



REFLECTIONS

July 10, 2011 Refreshed from May 1, 2005

**Now faith is being sure of what we hope
for and certain of what we do not see.**

Hebrews 11:1

Obedience and faith...

Sometimes Scripture can just grab you. For me, one of those times came from reading the story of Abraham and Isaac. Abraham had waited 100 years for a legitimate heir to be born to him only to have God call him to the mountain to offer his long awaited son as a sacrifice. My attention was initially seized by Abraham's willingness to obey. I tried to imagine my response to God if He had called me for something like that. But try as I might, I could not envision myself making the obedient choice Abraham made.

Upon further reflection however a larger meaning of this story of Abraham began to unfold for me. Observe that Abraham made a curious statement to his servants as he dismounted his donkey to head up the mountain. "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. *We* will worship and then *we* will come back to you." (*Gen. 22:5, emphasis added*) Even though he had no idea how it all could be pulled off, Abraham knew that God had an answer that would allow him to fulfill the request and still provide for both he and his son to return from the mountain top. He was called to sacrifice his beloved son, but he also expected death to be overcome. He was *sure of what he hoped for and certain of what he could not see*.

Next, notice that Isaac was unhesitatingly obedient to his father's wish. He had faith in his father and was lovingly obedient to him. Now, as much as I loved my dad and honored and trusted him, there is considerable doubt that I would have been obedient to a request like this one.

Sometimes it takes a while to capture the pictures that God paints for us in Scripture. Such was the case for me with this episode in the life of Abraham; but when the picture finally emerged, I could see the preview of a blessing to come. God so loved the world that He would one day call his Son to the mountain as a sacrifice for our sins; and from the garden Jesus would be lovingly obedient to his Father's instructions.

And we are blessed by God's love. Our sins are forgiven and death overcome.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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