A Prayer Workshop: *Morning Edition*

Discovering and Applying Biblical Prayer Principles

from Hebrews 11

Session Eight: The Faith of God’s Provision: Praying in Loss

Hebrews 11:17-19

(ESV***) 17By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, 18of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” 19He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.***

Praising God when He answers with blessing is one thing, but how shall we pray when something precious is taken from us? How are we supposed to think and pray during and after great loss? How do we maintain our faith in a God who asks us to give up everything for Him? Beginnings of answers to those questions take shape as we meditate upon Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac.

**1. We pray knowing that each and every loss is a test of our faith.**

 It is difficult to imagine a greater test than Abraham’s. In a sense, it contains and represents all tests, for it appeared to negate God’s promises, and run counter to all we know of Him, as well as all human relationships. It actually has never been in God’s mind to ask for child sacrifices. But it was a test that proved (to Abraham and all his children) that true faith is obedient. Jeremiah 32:33-35

 Scriptures: Gen. 22:1-19; 26:1-5; Prov. 17:3; John 14:15; 15:10

 Prayer prompts: Father, we know that no command of yours is unrighteous.

 Father, we believe all blessings are yours to give or take.

 Father, help us to pass our own tests of faith.

**2. We pray knowing that the Promiser is the focus, not the promise itself.**

 We must not lose sight of the fact that God, not Abraham, is the hero of the story. It is His character which is in jeopardy should even one of His promises fall to the ground unkept. THAT is why Abraham could believe Him fully and freely.

 Scriptures: Joshua 23:14; Titus 1:1-3; Hebrews 6:18

 Prayer prompts: Father, grant that we may fully rest upon your character.

 Father, help us see our losses in the context of your gifts.

 Father, we ask your grace to trust you with our griefs.

**3. We pray knowing that God’s power/character overcome all enemies, even death.**

 Abraham knew that God could and would raise Isaac from the dead. Death is the “last enemy,” and represents all enemies, so the resurrection must be a normal part of our confession. For a believer, nothing ever is wasted or lost.

 Scriptures: 1 Cor. 15:20-26; 2 Cor. 1:8-10; Revelation 20:6

 Prayer prompts: Father, help us not fear death, because of Jesus.

 Father, help us to be overcomers in the name of Jesus.

 Father, help us share your love with all peoples.

 Let’s pray. . . A Model Prayer from Loss

**Psalm 13 (ESV)**

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|  To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.  1How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?  How long will you hide your face from me? 2How long must I take counsel in my soul  and have sorrow in my heart all the day?  How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? 3Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;  light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,  | 4 lest my enemy say, “I have prevailed over him,”  lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken. 5 But I have trusted in your steadfast love;  my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. 6 I will sing to the Lord,  because he has dealt bountifully with me. |