

# The God Who Can Be Trusted

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 27 October 2019

Preacher: Rev. Iain T. Campbell

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Now, turning back to the portion of Scripture that we went, we can look at verse 7 and verse 8 in that chapter. Genesis 22 verse 7 and 8. And Isaac said to his father Abraham, my father and he said, here am I, my son. He said, behold the fire and the wood that weareth the lamb for a burnt offering. Abraham said, God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son. So they went both of them together. And we will take in most of what we got in this chapter itself, but especially taking in these two verses.

And we can look at it from three points. A great dilemma and trust in God's word and a great ransom.

And firstly, coming to a great dilemma and trust, Abraham's life at this particular point was very much based on his faith in God and in God's promises. It was a faith that was tried to the point where Abraham was almost given up. And that happened especially in the promise that he got from God that he would have a son. And as the years were passing, there was no sign of this son being born. And as we know from the advice of his wife Sarah, he went into Hagar and a son was born to Hagar. And God revealed to Abraham, the dish male, the name given to that son was not going to be the son of promise. And he was not the son of promise. So Abraham's faith, when especially when he reached the point where himself and Sarah were past age where they could bring children into the world, his faith had reached a point where he was almost given up. But through such trials, Abraham was learning one thing. And that was that God was a passion who could be trusted. God was a passion who could be trusted. But the test that Abraham now faced was beyond comprehension. He was being asked to offer up Isaac the son of promise. And Isaac's name means laughter.

[ 3 : 3 0 ] And one could say that Isaac was a living testament to God's faithfulness to his promises. Here he was being asked to offer Isaac up as a sacrifice. And this command that God gave to Abraham almost seems to make faith unreasonable. To make faith unreasonable. God commanded Abraham to offer up his only son Isaac as a burnt offering at a place appointed by God. My place appointed by God himself.

Was God unreasonable? It would be a question that would be filling Abraham's mind at this particular moment. Was God being unreasonable? Abraham had waited after all many years for an ear. And now against all reason, he was being asked to obliterate the fulfilment of God's promise with his own hands. Was God not a way of the love that Abraham had for Isaac? Well he was. And we find that in verse 2 of this chapter. God said, take 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. Was God not aware? Yes he was aware. Fully aware of the love that Abraham had for Isaac.

Well a greater test of faith one could not imagine. And the cost to Abraham was everything. All of Abraham's future temporal plans were wrapped up in Isaac. Every one of them. They were wrapped up in Isaac. The cost to Abraham was everything. Now when you think of a burnt offering, what did a burnt offering entail? Well it was a symbol of consecration. An offering to God without to be said or remained. And what do I mean by that? Well if you took a lamb from the flock or a nox from the herd or a goat and placed it on the altar of the burnt offering, the flames would consume that sacrifice until there was nothing left but the ashes. Until there was absolutely nothing left but the ashes. Abraham was being asked to give up Isaac totally and completely without holding anything back. Without holding anything back. And it seems as if more than the price of love has been asked of Abraham here. What about the promise that God gave him? That he would be a father of many nations. And here God was demanding of him the sacrifice of his only son. Well we can ask the

question, was not the command destroying the promise of God? How could Abraham continue to trust in God's work when that very word seemed to be running comparatively to the promise? Well the very same, Taelah, confronted Jesus Christ in the hour of his temptation. And here was Jesus in the desert. And Satan was more or less saying to him, if you are the son of God, if you are the Saviour of the world, what is leaving you out here? Dying of starvation. How can you continue to trust in God's work when God is making no attempt whatsoever to save you? All you are surrounded without here is barrenness and stones. And why don't you turn some of these stones into a break and save yourself? And Abraham must face with that very temptation at this very point. Could he continue placing his trust in God's work? Or should he not rebel against that very word? And if he rebelled against it, he would hold, he would at least hold on to Isaac. He would be able to hold on to Isaac, which takes us to the second thing that we have here, and that is trusting in God's work.

[ 9 : 32 ] Abraham however, continued to believe God and placed his trust in God's goodness, God's wisdom and God's justice, even though the command seemed to be flying in the face of that very justice. God was asking Abraham to give everything, and this was the greatest test of Abraham's faith. He was being asked to give everything, hold nothing back. And her own faith, her own faith, if we are children of God here this evening, her own faith should never come short of that. When you and I come to believe in God and look to Him alone and not to ourselves, and see Him as being all our hope, as being all our hope, it is then that we hold nothing back. And you might say to me, well, that is easy for you to say. That is easy for you to say. And yes, it is easy for me to say. But where I am taking that from, from the history of the Church of Christ, when the people of God have been taken, maybe not to the same point, but very near to the point

