

Our Covenant God – Part Thirteen

Abraham's eighth encounter with God

Last week we started to look at Abraham's eighth, and final, encounter with God in Genesis 22, where God asked Abraham to offer Isaac up as a sacrifice on a mountain in a land called Moriah.

In summary, we saw that:

1. This encounter was a new beginning of a deeper relationship between God and Abraham.
2. This final encounter was almost a mirror image of the first encounter. Those two encounters are a frame that the picture, being the covenant, fits inside.
3. God said please! God did not order or command Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. God was appealing to Abraham on behalf of their friendship.
4. Abraham was obedient to God and was armed with God's covenant promises to him and knew that God was devoted to him personally.
5. Abraham was to leave Gerar and go to a mountain in the land of Moriah. Moriah means God sees.
6. Isaac was a young man, not a helpless child. He was a willing sacrifice who laid his life down in obedience to his father.
7. Abraham believed that God would raise Isaac from the dead and that they would both return from the mountain afterwards.

Now back to Genesis 22:

Genesis 22:1-14 (NKJV) Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He 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."

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. Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. 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."

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. 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 for Himself the 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. And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." 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."

Our Covenant God – Part Thirteen

Then Abraham lifted his eyes and **looked**, and **[behold]** 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. And Abraham called the name of the place, **The-LORD-Will-Provide**; as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of the LORD it shall be **provided**.”

To see or not to see – That is the question!

Today what we are going to look at is the main theme of this whole encounter. It can be summed up in one word: SEE.

The word ‘see’ is repeated constantly throughout this chapter. In the passage above I have highlighted each instance. To see is more than simply looking at something with your eyes. It is a detailed and experiential examination which results in deep understanding and responses from the parties involved.

Firstly, in verse 1, Abraham’s response to God is usually translated “Here I am”. The King James Version translates it as: “Behold, here I am.” In fact, the King James Version translates this the best way because the Hebrew word used there means “behold” or “see”. The Strongs number is 2009. The modern way of pronouncing this Hebrew word is “hineni”.

Therefore when God called Abraham’s name, his response to God was an invitation to God to SEE him. Abraham actually told God to examine him... and so God did by asking him to offer Isaac up as a sacrifice to Him.

In this chapter Abraham says “hineni” three times. I have highlighted them in **blue**. The first time he says it to God. The second is found in verse 7 where he says it to his son, Isaac. The third time he says it to the messenger of God in verse 11.

The second word associated with ‘SEE’ is “**Moriah**”. Moriah means “God sees” and it was the name of the land where the mountain was found in. We do not know exactly which mountain this was but we know that it appears to be in the vicinity of Jerusalem. Moriah is made up of two Hebrew words: Strongs numbers 3050 and 7200. 3050 is a name for God: Jah. 7200 means ‘see’.

The Hebrew word ‘see’, (Strongs 7200) is highlighted in **green**. You will see that twice it is translated by the New King James translators as ‘provide’. This is quite correct but perhaps it would flow better if, instead of it saying: “My son, God will **provide** for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.”, it said “My son, God will **see to it** for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” That is how it was expressed in the Hebrew, after all.

There is another interesting find in verse 14. Abraham called the place “**The-LORD-Will-Provide**” or “**Jehovah Jireh**”, depending on which Bible translation you use. This word is a combination of Hebrew Strongs numbers: 3068 and 7200. 3068 is “JHWH” and 7200 is the same word that we have highlighted in green and we see in “Moriah”, meaning “see”.

Therefore, Moriah and Jehovah Jireh (or “The-LORD-Will-Provide”) both mean the same thing “God sees”. Abraham experienced God examining him in the deepest possible way. Abraham’s trust and loyalty to God was tested and when Abraham proved to be a faithful friend, God then showed Abraham the plan that He had all along: To provide His own Son, Jesus, to die in the place of Abraham’s offspring.

To get to the place where “God sees” we see that twice Abraham lifted up his eyes. In verse 4, he lifted up his eyes and saw from afar the mountain where God sees. In verse 13 we see Abraham on that mountain, lifting up his eyes to see the ram that God provided. Today many people have seen from afar the mountain where God sees. But it is not enough to simply see it from afar. We have to climb that

Our Covenant God – Part Thirteen

mountain and see God's provision on that high place. Many see Jesus on the Cross from afar but few climb that mountain and see (experience and examine) what God has provided for them.

In John 8:56, Jesus said: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad." I used to think that applied to him seeing the smoking oven and the burning torch that passed between the animal carcasses in Genesis 15:17 but after 'seeing' how the main theme of Genesis 22 is sight, I am convinced that this is what Jesus was referring to.

God told Abraham to go to the place where God sees and sees to it. And because Abraham did so, he ended up SEEING what God had seen to (or provided). The 'seeing' was mutual.

The seeing was mutual. Think about that for a minute. That speaks about friendship. In a friendship both parties are open and transparent with each other. Both see and are seen. God and Moses also had that same type of relationship. The Bible describes it as "face to face" communication. Face speaks of open revelation. We identify people by seeing their faces. Faces tell us things that no words, verbal or written, can. You can discern a person's mood by looking into their face. If a person doesn't make or maintain eye contact that often indicates that he or she is lying. Woman who have deep-seated feelings of low self-worth often hide their faces behind their hair. In short, we understand people better when we see their faces. When you look into your friend's eyes you can see deeper than what words can express. You can see who they really are and they can see who you really are too.

