

## FAITH, OUR NEED FOR TODAY

Rev. B. D. Price

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Dear folks, we hear much these days about the condition of the world, the loose morals, backsliding of the church, etc., and when we come in contact with folk in conversation, we see the lack of faith in our country, our governments, our churches: and in some cases, yes, a good many cases, in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We hear folk complain of their trials and sufferings, disappointments and many other things that the human race is subject to. Church folk are growing cold, men are slipping, losing trust in their fellow men, and many other things which, I truly believe, to be works of the adversary.

Let us go back to our album, the Holy Scriptures, and look through some of the photographs we find there. Turn to Genesis 22: We find there a picture where God desires to test the faith of Abraham. Let us take a close view of this with open minds and a heart of feeling and we see Abraham sitting, thinking of his past life, of God's covenant with him, of the son God had given him in his old age and the future of that son, when suddenly he hears the voice of God speaking to him, and he said, "Behold here I am." We can hear this old man say, "Yes; Lord," and God speaks, "Abraham, I want you to go up into Mount Moriah and offer there a sacrifice, and Abraham, that sacrifice must be your son Isaac, your only son, that son whom you longed for, he whom you waited a good many years for, the boy whom you have been thinking about, building a future for, the son of promise.

Now folk, picture that old man's feelings. I can see him wondering, thinking: "Can this be the voice of God?" He ponders, he says to himself, "Why, Lord, I have kept the faith, I left my home, my friends, my all and went where thou didst lead me: Now can this be possible?" And we can see Satan on hand to suggest to him that this would be breaking the Divine laws of God; "thou shalt not kill." Surely God would not require what he had once forbidden. We see this poor man deeply grieved, getting up and going outside of his tent in the night. The sky is clear, and looking up he sees the stars and remembers the promise that God had made, that his seed through Isaac would be as numerous as the stars, and he thinks, "how can this promise be fulfilled through Isaac if I put him to death?" He is tempted to believe that he might be under a delusion and in his doubt and anguish he bowed upon the earth and prayed as he had never prayed before for some confirmation of the command, if he must perform this terrible duty. He remembered on several occasions before, also the place when he had met the Heavenly Messengers and they had revealed to him God's will. So we see him, praying, weeping and seeking for further directions, but none came to his relief. Darkness seemed to shut him in, but God's command was still sounding in his ears: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." That command must be obeyed and he dared not delay. He could see that day was approaching and he must be on his journey. With a heavy heart he slips back to his tent, goes to where Isaac lies sleeping, the deep

untroubled sleep of youth and innocence. He hesitates for a moment, as he looks upon the dear face of that boy he loves so much, then turning trembling away, goes to the side of Sarah, who is also sleeping. Shall he awaken her and tell her, that she might once more embrace the boy? Oh! how he would like to unburden his heart to Sarah and tell her God's command, but he is restrained by the fear that she might hinder him and make it all the harder. He realizes that he must do this thing alone, so he awakens the boy, makes it known to him that they must go and make a sacrifice on the distant mountain. They start on the three-day journey with their servants and equipment.

Picture Abraham as he journeys along. For three days and nights, how he prayed and laboured within his own soul. How long those days and nights must have been, but we never find him murmuring against God. We see Satan again hovering around trying to tempt Abraham with unbelief; but he resists Satan's suggestions. The third day finds him marching on. Looking northward, he sees the promised sign—a cloud of glory—hovering over Mt. Moriah and he knows that the voice which had spoken to him was a voice from heaven. Even now he does not murmur against God, but his strength is renewed and he praises God for giving him this son, for his goodness, realizing that God who gave him and Sarah this promised son in their old age, was able to raise him up again and restore him to them after he is offered up as a sacrifice. Heb. 11-19.

Then again comes another test when Isaac speaks, saying, "Father, we have the fire, the wood and the knife, but where is the Lamb?" This question must have been like a dagger in this father's heart, but Abraham replies, "God will provide himself a lamb for the sacrifice." He continues on to the very point of taking his son's life, but God speaks, "It is enough, for now I know that thou fearest God seeing what thou has already done."

Going on we find the angel speaking the second time, renewing his covenant, declaring that he will bless Abraham and multiply his seed as the stars and the sands of the shore, and that his seed would possess the gates of his enemies. Thus did Abraham stand the trial of Faith, come out conqueror and through his seed we are blessed today by the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Friends, Abraham believed in God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God. Abraham's faith was manifested by his works. Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works when he offered his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works and by works was faith made perfect?" James 2:21-22-23. There are many who fail to understand the relation of faith and works. They say, believe in God and you are safe and they neglect to keep the laws of God.

I say, by the authority of the Holy Scripture that genuine faith will be manifest in obedience. Jesus said in St. John 8:39, to the unbelieving Jew, "if ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham." Obey, keep God's charge, His commandments, statutes and laws. Gen. 26-5.

Friends, we need our faith strengthened in order that we may stand the test we face and through our faith walk in the statutes of God, obey His commandments and launch out and labor for our Master, that this old world may return to the faith of our fathers and we see restored to us the good-will and fellowship of

man. This we can enjoy only by obeying God's commandments and doing that which he has called us to do regardless of the cost. Knowing and believing that God who gives all is able to restore unto us double-fold if it is His will. Having the testimony of Job: "He knoweth the way that I take when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as Gold."

## TEMPTATION

Thomas-a-Kempis

Temptations are often very profitable to men, though they be troublesome and grievous; for in them a man is humbled, purified and instructed. All the saints have passed through, and profited by, many tribulations; and they that could not bear temptations became reprobates, and fell away. "My son," adds the author of Ecclesiasticus 2:1-5, "if thou come to serve the Lord," "in the" perfect "beauty of holiness," "prepare thy soul for temptation. Set thy heart aright; constantly endure! and make no haste in the time of trouble. Whatever is brought upon thee take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate. For gold is tried" and purified "in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity." And, therefore, says St. James, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried," if he stands the fiery trial, "he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to them that love him" with the love which "endureth" temptation and "all things," that is, with perfect love. James 1:12. Patiently endure, then, when God "for a season, if need be," will suffer you to "be in heaviness through manifold temptations." By this means the "trial of your faith, being much more precious than that of gold which perisheth, though it be tried in the fire, will be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (I. Peter 1:7).

## THROUGH PEACE TO LIGHT

Adelaide Anne Procter

I do not ask, O Lord, that life may be  
A pleasant road;  
I do not ask that Thou wouldst take from me  
Aught of its load;  
I do not ask that flowers should always spring  
Beneath my feet;  
I know too well the poison and the sting  
Of things too sweet.  
For one thing only, Lord, dear Lord, I plead;  
Lead me aright—  
Though strength should falter, and though  
heart should bleed—  
Through peace to light.  
I do not ask, O Lord, that Thou shouldst shed  
Full radiance here;  
Give but a ray of peace, that I may tread  
Without a fear.  
I do not ask my cross to understand,  
My way to see;  
Better in darkness just to feel Thy hand  
And follow Thee.  
Joy is like restless day; but peace divine  
Like quiet night:  
Lead me, O Lord—till perfect day shall shine  
Through peace to Light.

Blessed are they who have the gift of making friends, for it is one of God's best gifts. It involves many things, but, above all, the power of going out of one's self, and seeing and appreciating whatever is noble and loving in another.—Thomas Hughes.