Abraham was taken here, none of them, it's been history proves it, that none of them have come short of giving everything and holding nothing back. I might go through the whole of my life, and I will never be tested in the manner Abraham was, and many of us will be. But those who are, and who belong to God, when they were, this, when the test came, they found themselves not holding anything back and giving everything. Why? Because of faith comes from the same source as Abraham's faith came from. It comes from the very same fountain that Abraham's faith came from. And when it is put to the test, if we, if we are ever put to such a test, or very near something like Abraham was, as very near to Abraham's test here, we will find that our faith is ready to give everything and hold nothing back, and hold nothing back. And the other thing about faith is that what faith gives, it receives back double what it is ready to give. And you see that from the life of Job, and you see it from the life of Jesus himself. As far as Job was concerned, it is not what he gave, but what was taken from him, that left him in such a dilemma, a great dilemma. But even then, it was possible for Job to say, the Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord. And Job received double for what he had lost. We find the same of Jesus himself. Jesus gave, Jesus's faith gave everything and held nothing back. And where do we find Jesus today?

Raised from the dead, ascended to the right hand of God, receiving double to what? In relation to what he had given. Receiving double in relation to what he had given. And that is what we can be certain of. That what our faith is ready to give, that will receive back double. And we do receive back double when we take in what God's salvation entails. Life eternal, life eternal.

So when Abraham was tested by faith, he offered up his only son, Isaac, even though God had promised to him, through Isaac, shall your offspring be named. As we have it in a chapter before this in verse 12, chapter 21 and verse 12, that was the promise given to him by God, through Isaac, shall your offspring be named. And you might say to me, well, Abraham didn't offer a bison. Didn't have to. But yes, he did. He was ready to go the whole way. The knife was lifted up to push Isaac's heart until the voice of the angel came, do not harm the lad. Do not harm him.

[ 15 : 52 ] Abraham gave Isaac up in his heart. He was ready to go the whole way. And the question is, how?

How? Was he ready to go all the way? Well, the writer to the Hebrew, the writer to the Hebrews reveals that to us. Abraham was convinced that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead, to raise Isaac from the dead. If you remember what I said about the burnt offering, and that the flames consumed everything until there was nothing left but the ashes. The writer to the Hebrews reveals to us in chapter 11 and verses 17 to 19 that Abraham was convinced that God was able to raise Isaac up to life from the ashes of the sacrifice, from the very ashes of the sacrifice. And figuratively

speaking, Abraham had already received Isaac from the realm of the dead. Because his own body and

Sarah's body were past the age where it was possible for them to bring children into the world. He had already received him from the realm of the dead. And could God not bring him back again from the realm of the dead? From the realm of the dead. Abraham had received this promise from God. To Isaac shall your offspring be named and Abraham placed his trust in God's world as far as Abraham was concerned. God's world would not fail. And we see this in Abraham's words to his servant, to his servants in verse 5. Then Abraham said to his young men, they were his servants, he said to his young men, stay here with the donkey. I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you. And then again we have Abraham's answer to Isaac's question. To Isaac's question.

Isaac put the question to him. Here Isaac put the question to him, behold the fire on the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? And listen to Abraham's answer. God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son. And you see the writer to the Hebrews was seeing faith in these words of Abraham. They were not words of deception. They were not words that Abraham was using, hoping that things would turn all right at the end. He was not putting his placing his hope in a chance happening. That Isaac would eventually be saved. No, he was placing his trust, firmly and completely in the word of God. And the question that Isaac posed to Abraham at this particular time would have been like a sword, fishing through Abraham's heart. And you see Abraham's answer. Abraham's answer to Isaac, behold, God will provide for himself a lamb for the burnt offering, can be translated from the Hebrew in this way.

[ 19 : 48 ] God will see the lamb for the sacrifice. Or God will see to the lamb for the sacrifice.

And this is what inspired, these are the very words that inspired Abraham to give the name to the place that it gave to it, to give the name to the place of sacrifice that it gave to it, Chihuahua Chairi. Although it's not mentioned in this translation, yet this is the name that it gave to it. And that the meaning of that name is explained to us by the statement that we have in verse 14, that we have in verse 14, on the mount of the Lord it shall be seen or provided.

On the mount of the Lord it shall be seen or provided. And Abraham's, Abraham's naming of that place Chihuahua Chairi, the Lord shall provide, reveals to us the victory of faith in the face of adversity, in the face of adversity. You see, when Isaac put the question to Abraham concerning the sacrificial lamb, all Abraham could do, all he could do was place his faith in God's promise. Could do nothing else but that. God would see to the sacrifice. God would provide the substitute. God would provide the substitute. And Abraham at this very moment, he sees Christ's day. Christ himself said, Abraham saw my day. And it's at this very moment, when he was lifting up the knife, and the voice of the angel intervened, and he looked behind him and there was a ram, caught in a ticket by its horns. Abraham saw Christ's day. Abraham realized God's great mercy. And he also realized he also saw God's provision for sinners like himself and Isaac.

