faith followed that declaration. It was not that Abraham suddenly discerned a matter, but rather that leue *spoke*. The lack of correspondence between his own circumstances and God's declaration Abraham learned to leave with leue. He let the question of sight or seeing remain with Him Who had made the declaration. This was the apt affirmation which Abraham made to answer Isaac's question about the failure to bring a flocking for the ascent offering. "Alueim is seeing to the flocking."

Abraham's faith had now become fully intelligent, and this fact was enshrined in the name he gave to the place. He called it leue-jireh, but the versions, by rendering jireh, as "provide," preclude the point that Abraham clung tenaciously to his faith, leaving the *seeing* to leue. Jireh should be rendered as *see*, and not provide. leue is the One Who during the eons is seeing. All others must exercise faith, and its accompaniment, expectation.

This is a remarkable insight about faith, made available to the English reader of the Concordant Version of Genesis, yet originating in the words of Abraham, spoken some forty centuries back. Its vitality is such that it denies that *blindness* characterizes faith, for it leaves the seeing entirely in the hands of leue, Whose word has created the faith. So important is faith in regard to the evangel that we read that it is God's oblation to us, whereby we come to be His achievement. No one should be boasting in "his" faith but rather be finding his joy and delight in the fact that all the glory belongs to the God and Father of our Lord, Christ Jesus.

Faith triumphs in obedience. And obedience is really the operation in us of the holiness afforded in God's evangel. Each of these is the response to God's claiming and delivering us in accord with His own declaration.

Faith relies on God to do everything necessary for our salvation, and thus it allows Him to glorify Himself. This was the outstanding glory of the faith of Jesus Christ. Mature understanding of faith perceives that faith is related to matters which are outside our will to effect them.

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