

ON THE MOUNTAIN OF ABSOLUTE SURRENDER (Genesis 22:1-14)

This is one of the great mountain top passages of the Bible. In it, we find one of the clearest pictures of *the coming sacrifice of Jesus on the cross at Calvary.*

It appears **God used the life of Abraham** as a canvas to paint a portrait of **His Own heart** as **He willingly gave His Own Son to die for the sin of man.** This is usually how we approach this passage.

However, there is **another dimension** to this text.

I would like to look at this passage from **Abraham's perspective.** As I read the Bible, I'm confronted with the truth, **no other man** was asked to give so much.

Yet, as **Abraham's sacrifice to the Lord is offered**, *we do not see the heart of a devastated broken man. **Instead, We see the heart of a worshiper!***

I believe there are **lessons that we can learn** from **Abraham** today.

As you and I pass through this life, **There will be demands made on our lives by God.** These demands will call for **personal and profound sacrifices** on our part.

From a human perspective, we might **not want to do** what **God calls us to do.**

God's demand from our life is total, absolute and unquestioning obedience to His perfect will...

Saul Disobeys the Lord - 1 Samuel 15:3,8-9 - "Go and attack the Amalekites! Destroy them and all their possessions. **Don't have any pity.**

⁸ Every Amalekite was killed **except King Agag.** ⁹ Saul and his army let Agag live, and they also **spared the best sheep and cattle.** They *didn't want to destroy anything of value,* so they only killed the animals that were **worthless or weak.**

The Lord Rejects Saul - 1 Samuel 15:22-23 - ²² "Tell me," Samuel said. "Does the Lord really want sacrifices and offerings? **No! He doesn't want your sacrifices. He wants you to obey him.**" ²³ Rebellious against God or disobeying him because you are proud is just as bad as worshiping idols or asking them for advice. You refused to do what God told you, so God has decided that you can no longer be king."

Paul reminds us in Romans that God is looking for a Living Sacrifice, totally surrendered too Him!

A Living Sacrifice - Romans 12:1-2 - Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Even though we know this, there is still a part of us that wants to **rebel** against the **command of God** for our lives.

Let's join **Abraham** as he climbs **The Mountain Of Absolute Surrender**.

There are **steps** we must take **if we will climb** that mountain.

Let's see what it would take for us to be On The Mountain Of Absolute Surrender as well.

****INVOLVES PERCEPTION**

Abraham Tested – Genesis 22:1-2 - Sometime later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" ***"Here I am," he replied.*** ²Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you."

We must be in a position to hear God.

This Demands A Relationship

- Abraham **came to know the Lord** back in Genesis chapter 12.
- The reality of his conversion is revealed in Gen. 15:6.
- Abram **believed** the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

Their relationship had often been rocky, He wasn't perfect, but he knew the Lord.

How about you? Have you been saved? If so, then no doubt your relationship has been rocky too. Be that as it may, **there is still a relationship.** If you have not been saved, you need to bow to His will and be saved!

This Demands A Readiness

- As soon as God speaks, **Abraham responds!**
- **This implies that he had been listening for the voice of His Lord!!!**
- And he was **not** disappointed.

John 4:23 - Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

- **God is on the lookout for people who want to be in a deep, close relationship with Himself.**
- If you ever get **hungry for the Lord**, **you will not be disappointed!**

This Demands A Revelation

God revealed His plan for Abraham's life.

This was a necessary part of the process, **for no person can know the mind of God until it is revealed to people by God.**

1. **Notice How God Defines His Commands** – “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac....”
 - Abraham's son **Ishmael** had already been sent away.
 - Now, the command comes **that would take Isaac away as well.**

God was asking for everything Abraham had!

- All his **hopes**, his **dreams** and his **plans** **were bound up in Isaac.**
- **God says, "give it all to me!"**

God wants nothing less than everything!

2. **Notice How God Details His Commands** - God was **very precise** about what Abraham was to do.
 - **When God speaks, He may not reveal every detail of His plan.**

But your next step will always be made clear.

3. God does not explain the "*why?*" to us!

- Does the "*why*" even matter? It shouldn't!
- Faith knows the path of God always leads to good for us and glory for Him.

Romans 8:28 - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

****INVOLVES PREPARATIONS**

Genesis 22:3-5 ³ Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. ⁵ He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."

As we observe Abraham doing what the Lord commanded, We see a man who is thoroughly prepared.

There are three areas in which Abraham made his preparations.

V. 3 His Hands Were Prepared

- Abraham wasted no time. He got up and got going!!!
- He gathered everything he would need to do what God had commanded.
- He left nothing out, but he took nothing extra!

John 9:4 - As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work.

- There is urgency to the commands of God.
- The moment He calls is the moment you should act.

Procrastination has caused the death on many profound spiritual experiences.