The cost of redemption was everything. And all that was necessary in relation to that cost. God would see to it. God would see to it. Which takes us to a final thing here, a great once. You see, God led Abraham to Mount Moriah to edify Abraham's faith. God was going to show him by symbol that God himself was the one who would pay for the price of a redemption. He would pay the price of my redemption and your redemption. Abraham was taken to the very area where in centuries to come the temple would be built. Where burnt offerings would be offered up frequently, along with every other offering that was offered up. Every offering pointed forwards to the great offering that was to come. And Abraham was led to the very area where in centuries to come the cross of Calvary would be placed.

The cross of Calvary would be placed. The Lamb that God would provide would redeem Sonosh by the sacrifice of himself. And this is why Paul can use, in the New Testament, this is why Paul can use the figure of Abraham's sacrifice in revealing to us that in that we see God's provision for Sonosh like me and you. Listen to the words of Paul in Romans chapter 8 and verse 32. He who spared not his own son but gave him up for his heart.

[ 25 : 20 ] How will he not, along with him, graciously give us all things? And you see as the writer to the Hebrews points out to us, the blood of bulls and goats could not cleanse my conscience or your conscience from the guilt of sin. Neither could the blood of the Son of promise Isaac cleanse our consciences from the guilt of sin. Only the blood of God's beloved Son was sufficient for that. Calvary reveals God's love for me and for you. Paul leads us back to Mount Moriah. In his writings

he leads us back to Mount Moriah and the Son of Abraham, the Son that he loved, his only Son. Abraham was asked to offer him up as a sacrifice by the very God who had gifted that Son to himself and to save him. What were the feelings that were filling up Abraham's heart when Isaac put the question to him about the absence of the sacrificial lamb? We cannot enter into it. We cannot enter into that. But we do find them walking together up that hill to the place appointed by God. And Paul leads us to see in his own writings. In Romans 8 and 32 Paul leads us to see God the Father, leading his own Son up that very same hill, now called Golgotha. And when the cry of dereliction came forth from the lips of that Son, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? God the Father is paying the price of my salvation and your salvation through his silence. You see when Jesus came to a time of crisis in his life, the first one was the temptation.

Angels were sent to minister to him. In Gethsemane, when his blood was poured forth onto the ground as grey, when his sweat was poured onto the ground as grey, drops of blood. An angel was sent to him and as Professor Finlayson was saying, it was like a letter from home reminding him that home was concerned about him. That home had not forgotten. An angel was sent to strengthen him. But when this cry came forth from his lips, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? There was nothing but silence. And God the Father was paying the price of my salvation and your salvation through that silence. But God demonstrates his love for us in this. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans chapter 5 and verse 8.

John in similar fashion to Paul says in that famous verse in John 3.16, God so loved the world that he gave us only begotten Son that too so ever believes in him shall not perish.

But of everlasting life. It was necessary for God to do what Abraham did not have to do. And that was offer up his only son as a sacrifice for sin. And that in itself reveals to me and to you that God in relation to my salvation and to your salvation holds nothing back. He gives everything. He gives everything. On this typology of Abraham's offering up of his son enables us to understand in a measure anyway the depth of meaning behind the New

[ 30 : 57 ] Testament teachings about God's love in offering up his one and only son. And in the darkness of Calvary, God the Father was paying the price of love. Paying the price of that love that John was unabout in that verse. God so loved the world. And John in his first epistle on chapter three begins with these words. What manner of love is this that the Father has that we should be called the children of God. But that he says is what we are. And was it not God himself who gave the command to the sword to awaken. Awake, O sword and smite my shepherd. The man who stands next to me declares the Lord of hosts.

And that sword peached through the very heart of the Savior until it reached his very soul. It was necessary for God the Father to do what Abraham did not have to do. So therefore on this evening what is your response to this great and awesome love. Is it negative or is it positive? Will you continue to resist the strivings of the Holy Spirit for its thrives with us all? Or will the time come when you will give in to these strivings and embrace this love and the blessings that come with imprisonment? May God bless these thoughts on his word. Let us pray. O gracious and ever blessed Lord grant us to be thankful that you did not leave us to ourselves or to our own devices. But that you reached out to undeserving sinners such as we are. With a love that goes beyond our understanding. Where you were ready to give your all in order that we would be saved. And that we would be transformed from being enemies of God to being friends of God. That we would be thankful for the one who was willing to take your room and place and offer himself up as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile a sinnish to God. O Lord bless each and every one of us. Reconcile in us to yourself and enable in us to rejoice in this great and wonderful love that draws us near to you very bosom. Forgive us for our sins and all that we ask that we would do so in Christ's name and for the sake of Amen.