**OUR FATHER WENT FARTHER**

**GENESIS 22:1-18**

**I. THE EARTHLY FATHER**

**A. THE REVELATION (vs. 1-2)**

 We have no record of what transpired that night, no hint of the anguish of Abraham’s heart.

 But no doubt each word spoken by God was like a knife *sinking* and *probing* deeper and deeper into Abraham’s chest—“*take now thy son, . . . thine only son Isaac, . . . whom thou lovest.*”

 I think it is interesting that the 1st mention of the word “love” in the Old Testament is the love Abraham had for his son Isaac.

 The first use of the word “love” does not even refer to a *husband* and *wife* relationship, but to the one who would carry on the father’s *name* and *legacy*.

 Isaac was dear to Abraham, not merely as the child of his flesh and the son of his old age, but as the channel through whom the promise was to be fulfilled and through whom were to flow the blessings to all mankind.

 And now God tells him to offer him up as a sacrifice!

 When Abraham pleaded for Sodom and Gomorrah, he stood by the truth, “*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*” now he is put to the test, to see if he really believes that truth, and how *enormous* and *weighty* was that test.

**B. THE PREPARATION (vs. 3)**

 Notice how quickly Abraham begins to obey God’s will.

 He doesn’t put it off, but he rises while it is still early in the morning.

 He gathers every thing needed for the sacrifice.

 No doubt he cried as he clave the wood for which he would soon lay his son upon.

 We find that when they get to the base of the hill that Abraham *lays* that same wood upon the back of Isaac.

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 But notice that Abraham takes the fire and the knife; the things that might injure his son prematurely.

**C. THE SEPARATION (vs. 4,5)**

 At a certain point in the journey Abraham left his servants behind.

 It is very possible that they would have *interfered* when they realized that he was going to sacrifice his son and Abraham wasn’t about to allow anything to distract him from worshiping and giving his all to God.

**D. THE DEDICATION (vs. 6-10)**

 Abraham is known for building altars (Gen. 12:7,8; 13:4,18), but this is, by far, the hardest he was ever going to have to build.

 As they were traversing up the hill Isaac looks to his father and says, “*Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?*”

 Oh, how that question must have pierced the heart of Abraham with a knife blade shaper than the one which he held in his hand.

 But Abraham had faith in God.

 For Hebrews 11 tells us that Abraham believed “*that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead*”.

 Abraham knew that if God could create Adam and Eve from the dust of the ground that He could take ashes and *recreate* his son Isaac.

 And so Abraham says to Isaac, which unknown to him at the time would turn out to be prophetically some 2,000 years later, “*My son, God will provide* ***himself*** *a lamb for a burnt offering:*”

 So Abraham begins to build the altar and he lays his son, his only son, the one whom he loves, on that altar and binds him there.

 He takes his knife out from its sheath by his side, and raises it in the air to do that deed that he *dreads*.

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 But as soon as he is ready to plunge the knife in, and spill that innocent blood of his child, a hand reaches out from nowhere and grabs his wrist and says, “*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.*”

 No doubt relief flooded over him.

 But the story doesn’t stop here for Abraham looked with tear-streamed eyes, and there, miracle of all miracles, was a ram that had gotten stuck in a thicket.

 And the boy and the ram switch places.

 Put yourself in Isaac’s shoes that day as his father untied him and then took that ram, tied it up, placed it in the wood and plunged that knife into it.

 I can see the tears running down the Isaac’s face as he watched that lamb bleed to death.

 Isaac knew that he was the one who should have died, but he lived because another had taken his place.

 I am sure his heart was filled with gratitude over what the Lord had provided for him a substitute!

**E. THE PROCLAMATION (vs. 11-14)**

 Because of Abraham’s faithfulness that day God told him, “*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.*”

**II. THE HEAVENLY FATHER**

**A. THE REVELATION**

 Abraham replied, “*God will provide himself a lamb*.”

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 From the very first sin in the Garden of Eden God did not leave us in the place of *despondency* and *despair*, but there in that Garden, He gave us a revelation of what was to come.

 Genesis 3:15, “*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*”

 Even before Jesus’ official ministry began, John the Baptist revealed who this Lamb was for he said, “*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*”—John 1:29.

 I John 4:9, “*In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.*”

 I told you in what place and circumstance the word “love” was used for the 1st time in the Old Testament.

 Listen to where it is found in the New Testament. For once again it has to do with a Father and a Son.

 The first instance is found in Matthew 3:17 where the Heavenly Father speaks out after Jesus was baptized and said, “*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*”

 But that is not all! The first occurrences of “love” in the Gospels of Mark and Luke—the next two books of the New Testament—are also found in the their accounts of Jesus’ baptism. Both Mark and Luke record the Father calling Jesus His “beloved Son.”

