

Unlocking The Mystery & Treasure Of My Inheritance

Lesson #9 -The Call To Mt. Moriah

The spiritual history of Abraham was marked by four great crises, each of which involved the surrender of something which was naturally dear to him.

1. He was called on to separate himself from his native land and kindred Genesis 12:1
2. He was called on to give up Lot Genesis 13:1-18
3. He had to abandon his cherished plan about Ishmael Genesis 17:17, 18
4. God bade him offer up Isaac as a burnt offering. Gen. 22

Christian character is developed via a series of tests. Frequently there is one supreme test, in view of which all others are preparatory. Abraham had been tested again and again, but never as here. God's demand is, "Son, give Me your heart (Proverbs 23:26).

It is not our intellect, talents, money, but our heart, God asks for first. When we have responded to God's requirement, He lays His hand on something especially near and dear to us, to prove the genuineness of our response. God requires truth in the inward parts and not merely on the lips. Thus He dealt with Abraham.

Gen. 22:2 Then He [God] 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."

Observations: Abram's Call To Moriah

1. No test could have been more severe than the one God now imposed..
2. Law Of First Mention: The first occurrence of a word in the Scripture is usually very significant in the overall design. It is profoundly significant this account includes the first occurrence of the word "LOVE" in the Scriptures. Notice it is between a Father and Son!
3. This is also the start of the history of Mt. Moriah. Significant in the Bible
4. Abraham had another son, Ishmael, who was the result of the flesh taking over.

When Isaac is weaned, the Flesh must be "Cast out!"

Your spirit [Isaac] cannot mature when the flesh is present. We are to "reckon our flesh dead."

5. For God's purposes, Isaac is viewed as "your only son." He was to have been the promised seed, the one in whom all the great things spoken of the seed were to be fulfilled.
6. When he was called to give up his other son God condescended to give him a reason for it, but here no reason was given. Ishmael must go because he was not the child of promise ("in Isaac shall thy seed be called"). If Isaac goes who shall substitute for him?

Who will fulfill all the promises? To offer up Isaac was to sacrifice the very object of his faith.

Remember: We are to live by faith on PROMISES not on explanations!

Consider: We must have occasional tests to know where we are spiritually.

Abraham's first test was the "family test."

Next was the "famine test" which he failed because he doubted God and went to Egypt for help.

[Recall: He was "passing through."]

Once back "in the land," he passed the "fellowship test" when he gave Lot first choice in using the pastureland. He also passed the "fight test" when he defeated the kings.

He passed the "fortune test" when he said "NO" to Sodom's wealth.

But he failed the "fatherhood test" when Sarah got impatient with God and suggested he have a child by Hagar. When the time came to send Ishmael away, he passed the "farewell test" even though it broke his heart.

Note: Not every difficult experience in life is a test from God.

Sometimes our own disobedience causes us pain as when Abraham went to Egypt and Gerar.

Distinguish trials from temptations:

Temptations come from desires within us. Trials come from God who has a special purpose in us. Temptations are used by the devil to bring out the worst in us.

Trials are used by the Holy Spirit to bring out the best in us.

Temptations seem logical while trials seem unreasonable. Why would God give Abraham a son and then ask him to kill him? Why did God never ask Lot to face the same testing as Abraham?

Lot was being tempted by the world and flesh and NEVER grew to the place of maturity

Abraham reached. Is it a complement when God sends us a test? Does He desire to promote us in "The School of Faith?" God never sends a test until He knows you are ready for it!

A psychiatrist wrote: "Life is difficult. Once you truly know it, understand it and accept it, life becomes much less difficult." Expect trials from God! The Christian life is not easy!

How Can I Face & Handle Tests Of Life To The Glory Of God?

I. Expect Tests & Trials [See lesson #8]

II. Focus on Promises - Not Explanations

Gen. 22:3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

Abraham's Response: No doubt or delay, no reluctance or hesitation; instead, he "rose up early in the morning." There was no opposition either from natural affection or unbelief. He bowed in absolute submission to the will of God. FAITH TRIUMPHED over natural affection, over reason, and over self-will. Here was a most striking demonstration of the efficacy of Divine grace which can subdue every passion of the human heart and every imagination of the carnal mind, bringing all into "unrepining acquiescence to God." Faith & Obedience Are Eternally Intertwined!

Gen. 22:4-5 Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.

[Notice on the third day Abraham saw the place where he was to sacrifice His son? Coincidence]

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."

Further Observations: Abraham's Call To Mt. Moriah

1. Question: Why 3 days? ~50 mile journey Why there?

2. It is interesting that Isaac was "dead" to Abraham for three days; from the time the commandment came until he was free by the angel and returned to "life" 3 days later.