- **We miss them because we hesitate.**

V. 4-5a His Head Was Prepared

Abraham had three days and three nights to think about what was about to happen.

- To him, it must have made no sense at all, yet He did it without question!

All he knew was:

1. *Isaac was the future* - Gen. 17; and

2. *God wanted Isaac back!*

- Even though he couldn't make it add up mentally!
- By faith he was willing to obey God.

This is the key to consistent spiritual victory! We are called to walk by faith -

Romans 1:17 - For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, **"The just shall live by faith."**

God help us to come to the place where, Even when God's commands make absolutely no sense, we will still obey Him without question or reservation!

V. 5b **His Heart Was Prepared**

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

He was there to **give everything** that was present in that day and all that was promised for tomorrow.

Yet, he looked at it as **a service of worship!**

Define worship - It is ascribing worth to someone!

- Worship is taking a place of **absolute humility before God.**
- Thereby **leaving Him, alone, in the place of exaltation!**

Abraham viewed God as being worthy of receiving all he had without question or without reservation.

How could he do this? Because Abraham knew that God ALWAYS honors His Word

Hebrews 11:17-19 - Abraham had been promised that Isaac, his only son, would continue his family. But when Abraham was tested, he had faith and was willing to sacrifice Isaac, ¹⁹ because he was sure that God could raise people to life. This was just like getting Isaac back from death.

His great statement of faith in

Genesis 22:8 - And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

- **"God Himself will provide!"**
- **This is the place God would have us all to come to!**

God wants you and me in a place in life where no one or nothing in our lives is more precious to us than He is!

Can you honestly say: God is more important to you than anything else in life?

Be careful before you answer!

- Have you honestly come to the place of **total surrender to God?**
- **If you ever do, you will learn that you have no rights, no possessions, no positions, nothing but Him and His will for your life.**

INVOLVES PARTICIPATION

Gen. 22:6 - Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife.

This Participation Is Personal

- Abraham **personally** placed the wood on Isaac.
- He **personally** took the fire and the knife, and he **personally** led the way.

For Abraham, This was an event of personal commitment and sacrifice.

God has determined that **you and I are to be personally and intimately involved in His service and worship.**

A Living Sacrifice - Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

Are you personally, intimately involved with God and His work?

God has a perfect, precious plan for your life. Only your involvement will result in its being accomplished.

This Participation Is Profound

Gen 22:7-10⁷ Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

⁸ Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together.

⁹ When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

Abraham willingly and completely obeyed the command of God.

- **He held nothing back!**
- He gave up everything he loved at the simple command of God!
- **What an act of love and worship!**
- **Have you come to that place in your life?**
- **Do you even want to?**

How could Abraham do this? Easy! Isaac was already dead!

- Isaac had already been offered in Abraham's heart, He died in verse 2 when God asked for him. **Abraham's commitment was to the Lord!!!!**

This Participation Is Powerful

Genesis 22:11-14 But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied.

¹² "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

¹³ Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided."

Abraham's participation was powerful

- **It gave God an opportunity to flex His muscles.**
- It gave **Abraham** the opportunity to receive some special blessings.

He Received God's Provision

Abraham gave up Isaac and got him back again because he minded God.

Abraham's faith honored the Lord and God in turn honored Abraham's faith.

While Abraham and Isaac climbed one side of the mountain, a ram was coming up the other side of the mountain!

God had already gone ahead and made a way!

(Note: That will still work today! Our God is still Jehovah-Jireh. When we do what He tells us, no matter what the cost, we will see Him bless in a profound way!)

He Received God's Praise

Abraham got to hear the Lord say, "*I am pleased with you!*" VS 12

This verse points out the whole purpose behind this episode.

This was never about Isaac; it had always been about Abraham!

God wanted Abraham in that place of total surrender and love for Him.

- That's what it's about in our lives as well!
- When God's commands calls for sacrifice,
- It has nothing to do with **what we are told to give up.**

It has everything to do with our being willing to give it up at the simple command of God.

God doesn't want your Isaac's, He wants you!

Is there anything in your life that you have not been willing to give to the Lord?

He Received God's Promise - Genesis 22:15-19 - ¹⁵The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time ¹⁶and said, "I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, ¹⁸and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me." ¹⁹Then Abraham returned to his servants, and they set off together for Beersheba. And Abraham stayed in Beersheba.

God renewed His covenant with Abraham. God knew what Abraham would do!

He put him to the test so that Abraham might see what was in his own heart.

He was brought to a blessed place of peace, provision and promise, ***because he put God ahead of everything else in life.***

Matthew 6:33 - But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. **If you really want God's best, then put God first!**

CLOSE: Is everything you have and are - totally, absolutely and completely surrendered to God?

God isn't really interested in your Isaac's, it's you He wants!

Does He have all of you there is to have?