

Abrahams Faith

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[0 : 00] We'll turn with you now to one of the portions that we read, Genesis chapter 22, and we'll look tonight at verses 1 and 2. Genesis chapter 22, verses 1 and 2.

Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.

Now, when looking at the life of Abraham, we mustn't think he is an extra special kind of believer. We mustn't put him on a pedestal.

Rather, we must see him as an example of someone who showed in his life the basic elements that make up the life of faith.

And we see his life of faith lived out in real life. His life is the first example we have in the Bible of someone living by faith.

[1 : 06] We have Enoch, way back in Genesis chapter 5. He walked with God. But we're not told how he did this, so he doesn't help us.

He doesn't help us much, anyway, when we want to know more about a walk of faith. Some people, Christians and non-Christians, they give faith a sort of magical quality, a magical quality of its own.

It's a sort of magical wand to wave over life, to iron out all the creases. Others have faith in God, but it's on an almost bargain basis.

If we do so much, he will respond with so much. And when things go wrong, when tragedy comes in, maybe, or disaster strikes, these people turn bitter, and they feel God has let them down because he hasn't kept his side of the bargain when they were doing their best.

Faith, we must realize, is not really something that is born at the negotiating table at all. Faith is believing in the word of God.

[2 : 26] Faith is simply trusting in God. Faith is just a desperate dive out of a sinking boat with the cry, Lord, save me or I perish.

It is just coming with empty hands, calling upon him to help us, and we believe and trust that he will. Abraham's, when we look at Abraham's life, we see a man who shows us what faith involves.

A man who faced life's problems, and through them, he found that God is real, and that God is reliable. And notice that his faith was completely always based on the word of God.

Faith is simply a responding to the word of God. Faith takes God at his word. Because God said this, we believe it, and we act accordingly.

We hear the word, we either believe it or we don't. If we don't believe it, and don't trust God, then we go on our own way.

[3 : 41] But if we do believe it, then we do what the word says, and we trust God in the consequences. We trust God with the result. We trust him.

And that's what we see in the life of Abraham. He wasn't sure what was going on. He didn't know what was going to happen the next day or whatever. But he trusted God, and he took God at his word, and he did what God said.

In a reading, he's facing the supreme test of his faith, and he's ready for it. His faith had been tested many times, tested all his life. And he was led into a closer and closer relationship with God.

And the more he became close to God with this relationship that he had with him, trusting him more and more, the more he found that God was reliable, and that God was always doing what he said he would.

So we read at the beginning, when God's word came to him, at the very beginning of his life, and he was told, leave all and go to a place I will tell you of. He obeyed. And that's all he was told.

[4 : 50] He left his home in the Caldeans, his friends, his way of life, and he went to go to a place he didn't even know exactly where it was. And he didn't know anything about it.

Where is it, Lord? I'll tell you. What do the people like, Lord? I will tell you. What do they do, Lord? I will tell you. Are they friendly, Lord? I will tell you.

That was all he was going on. But God said, go there. And he didn't tell them anything else, except bit by bit. Later on, in a family quarrel with Lot, Abraham gave Lot the chance of where he wanted to live.

He gave Lot, told Lot that he could choose, because Abraham trusted God with the result. He knew that God would overrule the decision that Lot was making.

Then later on, when he fought against the kings who had gathered against him, he trusted God to protect him. And now we read here, and this is the top stone of his faith.

[5 : 51] We see the test about his own son, Isaac. Abraham was now about 112 years old. And he was in the evening of his days.

And he'd had many, many trials in his life. But now, the scene was peaceful and calm. It was peaceful all around him. The neighboring tribes are peaceful.

Everybody respected him. And he was rich. Chapter 13, verse 2. Abraham became very wealthy in livestock and in silver and in gold. And the thing that he had wanted all his life was a son.

And he had the son, Isaac. And Isaac was a healthy teenager running about the place. So everything was good. But it was really a calm before the storm.

Because there was still one test that he had to undergo. No. The test was, God came to him. Abraham was often speaking to God.

[6 : 52] And God was often speaking to him. And he, I'm sure, would often have been surprised at what God was telling him to do and what God said. Many times, he was blessed by what God told him.

But this command made, he just aghast at this command. This command was completely out of his sphere.

Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love. And go to the region of Malaya. Offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.

What? Isaac. Isaac, my only son. Isaac, whom I love. A burnt offering. Lord, whatever else you want.

Please, I will do it. Anything. Anything but this, Lord. Well, we don't know what Abraham thought. But we do note his immediate obedience to this absolutely frightening command.

[8 : 04] We read straight away, early the next morning. No argument. No hesitation. No delay. Abraham's attitude, God is God.

Oh, yes. It's an unbelievable command. But I cannot call God to the judgment bar. I cannot ask God, what are you doing?

So early the next morning, Abraham got up. And it's an example for us and guidance. Whatever our Christian duty is, do it.

And do it now. An immediate response to what we have to do. Eliminates second thoughts. And makes it easier in the long run. Do it and do it now.

No excuses. No squirming. No ifs or buts. We do it now. It looks as if Abraham didn't even tell Sarah.

[9 : 08] Or Eliezer, his faithful servant. Because if they had been told, I'm sure there would have been an obstruction. There would have been an obstacle.

But Abraham knew that any delay, any change in the orders would be treason against his majesty. And that's what we must realize. That any disobedience on our part or on anybody else's part is treason against his majesty.

God says to the world, believe in my son. And like Abraham, we must rise up early and obey.

We believe and act on what God says. We don't measure things by the world's standards. We don't work things out as according how we can arrange things to do things properly.