This is called, in Biblical parlance, a "type" or "model."

Abraham is a "type" of the Father; Isaac, a "type" of the Son.

The entire episode is in anticipation of the New Testament event.

Key Point #1: God's request seems unreasonable. Isaac was a miracle child, a gift from God in response to Abraham's faith, Abraham's only son, the future of the covenant rested in him.

"Our faith is not really tested until God asks us to bear what seems unbearable, do what seems unreasonable and expect what seems impossible." Look at Joseph in prison, Moses and Israel at the Red Sea, or David in the cave. Same lesson: We live by promises!

Key Point #2: When God asked him to offer his son, He was testing Abraham's faith, hope and love. It appeared God was wiping out everything Abraham and Sarah lived for.

Consider: God has reasons for sending us tests.

a. Purify our faith I Pet. 1:6-9 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, ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

b. Perfect our character James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

c. Protect us from sin II Cor. 12:7-10 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. ⁸ Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake.

For when I am weak, then I am strong.

#3. Abraham heard God's word and immediately obeyed it by faith.

#4. God's will NEVER Contradicts God's Promise.

He HELD ON to the promise "in Isaac shall thy seed be called. [Gen. 21:12].

#5. Abraham believed even if God allowed him to slay his son, He could raise Isaac from the dead. God had promised Abraham that Isaac would have children. It was God's problem!

Heb. 11:17-19 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.

Truth: Faith does not demand explanations; faith rests on promises.

Martin Luther: "Our suffering is not worthy of the name of suffering. When I consider my crosses, trials and tribulations, I shame myself almost to death, thinking what they are in comparison of the sufferings of my blessed Savior Jesus Christ."

Wiersbe: I need never fear the "cup of testing" the Father hands me. My Savior has already drunk the cup before me and I am following in His steps. I need not fear because the Father has prepared it for me in love. The cup He prepares for me will never harm me. I may suffer pain and heartbreak, but He will eventually transform my suffering into glory.

III. Depend On God's Provision

Gen. 22:6 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.

1. Isaac was not a child: possibly 30 years of age!
2. An image of the Son who said "Father ... not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42)
3. The son bore the burden of sin. The wood is mentioned 5x in this narrative.

Isaac did not start carrying the wood until he arrived at Mt. Moriah.

The wood doesn't seem to be a picture of the cross; Jesus did not carry his cross all the way.

The wood seems to picture the burden of sin Jesus bore for us.

I Pet. 2:24 who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,

Abraham took the wood and laid it upon Isaac his son.

Isa. 53:6 and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Provision of the Lamb: Gen. 22:7-10 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said,

"My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering?" And Abraham said, "My son,

God Will Provide HIMSELF a lamb for a burnt offering: so the two of them went together.

Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

Consider: A true worshiper of God holds nothing back from God but obediently gives Him what He asks, trusting that He will provide.

Gen. 22:11-12 But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." ¹² And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, YOUR ONLY SON, from Me."

Note: Paul wrote God "did not spare (epheisato) His own Son, but gave [delivered] Him up for us all" (Rom 8:32). A form of the same Greek word is used of Abraham in the Septuagint:

"Thou hast not spared (epheiso) thy beloved son" (Gen 22:12).

Gen. 22:13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind *him was* a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.

The Substitutionary Ram: When Adam and Eve "fell" in the Garden of Eden, God taught them they would be covered by the shedding of innocent blood. All the Levitical sacrifices in the Torah were designed to anticipate the climatic sacrifice for all time.

Gen. 22:14 And Abraham called the name of the place, Adonai Yireh; The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

Abraham then gave the location a prophetic label.

It appears he somehow knew he was acting out a prophecy!

The Topology of Mount Moriah: If we examine the topology of Mount Moriah, we find it is a ridge system between the Mount of Olives and Mount Zion. It is bordered by the Kidron Valley on the east, the Hinom Valley on the south, and the Tyropean Valley on the west.

If we approach the Mount as Abraham did, from Beersheva to the south, we begin at about 600 meters above sea level, and climb to its peak, about 777 meters above sea level.

The Offering Site The peak of the Mount is at a place just outside the city wall to the north. It is known as Golgotha. Isn't it fascinating that a group of Roman soldiers erected three crosses 2,000 years ago on the very spot that Abraham offered his son so many years earlier?

About a thousand years later King David was involved in a transaction regarding this very site.

Background Points : [II Sam. 24 & I Chronicles 21]

II Sam.: God incited David to number the people. I Chron. Satan was the culprit.

God permitted Satan to tempt David in order to accomplish the purposes He has in mind.

1. King David ordered a military census to see how big his army was. Scripture suggests David's command was motivated by PRIDE > magnify his own achievements.

