

ABRAHAM OFFERS UP ISAAC

BIBLE TEXT: Genesis 22:1-18.

LESSON 11 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "God, will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (Genesis 22:8).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Genesis 22:1-18.

¹ And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

² And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

³ And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

⁵ And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

⁷ And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

⁸ And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

NOTES:

A Test

Isaac was born many years after God had promised a son to Abraham. This delay taught Abraham to have patience and faith in God. Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Romans 4:20, 21). Abraham and his wife must have been very happy to have this son of promise in their old age. They loved their son dearly. Abraham had proved God, and then God proved Abraham. God tried him in a severe test. God called Abraham, who answered promptly, "Behold, here I am." God told Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering. God's instructions were very plain. He told Abraham exactly where to make the offering, and to offer his only son whom he loved so much.

No doubt some people would have tried to persuade God to change His demand, reminding God that He had promised to make Abraham a father of many nations, and surely God would not let anything happen to his only son. Some people probably would have told God that they would give anything else, but that they loved their son too much to give him up. Other people might have tried to make themselves think that they had heard wrong, or that God did not really mean just what He had said. But Abraham rose early in the morning and started for Mount Moriah.

Prepared to Obey

Abraham did not make a big announcement so there would be many onlookers. He did not ask sympathy of anyone. This was between God and himself, and it must have been sacred to Abraham. It is not recorded that he told anyone, not even the boy's mother. But Abraham went prepared to carry out God's command. He took wood, a knife, fire, rope to bind the sacrifice, and the offering -- his "only son," Isaac. Abraham loved Isaac. It would have hurt him as much as any father to do this to his only son. This was a hard test, but Abraham obeyed God. He did not wait, and put off obeying God.

After travelling three days, Abraham saw the place where God showed him to offer Isaac. Abraham said to the two servants with him: "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." Come again to you! Did Abraham really think that Isaac would return with him? Yes, he did. Abraham was "accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead" (Hebrews 11:19).

Lamb of God

As father and son walked along together they talked. Abraham had taught his son about burnt offerings to God. Isaac noticed that there was no lamb. Everything else needed for a burnt offering was there. But where was the sacrifice? Abraham answered, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

Abraham gave a prophecy. God did provide Himself with a lamb -- His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Many years later John the Baptist saw Jesus and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Isaac being offered by his father upon Mount Moriah was a type of Jesus, who gave Himself for the sins of the world.

⁹ And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

¹⁰ And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

¹¹ And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

¹² And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

¹⁵ And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

¹⁶ And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

¹⁷ That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

¹⁸ And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Willing and Obedient

Isaac was a willing son. He saw the altar being built and the wood laid in order. How do you think he felt as his father bound him and laid him on the altar on the wood? We feel certain that Isaac did not struggle against the ropes, did not accuse his father, did not give any reproachful look. Isaac was willing and obedient to his father and to God. Abraham must have loved him dearly for his honourable actions. How many children would have said, "I don't want to," or "You have no right," or "You don't love me." Some children do not want their parents to be obedient to God; they hinder their parents in serving Him; they bring heartache and sorrow by their disobedience. When children are saved they help their parents to serve God. When their parents are privileged to do special work for the Lord, the children are willing to stay at home. They pray for and with the parents. They co-operate, and encourage their parents to do as God commands -- like the daughter of Jephthah who said, "My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth" (Judges 11:36). Isaac was like Jesus in that he was willing to obey.

A Quick Answer

Abraham took the knife and stretched forth his hand. At that very moment a voice called, "Abraham, Abraham." He answered, "Here am I." The angel of the Lord had spoken to Abraham, and it was good that he answered so quickly. He could have let the angel call and call. He could have said that he was busy. He could have waited until he had finished what God had given him to do. Let us learn a lesson from Abraham to answer promptly. Afterwards, Abraham was very happy that he had answered so quickly. The angel gave a message from the Lord. He said: "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." Although Abraham had believed that God would restore Isaac, he had not expected it to happen in this manner. In a thicket was a ram, caught by the horns. Abraham offered it for a burnt offering, instead of offering his son. God had provided for the offering.

Tried and Faithful

So far as Abraham was concerned, the offering was as good as made. God could see faith and obedience in the heart of Abraham. God can see what is in our heart. Sometimes He permits us to be tried to show us what is in our heart. Often when people pray at the altar they consecrate their family as well as themselves to God. In turn, He may test them to see if they really meant their consecration. Today God's followers do not actually slay and burn their families, but they love God more than they love people and do not allow others to hinder them from serving the Lord. Christians, in a spiritual way, put their loved ones on the altar, commit them unto God, and leave them in God's hand.

Blessings

Abraham did not lose anything by obeying God. Rather, he gained blessings, and God renewed His covenant with Abraham. God promised that Abraham's seed would be "as the sand which is upon the sea shore" -- so much would God bless Abraham and his family. God told him, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." God had told Abraham that before, but Abraham still had to be obedient to God in order for that promise to be fulfilled. God's chosen people, the Jews, are Abraham's family. True Christians are Abraham's children by faith. "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (Galatians 3:7). "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians

3:29). Truly, God's promise to Abraham has been fulfilled.

Mount Moriah

This mountain where Abraham built an altar to offer his son is an important place. This first altar which Abraham built is a type of salvation which Jesus, the Lamb of God, made possible when He shed His Blood on Calvary. Other altars were built on Mount Moriah, too.

David, king of Israel, was commanded to erect an altar in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. David paid the full price to buy the property from Araunah, although the man wanted to give it to the king. David said: "I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing" (II Samuel 24:24). This second altar that was built on Mount Moriah is like the second Christian experience, sanctification, which one receives from the Lord when he deepens his consecrations. See Lesson 247.

Mount Moriah was also the site of the Temple, which Solomon built. The blessings, which God poured out at the dedication of the Temple typify the Christian experience of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. There were 120 priests, all sanctified, as there were 120 saints, in one accord, who received the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost (**Acts 1:15**; ¹⁵ And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) **Acts 2:1-4**; ¹ And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.). As the Temple was being dedicated there was "one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD" (II Chronicles 5:13). The glory of the Lord filled the place, to give the Lord's approval and to bless the people. See Lesson 258.

Have you made three altars unto the Lord? first, when the Blood of Jesus blotted out your sins and you were saved; second, when your deeper consecrations were made and you were sanctified; third, when you were filled with power for service and you were baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire. Have you received all three of these Christian experiences?

QUESTIONS

1. Who is the father of faith?
2. Whose son was Isaac?
3. Why did Abraham go to Mount Moriah?
4. What did he take along?
5. How do we know that he believed God would spare his son?
6. What was slain for the burnt offering?
7. Who is the Lamb of God?
8. What did and do for Abraham because he obeyed?