

God's provision on the Mountain of Sacrifice

GOLDEN TEXT

“Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together” (Genesis 22:8).

USEFUL PRACTICE

Abraham's declaration was fully fulfilled when Christ died on the cross to forgive our sins.

SCRIPTURE READING Genesis 22:1-3



1 - Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

2 - Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

3 - Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To emphasize God's provision on the mountain of sacrifice.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

- I. **To show** that it is necessary to have faith to go up the mountain of sacrifice;
- II. **To understand** that Abraham's faith made him overcome the trial on the mountain of sacrifice;
- III. **To explain** that Jesus is the Lamb of God who went up the mountain of sacrifice for our sake.

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson, we will study the hardest test that Abraham would experience. We will also see that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, died in our place for our salvation. God was testing Abraham's faith, as well as his love and faithfulness. In the midst of trial, Abraham did not doubt the sustaining power of Jehovah-Jireh, the God who provides. The Lord told Abraham to sacrifice his only son, the child of promise. By faith Abraham obeyed God's command by going to the place of sacrifice with his son Isaac.

I - FAITH TO GO UP THE MOUNTAIN OF SACRIFICE

1. Abraham is tested. Abraham is part of the gallery of the heroes of faith (Hebrews 11). He is known as the "father of faith." The test that Abraham was subjected to seems a paradox before the loving, just God, who would never accept a human sacrifice. God asked Abraham for something out of the ordinary, since human sacrifices were practiced in pagan religions. But the challenge was made and Abraham would have to prove his loyalty and love for the Lord. On other occasions Abraham failed as a man and disobeyed God, but He did not abandon him. The Lord saw in Abraham qualities that were higher than his weaknesses. And the patriarch needed to learn to depend on God. Hardships and trials caused Abraham to develop a greater intimacy with the Lord. Abraham had already experienced some moments of frustration and bitterness that made him better evaluate his decisions to God.

2. Within the limit of human capacity. The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said: "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond

what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it" (1 Corinthians 10:13). The test that Abraham was subjected to made him reach the maximum of his spiritual and emotional capacity.

3. A hard request. God's request seemed to be illogical, inappropriate, irrational and impossible to accept. God had asked for his only son, "the child of promise", as a burnt offering. It gives the impression that God was asking back for something that he had given to his friend Abraham, however, at no time, he refused to obey God. Oftentimes, in the midst of hardships and trials, we say to God that we cannot obey him, that we cannot bear what He asks of us. God does not want to hurt us, because he tests us so we may know him better.

II – TRIAL ON THE MOUNTAIN OF SACRIFICE

1. Love, obedience and faith on the mountain of sacrifice. These three elements were the essence of the test that Abraham was being subjected to. The first element was his love for God. The Lord wanted to make sure that He was in first place in the heart of Abraham. God has to be first in our hearts. Abraham loved his son Isaac, but by obeying God he made it clear that it was the Lord who occupied the first place in his life. The second element was obedience. Abraham promptly obeyed the order that the Lord had given him, even though he did not understand the reason for such a request. The third element involved in this test was faith. If before, in some circumstances, Abraham had hesitated, as in the case of having a child with Hagar, now matured by crises, he fully trusts in God. Abraham trusted that God would be able to work a miracle.

2. The climax of the test. After three days of journey, Abraham, Isaac, and the young men who were with them came to the land of Moriah (Gen. 22:4). The two young men stood at the foot of the mountain, Abraham and his son took the wood and the knife and went up the mountain of sacrifice (Gen 22:4-6). On the way up, father and son talked. Isaac did not know how that sacrifice would be made because they did not have an animal with them (a lamb) for the burnt offering. Isaac said to his father: "[...] where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" (Gen. 22:7), and Abraham, incisive and confidently answered: "God himself will provide the lamb [...]" (Gen. 22:8).

3. The decisive moment on the test. The path to obedience may seem the most difficult one, but it is not impossible, because God acts at the

right time. Father and son arrived at the place of sacrifice. Abraham knew the faithfulness of God, and therefore did not despair. Isaac was an obedient son, a boy of faith. He agreed to be bound and placed on the wood. Abraham raised the knife to kill Isaac, but the angel of the Lord cried out and did not let him do it. Close to them was a substitutionary lamb. God's intervention in the land of Moriah (Gn 22:11,12) shows that one day on Calvary, Jesus died in our place. He replaced us on the cross, dying for our sins. In reality, Abraham saw, by the revelation of faith, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

III- JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD, ON THE MOUNTAIN OF SACRIFICE

1. The sacrifice of the Lamb of God (John 1:29). The God who provided a lamb to replace Isaac on the mountain of sacrifice is the same who sent his Son to replace us on the cross of Calvary. God gave His Lamb, Jesus Christ, to die for us. Jesus' sacrifice was necessary for the forgiveness of our sins.

2. Reconciliation through the sacrifice of the Lamb. The sacrifice of Jesus reconciled us with God. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ was unique and definitive for our reconciliation with God (Eph 2:16). Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). Without Him we would be lost, far away from God and condemned to hell. We have a Creator who loves us and who did not refuse to give his Only Begotten Son that we might have everlasting life.

3. Justification through the Lamb of God. Jesus, the Lamb of God, took the punishment that was ours. He took upon himself our condemnation. On the cross, Christ served our sentence, justifying us before the Father. He freed us from the law of sin. Once free and justified by faith, we have peace with God (Rom 5:1).

CONCLUSION

Believe that God provides for all our needs at any time and place, if we are willing to acknowledge his sovereignty and supreme will. We learn from Abraham that it is perfectly possible to live a life in accordance with the divine requirements.