 As we come to the 4th Gospel, which was written by the “beloved disciple”, we become silenced in awe as we come to the 1st verse that contains the word “love” in it.
 What is the verse? Why, what else could it be?

 “*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*”—John 3:16.

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 Three times God shouts His love for His Son from heaven. But then, He tells us that He loved us (yes, us!) so much that He was willing to sacrifice His only Son, in order that we might be saved.

 We start with Abraham *being* *asked* by God to give up his son Isaac and then in John 3:16 we find God *willingly giving* His only Son to die for the sins of the world.

**B. THE PREPARATION**

 Just as Abraham prepared the ingredients needed for the sacrifice, we find the Heavenly Father preparing what was needed for His Son’s sacrifice.

 God made the hill.

 God planted the tree.

 God provided the thorns.

 God provided the iron for the nails.

 Just as Abraham laid the wood upon Isaac’s back we read in Isaiah 53:6 that, “*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*”

 “Jesus not only carried the cross of wood but the cross of sin-bearing. He felt on the cross that He was guilty of every sin man *had* committed or *ever would* commit. He felt the *guilt* and *shame* for all of those sins that we should have felt and that the unforgiven sinner some day will feel in the Day of Judgment.”—Ed Bousman. “God is Just a Prayer Away”, pg.32.

 Isaac bore his altar up the hill and Jesus bore His Cross up Mt. Calvary.

 John 19:17 says, “*And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:*”

 The interesting thing is, is that; Mt. Moriah is where Jerusalem was to be built. It was where Solomon built his Temple, and the very place where our Lord Jesus Christ gave His life up for you and me.

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 But what kept Jesus on His altar of sacrifice were not cords of rope, but *love* and *devotion* were the cords that bound the eternal Son to the cross.

**C. THE SEPARATION**

 Abraham had to separate himself from his servants.

 This action is similar to when Christ went to worship the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane before He was to die.

 Matthew 26:37-39, “*And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.* 38 *Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.* 39 *And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*”

 Then Abraham had to separate himself from Isaac, because Isaac had to be bound while Abraham was free.

 Matthew 27:46, “*And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*”

**D. THE DEDICATION**

 “Was there ever such a dark, tragic work performed beneath the wide vault of heaven in all the ages of time or all the annals of eternity? God saw His Son *led* like a lamb to the slaughter, *laid out* upon the wood, and the spikes *driven home*.

 (Every lash that *cut* the back of Christ cut the heart of God.

 Every thorn that *pierced* the brow of Christ pierced the heart of God.

 Every nail *driven in* the hands and feet of Christ was driven in the heart of God.

 Every groan that Christ *uttered* broke the heart of God.)

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 God watched the whole dark, dreadful business on Golgotha’s hill. Then God himself had taken the great knife of His own fierce wrath against sin, had lifted it up as the darkness swept in, and had wreaked (inflicted) on His Son the eternal hell our sins deserved. That was the work of the cross, the work enacted *in type* by Abraham on that lonely mountain in the land of Moriah and enacted *in fact* at the place called Calvary.”—(Phillips, John. Exploring Genesis. Moody Press, p.183.)

 Here is where the Great Father gave His Isaac to a *death* from which there would be no *deliverance*.

 “This time there would be no voice out of the sky to stop the slaughter.

 This time no beneficent angel to stop the steel point from penetrating flesh.

 This time no animal nearby to take the place of man on the cross.

 For the all-time sacrifice for the sins of man *demanded* only the best that God could produce—His very own Son.”—Dan Betzer

 Yes, the nails would be *driven*; the blood would *flow*; the Son would *die*!

**E. THE PROCLAMATION**

 An eternal altar would be erected on Mt. Moriah.

 “My friends, from where you stand today, can you see the One Who died on the cross for your sins?

 Does it *move* your heart to know that Jesus loved you so much that He died in your place on the cross?

 Does it *thrill* you to know that by simply trusting Him, you can be forever free from the penalty of sin?

 Does it *fill* you with gratitude to know that He died so that you could live?”

 Notice the last phrase in **verse 14**, “In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.”

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 That was a prophetic statement! Many centuries later, Jesus Christ died on that same mountaintop.

 He wasn’t dying just for Isaac, He was dying for you.

 Just as God provided a ram for Isaac on Moriah, He provided a Lamb for you on Calvary.

 The Lord has provided *salvation*, *redemption*, *forgiveness*, and *eternal life*.

 And know Romans 10:13 proclaims, “*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*”

**CON:**

“Love so amazing, so divine,

Demands my soul, my life, my all,”

(“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”)—Isaac Watts

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