We don't work out, yes, I'll come forward maybe three or four communion times from now. No, the time is now. God says, do this. And we do it and we do it now.

[10 : 16] We rise up early and we do it. We act on his word. We hear him say, do this in remembrance of me. And we do it at the first available opportunity.

No prevarication. We don't ask for explanation for the circumstances that may come in upon us. We don't ask for explanation for the dark clouds which may envelop us.

Or the very weaknesses which are within us. We don't ask for explanation for the circumstances that may be in our lives. Weaknesses and things in our lives that may be torture and torment us.

No, we look beyond the immediate. And we cling to the promises of God. We hear God's word and we do it.

We see Abraham, his son Isaac, two servants, some wood on the donkey going on the journey.

[11 : 21] Leaving home next morning. Journey of three days. Three days. Three days with Abraham knowing that he was going to sacrifice his own son.

Seeing his own son round about him doing things for him. Talking to him and running and laughing around him. And he knew that he was going to sacrifice him on there.

Three days. Absolute agony. Do you think his father's love would have been tempted like Jonah to run away?

They came to Mount Moriah, the site of the temple. The site of the temple in the New Testament, of course. And we read about Abraham that he stopped the two servants going up.

They had been a previous help before to get to this stage. But there could be hindrances when it came to the actual sacrifice of Isaac.

[12 : 21] So Abraham, Isaac, took the wood and the knife. And the father and the son went on. There's nothing more poignant in the whole Bible than the way it says the two of them together.

Isaac, like a teenager, questioned Abraham about the sacrifice. The fire and the wood are here. But where is the lamb for the burnt offering?

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

And it says again, both of them together. And they finally came to a place that God had designated. And Abraham built an altar there.

And arranged the wood on it. He then took hold of his son Isaac. Tied him up and laid him on the altar on the top of the wood.

[13 : 25] Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. Everything was ready. The knife was raised. The test was at its height.

And that was the moment for God's provision to appear. An angel from heaven arrested Abraham. Abraham, Abraham.

Here I am. Do not lay a hand on the boy. Abraham looked up and saw God's provision. He saw a ram caught in the bushes.

Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering instead of his own son. 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. What will be provided? God's provision for sinful man.

[14 : 26] For the account of Abraham's testing and God's provision is a visual aid for us in our understanding of the New Testament.

A visual aid for our understanding of the New Testament and God's provision in his plan of salvation. We see father and son walking through the centuries of time.

From before the world was. Walking. Both of them together. Heading for one place.

Marked on heaven's map. A hill called Calvary. And two thousand years ago. They reached it. And the son is nailed to a cross.

This time. There's no arresting voice from an angel. The angels are silent. No arresting voice from heaven. To stop the sacrifice.

[15 : 39] Instead. Instead. We read. The father shuts his ears to the son's cries. My God. My God.

Why have you abandoned me? Notice. He had lost his father's presence. He was claiming covenant relationship.

By calling him. My God. My God. But the father walks away and leaves him there. This. Is how it must be son.

Well in the abandoned. Crucified Jesus. We see God's provision. We see a sacrifice. To satisfy divine justice.

A sacrifice. To bear his own wrath. And curse. On himself. For only God. Can meet his own requirements. He has provided a savior.

[16 : 42] Who is Christ the Lord. The lamb of God. That taketh away. The sin of the world. He was abandoned.

That we might never be. He says. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. So whatever.

Our circumstances. Whatever the stress. And the anxiety. And the strain. And the depression. That comes upon us. Help us. To take a walk.

To Calvary. Help us. To hear his voice. Calling out to us. I'm here. With you. My grace. Is sufficient. For you.

I love you. I love you. This much. I died for you. Believe. And be saved. That's as simple as that.

[17 : 39] There's no other secret message from heaven. There's no other secret that we can give. It is simply that. My grace is sufficient for you.

In all situations. Jesus Christ died. For you. And for me. And we go forward. With humility. But boldly. Into the world. We have a savior. Who loves us. A savior. Who has paid the full price. For all our mistakes.

And all. Everything. And we are able to stand before God. And he looks at us. And he sees us. Clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Your sins and iniquities. I do not even remember. Enter into the joy of my kingdom. That's the vision. That we have all the time. The glory. That is in Emmanuel's land.

[18 : 38] That's what gives us strength. Along the way. We hold our heads up. And we go forward. And we exude an invitation to people.

Come. Come with us. For we will do you good. For God guarantees it. Through the cross of Calvary. Oh Lord Jesus.

We ask forgiveness. For the way that we often disbelieve what you say. But we pray and ask that more and more. We would be able to eliminate all doubt from our minds.

And that we would be able to be strong in the faith. And that we would see and understand what you have done for us. And that we will go forward boldly. And that we will proclaim your name.

And that one day soon. The very heavens will be filled. With songs of praise from all our land. Giving praise to the Savior.

[19 : 37] Who died for sinners. Bless us. Oh Lord God. For Jesus sake. Amen. Let us close by singing to God's praise in Psalm 133.

Psalm 133. And it's on page 424. Again the traditional Psalms. Behold how good a thing it is.

And how becoming well. Together such as brethren are in unity to dwell. Like precious ointment on the head. That down the bearded flow. In Aaron's beard and to the skirts.

Did of his garments go. As Herman's Jew. The Jew that doth. In Zion's hills descend. For there the blessing God commands. Life that shall never end.

To the Lord's praise. Behold how good a thing it is. And how becoming well. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[20 : 34] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

peace from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God, be with us all and with all those we love, now and forevermore. Amen.