Exodus 33:11 (NKJV) So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

This same transparency should exist between us and God as well as between each of us who are believers in Christ. John had that type of relationship with Gaius, whom he describes as "beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth" in 3 John 1:1. He ended his short letter to Gaius with:

3 John 1:14 (NKJV) but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face.

In summary, we see in Genesis 22 that Abraham invited God to examine him. God did so by asking him to offer up Isaac to Him. When Abraham did so, he showed God who he really was – a friend of God. In turn, God then provided a ram (which represented Jesus) to take Isaac's place, thereby showing that He was a friend of Abraham.

Why did God send Jesus to die on a Cross? He did so because of His friendship with Abraham to save Abraham's offspring.

There are no homework questions for this study session. There are just two points for you to ponder this week:

1. True vision is to see as God sees, to discern, to understand, to experience, and to 'see to it'.
2. Open and honest communication and transparency are vital and key ingredients of a friendship.

Our Covenant God – Part Thirteen

It is all about Jesus

The story of Abraham offering up Isaac really tells the story of God offering up His Son, Jesus. The following table is a comparison of Isaac and Jesus and highlights the similarities between them.

Isaac	Jesus
Supernatural Conception and Birth	
His birth was the result of a promise.	
There was a long interval between the promise and the fulfillment.	
His mother, Sarah, was barren. Genesis 11:30	His mother, Mary, was a virgin. Luke 1:27
His father was impotent. Romans 4:19	His father had never slept with His mother. Luke 1:27
Before he was born, God gave him his name. Genesis 17:19	Before He was born, God gave Him His name. Luke 1:31
His mother conceived after overhearing God say that she would have a son. Genesis 18:10-12	His mother conceived after receiving God's Word from an angel that she would have a Son. Luke 1:26-38
His birth occurred at God's appointed time and not before.	
He was a joy to his father.	
He was identified as being his father's only begotten son.	
He was circumcised on the 8 th day.	
He was the result of Abraham's covenant with God.	
Through Isaac Abraham's offspring would be reckoned.	Through Him God's offspring (that's us) would be reckoned.
Offered as a Sacrifice by his Father	
Abraham offered up his son, Isaac, because of His covenant devotion to his friend, God!	God offered up His Son, Jesus, because of His covenant devotion to His friend, Abraham!
He was to be sacrificed on a mountain.	
He took a donkey to the place of sacrifice.	
He carried the wood he would be sacrificed on.	
He walked for 3 days on his way to be sacrificed.	He ministered for 3 years on his way to be sacrificed.
He was a consenting adult who laid his life down as a sacrifice in obedience to his father.	
God provided a ram (a male sheep) caught in a thicket of thorns to take Isaac's place.	He was the male Lamb who wore a crown of thorns that God provided to take our place.
His Reward	
He will have numerous descendants.	
His Resurrection	
He rose up, came back to life, after being on the wood of sacrifice	
Out with the Old, In with the New	
Abraham's wife, Sarah, died after Isaac was offered up to God, leaving Abraham free to remarry – which he did.	After Jesus was offered up to God, God's marriage to His wife, Israel, ended and a New Covenant (marriage) came into effect. (God never discarded Israel – He simply remarried her as we see in a later lesson)

Our Covenant God – Part Thirteen

Isaac	Jesus
The Selection of the Bride	
Abraham sent out his servant to find and prepare a wife for his son. Genesis 24	God the Father sent out the Holy Spirit to prepare a Bride for His Son John 15:26
Isaac's future bride was in a foreign land.	The Bride of Christ is made up of people from all lands and nations.
The father instructed the servant not to bring the bride back against her will.	The Holy Spirit does not win unwilling souls, only "whosoever will."
The bride was a beautiful virgin.	The Bride is a beautiful virgin.
"Whose daughter are you?" is the question whose answer qualified the bride.	"Whose daughter are you?" is the question whose answer qualifies the bride.
"Is there room for me?" the servant asked her.	"Is there room for me?" the Holy Spirit asks the Church today
The One sent by the Father	
The servant never spoke his own name but always spoke about his Master.	The Holy Spirit always points us to the Father and the Son.
The servant gives God all the glory.	The Holy Spirit always gives Father God all the glory.
The Preparation of the Bride	
The servant offered the bride ten gifts.	The Bride of Christ is given the gift of eternal life and nine gifts of the Holy Spirit.
The servant gave the bride silver jewelry.	Silver represents blood, redemption or its price. Jesus redeemed (bought back) His Bride, Israel, with His Blood.
The servant gave the bride gold jewelry.	Gold represents royalty, deity; highest quality; heavenly perfection. Once the Bride of Christ has been redeemed by the Blood of Jesus then she is perfect in Heaven's eyes!
The servant gave the bride garments.	As we know, garments represent identity. Christ's Bride puts on the garments of Salvation. No longer is she a sinner. She is now a saint. She is arrayed in fine linen in Revelation 19:8
The bride left her family and all she knew to be with her bridegroom, whom she had not yet seen.	The Bride of Christ forsakes all to follow Christ, whom she has not yet seen.
The servant took the bride to meet her bridegroom.	The Holy Spirit introduces us to Jesus Christ.
Isaac went out to meet his wife and brought her into his mother's tent.	Jesus brings His Bride into the covenant position and place of Israel. (She is Israel but is made up of Gentiles and Jews now!)
She became his wife, and he loved her.	We will be married to Jesus forever! He loves us!
Isaac's Inheritance	
Isaac (and his descendants) was Abraham's heir.	Jesus (with us) is God's heir.
God established His covenant with Isaac and his descendants.	God cut His covenant with Jesus and established it with us.
Isaac and his descendants inherited the Promised Land.	Jesus, together with us, inherits the Kingdom of God.