

He Offered His Son

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC

Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.

August 30, 2020

Diaspora XXIV – The Church Scattered, Twenty-fourth
Sunday

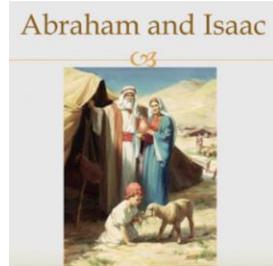
Text: Genesis 22:1-14

Purpose: The story of Abraham is one of obedience and trust. Abraham was obedient to God's request to offer His son on the altar. It was his faith and trust in God that enabled him to do this. God loved us so much that He gave us His son upon a cruel wooden cross as our substitute.

I. Introduction

Today we come to the story of Abraham offering his son upon the altar of sacrifice. Over the past few weeks, in our study of Genesis, we have seen the providential hand of God working in the lives of humanity. Due to the sin of mankind, God judged the world and flooded it. God chose Noah as His remnant because of his faith. Noah was obedient and built an ark of deliverance. Then when mankind's hearts were set upon usurping God, He intervened and confused the languages of the people and scattered them across the face of the earth. From that day until now, there have been thousands of languages spoken in different places all across the face of the earth. When the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah reached God's breaking point, God sent two angels to destroy the city. In that judgment, only Lot and his two daughters were saved.

You remember Abraham and Sarah. God began to unfold his plan of salvation with this man from the Ur of Chaldees. When Abram was 75 years old, God told them to go to a land that He would show them. In obedience, Abram left his home. When Abraham was 100 years old and his wife, Sarah, was 90 years old, the child of promise was finally given to them. God had promised twenty-five years earlier that his seed would become a great nation. In God's time and in God's way, God fulfilled His promise of a child named Isaac, which means "laughter."



Sometime between the time when Isaac was born and when he was 37 years old, (Sarah died when he was 37) Abraham was given instruction by God to take Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice to the Lord. To Abraham, this test would become his mountain of absolute surrender. In every person's walk with God, there comes a point of absolute surrender.

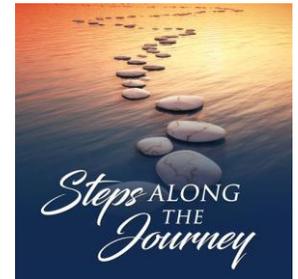
At this mountain of surrender, we find one of the clearest pictures of the relationship between God and Jesus, paralleled with the relationship between Abraham and Isaac. Just as Abraham was willing to offer his only son born to Sarah, many years later, God Himself would offer His only Son at Mt. Calvary. It is as if God was using Abraham as a canvas to paint the portrait of His Own heart as He willingly gave His Own Son to die for the sins of man.



How many of us would have been willing to surrender so much? If we were asked to surrender such a thing as this, we may crumble and fail. But when we examine Abraham closely, we see a man that was perceptive, prepared, and actively participated in God's plan. As we look at Abraham, let us examine our hearts to see if we are ready to climb the mount of absolute surrender.

II. Steps up the Mountain of Absolute Surrender

As with any journey, there is preparation involved. When you plan a trip, you often read brochures, or get a book about the place you are visiting. You may learn about the culture or language even before you get on the plane to go.



A. The Journey Involves Perception (verses 1-2)

In Abraham's case, his journey involved having a heart and mind ready and willing to receive God's word and instructions. He kept himself from the things of the world that would keep him from hearing the voice of the Lord.

1. To be Perceptive, this Demands a Relationship

If you have been married for any length of time, you know when something is wrong with your spouse. Even though they may not have said anything, because you are in a relationship with them, you are just perceptive to the slightest changes.

For Abraham to hear and know the voice of the Lord, Abraham was already involved in a relationship with the Lord. Abraham came to know the Lord back in Genesis 12 where God told him to leave his family and go as the Lord led. This relationship led them through many crises. (The deception in Egypt, the birth of Ishmael, the struggle with Lot, the abandonment of Hagar and Ishmael)



The first step in knowing the Lord involves establishing a relationship. What about you? Are you in a relationship with God? God has issued an invitation for all to come unto Him. Maybe you are estranged from God because you refuse to let go of self and want to continue to satisfy yourself. God is patiently seeking every person to be in a relationship with Him.

2. To be Perceptive, this Demands a Readiness

When you are in a relationship with someone, and notice a shift or change in the other person, you must be willing and ready to respond to the needs of the other.



