

=EVENTS FROM GENESIS=

Lesson 12

The Offering of Isaac

AIM: to teach my pupils to give all for Christ.

POINT OF CONTACT: Ask the class to share with you the most precious thing they ever had to give up. Get several answers and then lead into the story of Abraham offering Isaac, which we had in last week's lesson. Review the story carefully; then lead into the teachings of this week's lesson.

INTRODUCTION: For many, many years, Abraham looked forward to the coming of Isaac. Now Isaac is here, and for some reason unknown to Abraham, God asks him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice on an altar at Moriah. Those of us who have been to the Holy Land have seen the very spot, the very rock, where Abraham made this sacrifice. Let us notice the spiritual and practical truths concerning this story:

- I. ABRAHAM'S TESTINGS. Abraham's life was a series of giving up precious things. Let us notice the things that Abraham had to offer or be willing to give up.
 1. He had to give up his own country. Read Genesis 12:1a. Imagine the tremendous thing that Abraham gave here. Men who have served overseas in foreign wars have attested to the greatness of America and their unspeakable joy upon returning to their homeland. Abraham gave up his homeland forever.
 2. He gave up his kindred. See Genesis 12:1b. He sacrificed for God his friends, his loved ones, his relationships of a lifetime. What a price!
 3. He gave up his father's house. Notice Genesis 12:1c. In other words, he gave up his home, mother, father, brother, sister, life, etc. He left, never to live there again. What a price!
 4. He gave up Lot. Now read Genesis 13:8, 9. Lot was his nephew. He was dearly beloved by Abraham. He was one of the few people Abraham had with him that was from his past life and from his home. Now he must give up Lot.
 5. He gave up Ishmael. Read carefully Genesis 17:17, 18. Though Ishmael was Abraham's son by Hagar, the Egyptian, and not by his wife, Sarah, he was still Abraham's son. He was his firstborn son, and with the tender heart of Abraham, it must have been a price to pay.
 6. Now God asks him to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering. See Genesis 22:2. Isaac, his spiritual son; Isaac, the miracle from God; Isaac, the only hope of Abraham to father the Jewish nation—yet God asks for Isaac! Yes, God asks for our best. He wants us to be willing to give up anything for Him. If He knows we are willing, oftentimes He will spare us the grief, but we must be willing, and God must know it. He asks for first place, second place, third place, fourth place, and all other places. God wants our all dedicated unto Him. No doubt when Isaac was born, Abraham thought his troubles and trials were at an end.

- II. EXACTLY WHAT GOD ASKED ABRAHAM TO DO.
 1. God asked Abraham to take the life of his son. Think of this—especially those of you who have children. Imagine having this request to come from God.
 2. God asked Abraham to sever any opportunity of being a blessing to posterity and having the promises of God fulfilled in Isaac. Isaac was no normal boy; he was God's answer and a miracle to Abraham's hope to bless the world in the future. He was the son of promise, and now God asks for that.
 3. God asked Abraham to do it himself. It would be sad to have to offer Isaac at the hands of another, but God is asking Abraham to take Isaac's life with his own hands. Probably, no man was ever asked to make a sacrifice comparable to the one God asked of Abraham.
 4. God wanted it now. Genesis 22:3a, "And Abraham rose up early in the morning." God did not give Abraham another year to be with his son and enjoy his presence. God does not want our all next year, or when we are old, or when we are out of school, or when we are married, or when the children are reared. God wants our all now! Today! This very minute!

III. IT WAS WORTH IT! Do you remember the promises of God to Abraham back in Genesis 12:2-3? Today we can see that every promise was fulfilled and that God did do for Abraham what He said He would. Let us look at them:

1. Genesis 12:2a, "And I will make of thee a great nation." God has given the Jewish race through Abraham. They gave us the Bible and our Saviour. What a blessing Abraham was to us through his willingness to sacrifice!
2. Genesis 12:2b, "and I will bless thee." God has blessed Abraham's seed more than any other. Think of the future blessings He has for them.
3. Genesis 12:2c, "and make thy name great." God has done exactly this for Abraham. Even a child on the street, and people in every walk of life know who Abraham is. This could not have been possible had not Abraham given his all.
4. Genesis 12:2d, "and thou shalt be a blessing." Abraham has blessed the life of every person who has ever been saved and the lives of many who have not. Probably the greatest thing that God can give a person is to make him a blessing to someone else. This cannot be possible until we give our all.
5. Genesis 12:3a, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." What a promise this is! It has been fulfilled. Those who bless the Jews have been blessed of God. Those who curse the Jews have been cursed of God. He has placed a protection around His chosen people because Abraham gave his all. Do we want God to bless our children and their children? Then let us give our all!

IV. ABRAHAM AND ISAAC—A TYPE OF GOD THE FATHER AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. Let us notice the beautiful picture of Christ which we find in the offering of Isaac.

1. The father gave his son. Again, read Genesis 22:2. John 3:16 explains this. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...." This is one of the very few Old Testament types that brings before us not only God the Son, but God the Father. Nowhere else in the Bible are we shown the Father's heart as much as we are here. Read Romans 8:32 in connection with this truth.
2. The father set apart his son to be a sacrifice. See Genesis 22:3. Abraham set apart Isaac as a sacrifice. God, realizing that He could not save man apart from a just sacrifice or substitute, set apart His own Son in the foreordained counsels of eternity. This is pictured also in the Passover when the lamb was set apart for four days before he was offered. This especially teaches us that the death of Jesus Christ was more than an act of people who hated Him. Jesus was not killed by the soldiers or the angry mob. He was offered by the Father.
3. The son was willing to go. Isaac was more than a little boy. He was a young man, yet he was willing to do his father's will. Jesus also was willing to do His Father's will. Hebrews 10:9, "...Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." Psalm 40:8a, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." Jesus offered Himself. Yet, He could have called ten thousand angels, or ten million angels, or ten billion angels. The nails did not keep Him on Calvary—love did!
4. Two young men went with him to the place of death. Read Genesis 22:3. These two men picture the thieves on either side of Jesus Christ as He was crucified.
5. These young men did not go all the way with Abraham and Isaac. The same is true with Jesus. When God turned His back on Jesus because He was bearing our sins, only God the Father and God the Son were involved. Matthew 27:46, "...Jesus cried...My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—meaning that God the Father had turned His back on Him. The thieves could certainly not understand this. This was a transaction between the Father and the Son.
6. The wood was laid on the son. See Genesis 22:6. Here is a picture of Jesus Christ carrying His own cross up Calvary.
7. The son was laid on the wood. Notice Genesis 22:9. Here is a picture of Jesus being laid on the cross after the cross had been laid on Him.
8. It was a three-day journey to this mountain. Read Genesis 22:4. For three days and three nights the son was dead in the mind of his father as they took their journey. Picture the three days and three nights that Jesus was in the tomb before His resurrection.
9. Isaac did not stay on the place of sacrifice. He was unbound and he rose. This pictures the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the grave.

10. Something very interesting is not said in this story. Notice very carefully the wording of Genesis 22:19a, “So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba.” Nothing is said about Isaac’s returning. No doubt he was left on the mount for a season just to picture the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ back to Heaven.

CONCLUSION: Do we want to be a blessing to those who follow? Do we want to have a name that is great? Do we want to have others blessed because of our lives? Do we want to picture the Lord Jesus Christ and show Him to others? Then we too must give our all. What is that thing between us and God? Let us give it to Him or at least be willing to give it to Him. Maybe He will take it, maybe not. Maybe He will allow us to keep it once He finds we are willing to give it to Him. At any rate, let us seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. See Matthew 6:33.