2. I Chron. 21:7 God was displeased but He permitted Joab and his captains to spend 9 months & 20 days counting Israelites age 20 and up who were fit for military service.

The incomplete total = 1,300,000 men. [No Levites or Benjaminites]

3. II Sam. 24:10-14 & I Chron. 21:7-13 - David realized his foolishness in pursuing the project.

4. David confessed his sin: I have sinned GREATLY.

Note: His sin with Bathsheba > he said "I have sinned."

Consider: a. Sin with Bathsheba was a sin of the flesh - yielding to lust.

[Took the lives of 4 of David's sons + Uriah]

b. The Census was a sin of the spirit; a willful act of rebellion against God - motivated by PRIDE

c. God gave David over 9 months to repent.

5. When he finally yielded, God gave him 3 choices for the punishment. David chose pestilence.

6. Plague started the next morning and continued for the 3 appointed days.

7. God permitted David to see the judgment angel hovering over Jerusalem near the threshing floor of Araunah, a Jebusite.

8. David knew his actions had caused destruction and the presence of the death angel.

9. II Sam. 24:15 & I Chron. 21:14: 70,000 men of Israel lost their lives because of David's actions.

II Sam. 24:16 And when the angel stretched out His hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented from the destruction, and said to the angel who was destroying the people, "It is enough; now restrain your hand."

And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

The Altar on the Threshing Floor - II Sam. 24:18-25

¹⁸ And Gad [prophet] came that day [with message of hope] to David and said to him, "Go up, erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." ¹⁹ So David, according to the word of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded. ²⁰ Now Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming toward him. So Araunah went out and bowed before the king with his face to the ground. ²¹ Then Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" And David said, "To buy the threshing floor from you, to build an altar to the LORD, that the plague may be withdrawn from the people." ²² Now Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take and offer up whatever *seems* good to him. Look, *here are* oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing implements and the yokes of the oxen for wood." ²³ All these, O king, Araunah has given to the king." And Araunah said to the king, "May the LORD your God accept you." ²⁴ Then the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy *it* from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD heeded the prayers for the land, and the plague was withdrawn from Israel.

Key Points of the Purchase:

#1 David knew the threshing floor must be purchased; he refused to accept it as a gift.

#2 I will not sacrifice a burnt offering to the LORD that costs me nothing.

#3 50 shekels of silver to purchase the oxen and the wooden yokes for fuel; 600 shekels of gold to purchase the entire threshing floor [I Chron. 21:25]

#4 When the priest offered the sacrifices, God sent fire from heaven to consume them as a token of His acceptance.

Note: Where sin abounded, Grace abounded more.

Note: The land David purchased was no ordinary piece of property.

- a. It was the place where Abraham had placed his only son, Isaac, on the altar.
- b. David consecrated the site to the Lord and used it as a place of sacrifice and worship.
- c. This is the site where Solomon would build the Temple.

II Chronicles 3:1a Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to David his father.

Temple sacrifices offered at the future sight of the crucifixion of Jesus!

We are the beneficiaries of a love story, written in blood on a wooden cross, which was to be erected in Judea some 2000 years later and another Father offered His Son on that very spot!

Consider: Where does God provide my needs? In the place of His assignment!

I cannot expect God's provision in my life if I am not in His will.

When does God provide my need? Heb. 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Why does God provide my need? For the great glory of His Name!

What is the 1st petition in the Lord's Prayer in Matt. 6:9 ? Hallowed be Thy Name

IV. Look Forward To What God Has For You

Gen. 22:15-24 Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, ¹⁶ and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only *son*— ¹⁷ blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which *is* on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.¹⁸ In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." ¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

1. There is always an "afterward" to the tests of life.

Heb. 12:11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been Trained By It.

I Pet. 5:10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*.

2. God Never Wastes Suffering.

Job 23:10 But He knows the way that I take; *When* He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.

3. Abraham received several blessings from God due to obedient faith.

a. He received a "new approval" from God. [Gen. 22:12]

b. Abraham had described this difficult experience as "worship." [v. 5]

He obeyed God's will and sought to please God's heart and God commended him.

Consider: It is worth going through trials if, at the end, the Father can say to me, "Well done."

c. Abraham received back "a new son." He and Isaac had been at the altar together.

Isaac was now "a living sacrifice." Abraham gave Isaac back to God.

d. God gave Abraham new assurances. [Gen. 22:16-18]

Wiersbe: What two men did on a lonely altar would one day bring blessing to the whole world.

Spurgeon: The promises of God never shine brighter than in the furnace of affliction.

It is only by passing through trials that we come to KNOW who God is — His grace, His faithfulness, His sufficiency.

Heb. 6:12 It is through FAITH & PATIENCE we INHERIT the promises of God.