In Abraham's case, as soon as God spoke, Abraham responded. He was listening and waiting for the voice of the Lord. Abraham didn't give excuses or put off doing what the Lord asked. He responded quickly and obediently. Many times, we have a window of opportunity to respond to God and we delay. Our delay results in a loss of blessing. Maybe God is impressing upon you to do something and

you have delayed doing it. God wants to bless you and strengthen your faith. But maybe you don't trust God to surrender and to be obedient.

Abraham trusted God enough to even offer His son on an altar. If God could give him a son at the age of 100 with a wife that is 90, surely God could raise Isaac from the dead. Abraham trusted God – Abraham absolutely trusted God – with that level of surrender.

3. To be Perceptive, this Demands a Revelation

We may not understand everything in life, but as we live it out, God unfolds His plan before us. If we are in relationship with Him and are ready and willing to obey Him. God had revealed a plan for Abraham's life. The steps of a righteous man are ordered by the Lord.

In Abraham's case, he defined his command. *"thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest."*

Abraham's son Ishmael (by Hagar) had already been sent away. Now God's command included taking away Isaac. God was asking for everything that Abraham had. God was asking Abraham to place all his hopes and dreams on the altar of surrender. God said, *"give it all to me."* God wants nothing less than everything.



Jesus said in the Gospel of Luke 14:26-27, *"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not bear his*

cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” A relationship with God involves absolute and unconditional surrender.

God also gave detailed commands to Abraham. He was told to take his son, go to the land of Moriah, and offer Isaac as a sacrifice to the Lord. When God speaks, He may not give all the details for His plan, but He will always make your next step clear.

Sometimes when God gives us a task or command, it is often a darkened command. God does not explain “why?” to men. We cannot understand the ways of God. His ways are higher than our ways. If we get caught in the trap of “why” we lose our faith and trust in God. It is OK to ponder that in our heart, but I have found that God is not in the habit of explaining why to me.



I have met many people that have said, “When I get to heaven, I am going to ask God, “Why?”” I smile thinking that God does not need to explain Himself to us. He is God and we are NOT!

B. The Journey Involves Preparation (verses 3-5)

Abraham was a man that was prepared. For a few moments this morning, I want to point out that there were three areas in which Abraham was prepared.



1. His Hands were Prepared.

Abraham wasted no time when the word of the Lord came to him. The next morning, he gathered the supplies he needed, the wood and the fire, packed his donkey, brought Isaac and his servants with him, and began his journey in the direction God indicated. Once the order came, he took his provision and set about the task. There was a sense of urgency in obeying God.



2. His Head was Prepared.

This journey involved three days travel to the area God designated. To Abraham, this request must not have made any sense. The scripture does not tell us that Sarah knew of this trip or request. The scripture does not tell us if Isaac knew in advance what was happening. But the scripture does tell us that Abraham obeyed. The night before they left, Abraham’s head was prepared and willing to surrender everything – his future, his son, his all – just because God asked.



How many individuals have heard the call of God upon their lives and left the comfort of their present situation and gone on the mission field? I know of a couple in India today that have left all to reach a people group with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How many have left their jobs to go back to school to prepare for what God has in mind for them? Many students I went to Campbell with left good jobs to prepare for ministry. Today, they are pastors,

associate pastors, music leaders, chaplains, and youth ministers. Only those who are ready to go as the Lord leads will be willing to abandon everything simply because they feel God calling them.

3. His Heart was Prepared.

Abraham knew why he was there. He was there to offer his beloved son to God.

Abraham was willing to offer his all as an act of obedience and an act of worship.

Worship is ascribing something of worth to someone. Christian worship is coming before God in humility. Worship is an act of self-surrender. Worship is giving our best offering to God. Worship is singing songs of praise back to God. Worship is participation, not simply sitting in the pew observing the “worship service.” Worship is an act of the people, giving back to God. We can worship God through singing songs, reading scripture, giving an offering, yielding our hearts in prayer.

Abraham viewed God as being worthy of receiving all he had without question or reservation. How was he able to do that? Because he knew that God was able to keep His word! Abraham knew that his seed would be a great nation. If Isaac died, then God’s promise would not be fulfilled. Abraham so trusted God’s promise that he was willing to surrender the most precious thing in his life – Isaac.



HEART

i all to You,
surrender,
everything, **every** part of me.

i all to You,
surrender,
all of my **dreams**, all of me.
Your love makes it worth it all.

Let me ask you a question. Is there anything in your life you are holding on to more than God? Have you reached a place of absolute surrender in your life? If you ever reach that point, then you will realize that God owns everything and has a right to it all.

God is calling us to have our hands, head and heart ready to respond to God.

C. The Journey Involves Participation (verses 6-14)

God calls us to journey with God. He is with us as we go – we are not alone. We are in it with God. He doesn’t abandon us. He walks with us through our trials and tribulations. In Abraham’s case, it involved active participating.

1. The Participation is Personal (verse 6)

Abraham placed the wood on Isaac’s back. He personally took the fire and the knife and led the way to the place of worship. It was an event of commitment and sacrifice. God is calling all of us to be involved in the ministry of service.

Personal

There are numerous places where we can serve and work in this church. But so many have said “no” to being actively involved. Some members are depending upon others to do the work in the church. Some want to sit around and talk about the needs in our church but are not willing to take on areas of responsibility. Our church will not grow or reach out to our community until we are willing to personally commit to make a difference.

2. The Participation is Profound (verses 7-10)

Abraham willingly and completely obeyed the command of God. He held nothing back!



He gave everything he had longed for, lived for, and loved at a simple command of God! Abraham was able to surrender Isaac back to God because he had already offered Isaac in his heart! If you ever want to reach this point of obedience in your life, you need to count all that you hold dear – EVERYTHING – as already offered to God.

3. The Participation is Powerful (verses 11-14)

Abraham demonstrated his trust in God and God demonstrated His love of Abraham. Abraham was blessed and God was honored.



The power of God was demonstrated through receiving God's provision. God gave Abraham his son Isaac. Abraham gave Isaac back to God. In doing this, the Lord honored Abraham's faith by providing a ram as a substitute for the life of Isaac.

The encounter there on Mount Moriah was one where Abraham received a word of praise from God, "*I am pleased with you.*" This story was not about Isaac, it was about Abraham. God wanted Abraham in a place of surrender and love for God. At this point, God was more concerned about Abraham instead of Isaac.

The same is true for us. God is not interested in our sacrifice. He is interested in our heart, our willingness to surrender.

This participation was powerful because Abraham received God's promise. God renewed His covenant with Abraham. In verse 14, we encounter a new name for God – ***Jehovah-Jireh*** – or as your translation may say, "***The-Lord-Will-Provide.***" Abraham's relationship with God is stronger than ever, after going to the mount of absolute surrender.



III. Parallels between Isaac and Christ

Two servants went up with Abraham.

Two others died at the sides of Jesus.

Isaac willingly laid on the altar of sacrifice.

Jesus willingly surrendered to the cross.

It was on Mount Moriah

It was on a Mount outside Jerusalem.
(the very same mountain!)

Abraham provided the altar

God provided a cross

God provided a sacrifice; a ram for Abraham

God provided a sacrifice – His Son the Lamb

Isaac was a young man.

Jesus was around 33 when crucified

Isaac was Abraham's only Son by Sarah

Jesus is God's only beloved Son

Isaac took the wood on his back

Jesus bore his own cross.

Trip took three days to the altar of sacrifice

Three days later Christ returned from the dead

This was the work of Abraham and Isaac, not the servants

Sky darkened 3 hours – this was the work of God

Jesus - not the work of man

For Abraham, this was the trial of Faith

His life demonstrates the Sacrifice of Faith

The Obedience of Faith,

The Expectation of Faith

The Work of Faith

The Assurance of Faith

The Persistence of Faith

The Victory of Faith – May we have the same victory
in our trials of life.

IV. Our Trials Strengthen our Faith

God tested Abraham. I believe any person that God calls, any person whom God saves, any person whom God uses, is going to be tested. God tested Abraham, and God tests



those who are His own today. He tests you and me, and the tests are given to us to strengthen our Faith, to establish us, and to make us serviceable for Him.

If you are in the midst of a trial, take comfort from the words of one of my favorite praise and worship songs. (Invite the congregation to join in this song)

God will make a way

where there seems to be no way,

He works in ways, we cannot see,

He will make a way for me.

He will be my guide, draw me closely to His side,

With love and strength for each new day,

He will make a way.

God will make a way.

God is providing a Journey of Faith for you.

Trust Him as He leads.

He is our Jehovah-Jireh – our provider!

LET US PRAY