

Title: Trials, Works and their Purpose

Text: Gen 22: 1-14

Date: July 6, 2014

Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Our subject: Trials, Works and Their Purpose

You who have been taught, know the law and the prophets—the scriptures—written by Moses, David, Isaiah and so on—give us types and shadows of Christ.

Hebrews 10: 1: For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

John 5:39: Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me

Luke 24:27: And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Proposition: Our text today, gives one of the best types of Christ in all the scriptures.

Genesis 22: 1: And it came to pass after these things,....

Abraham had been sent the gospel, regenerated, given faith, and called. Abraham believed God. He had suffered many trials—each foreshadowing Christ. Then God gave him this great trial—

Genesis 22: 1: And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt [put through a trial] Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am.* 2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

I. FIRST, BEHOLD GOD OUR FATHER AND CHRIST HIS SON.

‘Take thy son.’ The Lord Jesus is the Son of God. **‘Thine only son.’** Christ is called God the Father’s ‘only begotten son’? **‘Whom thou lovest.’** God said, ‘This is my beloved son.’ **‘And offer him for a burnt offering.’** Christ Jesus was chosen by God the Father to be God’s offering for his people.

Do you understand why the Son of God had to lay down his life? All those God’s true spiritual Israel—God’s elect, those God purposed to save from eternity—were guilty. God’s law demanded we die and God’s justice must and shall be upheld. So by Christ’s one offering God satisfied his own justice—upheld his own justice. Christ fulfilled the law, removed the old covenant and established the new covenant of grace FOR HIS PEOPLE. Now God can show mercy to his elect Israel—Jew & Gentile—& remain just.

Hebrews 10: 9: Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10: By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all [time] (Back to our text in Gen 22: 3)

Genesis 22: 3: And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and

went unto the place of which God had told him. 4: Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. 5: And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

Abraham had three full days to think about this sacrifice: heavy upon his heart for three full days and nights. God the Father chose to give his Son for an offering for his people before the world was made. From the foundation of the world, God wrote down every name of every sinner he would save. His Son entered covenant to save them. Right then Christ became the Lamb of God slain in the mind and purpose of God.

Ephesians 1: 3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Revelation 13: 8:...names...written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Notice, Abraham provided and prepared everything necessary: the sacrifice, the wood, the knife. God provided, prepared, purposed everything that took place on Mt. Calvary. On the cross, God was in full control.

Acts 2:23: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Acts 4: 27: For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

Abraham commanded his servants to stay behind while he and his son went forth to the mountain to sacrifice Isaac. The eternal redemption of Christ's people from the curse of the law is the work of God the Father and the Son of God alone.

2 Corinthians 5: 19: God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself

Hebrews 1: 3:...when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Isaiah 63:3: I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me:

The glory of declaring God just and Justifier belongs to God the Father and his Son alone!

II. LET'S CONSIDER ABRAHAM FOR A MOMENT—WE SEE IN ABRAHAM THAT GOD SHALL TRY THOSE WHO GOD HAS MADE TO BELIEVE ON HIM—Genesis 22: 1:...God did tempt Abraham,...

Is your union to Christ a real union? Do you really believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in true saving faith? God will prove true faith and true faith will be proven genuine.

Works do not justify us before God. Our works have nothing to do with our justification before God. God alone in Christ is the justifier of his people. We are “justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:” (Rom 3: 24)

But wherever God gives true faith, God tries faith: why? **It is to bring glory to God! to justify before heaven and earth that the faith of his child is the faith God has given and sustains—it is to bring God glory!**

The works whereby our faith is justified as being genuine are works whereby God proves that we believe God is able. Rahab hid the spies because she believed God was able to save her. Daniel was faithful to God even when it meant becoming guilty before the law of the land and being cast to the lions because he believed God was able to save him. By this work of faith, Abraham will prove he believes God is able to save him.

So you see, “works” which prove faith to be genuine are sacrificial works—works removing all hope in our ability—works requiring faith in God’s ability.

Faith in Christ is obedience & true worship—**v5:...I and the lad will go yonder and worship.** Abraham did not object, “But God this is Isaac: the one through whom the Messiah is to be born. If I sacrifice him there will be no Messiah.” No—Abraham looked not to his wisdom or ability—he believed God. He did not have to understand why God said do this—he believed God. He did not have to have God lay out all the details—he believed God.

“Do you want to glorify God? Then obey God by bringing to God the one sacrifice with which God is well-pleased—his own Son. You do that by believing on Christ.

Also, true faith believes, not only that God is able, but that God will save—**v5: I and the lad [will] come again to you.** It is because true faith is in Christ. Abraham knew God promised Christ would come through Isaac. He knew Christ was all his salvation and the salvation of all God’s elect. So he knew God would save Isaac for Christ’s sake. His faith was in God’s Lamb, Christ Jesus.

God only calls us to do what is reasonable service considering what God has done for us in his Son. It was reasonable for God to command Abraham to offer his only Son, whom Abraham loved, because that is what God did for Abraham.

Believer, when God calls you and I to sacrifice that which is most dear to us, it is reasonable because God gave his own Son and Christ gave his Life for us. It is reasonable service for God to call you to walk in a way which adorns the doctrine of Christ, because that is what Christ did for you.

Believer, remember, wherever you are, whatever you are doing, you represent every believer in this place. Our actions reflect on what we have been taught and on our brethren here. Most importantly, what we do is a reflection of what we think of Christ. People will mis-represent what we do and falsely charge us, so God says, “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” (1 Th 5: 22) That is reasonable service.

III. THIRDLY, LET’S SEE THAT CHRIST IS THE LAMB WHICH GOD PROVIDED—Gen 22: 6: And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

Just as Isaac bore the wood, likewise, Christ bore the cross on which he was crucified. Is it reasonable for one of God’s elect to be called to bear the cross of suffering and rejection for Christ’s sake. Christ bore the cross of fierce justice for us! So, yes, indeed!

Genesis 22: 7: And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

Isaac knew, that because God is holy and man is sinful, there is no approaching God except through the blood of a Lamb. There is—no acceptance with God, no forgiveness with God, no communion with God—except through the blood of Christ the Lamb.

Leviticus 17: 11: For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Exodus 12: 13: And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

So should I run out and get a lamb? No, there is but one Lamb. God has provided himself that Lamb:

Genesis 22: 8: And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

“**God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering**”—it means God will provide himself as the Lamb:—our Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, is God! Therefore God is the Justifier of those who believe on Christ. Also, God will provide for himself a Lamb—it was for God, that his people offended—that Christ shed his blood, that God might be both just, as well as justifier (Rom. 3:23-26).

God will provide or see to it that redemption--the honoring of his law, the satisfaction of his justice, the fulfillment of his covenant--shall all be accomplished in full for all his elect by Christ the Lamb of God. God has seen to it. ‘It is finished,’ the Savior cried! Nothing was left undone. That is why Abraham later named this place ‘**Jehovah- Jireh**’—the Lord will see to it, the Lord will provide, in the mount of the Lord it will be seen. He has...

Hebrews 9: 22: And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. 23: *It was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; [the patterns, the figures were purified ceremonially by the blood of bulls and goats] but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26: For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

IV. FOURTHLY, LET’S SEE A PICTURE OF SUBSTITUTION—Gen 22: 9: And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

Isaac was a young man. So he willingly laid himself on that altar to be sacrificed. He willingly was bound. He willingly watched as his father stretched forth his hand. He willingly watched his father draw the knife to slay him. It shows he believed his Father.

It pictures Christ who willingly laid down his life for his Father and for his people trusting his Father’s promise that he would arise from the dead. Christ willingly was bound by the justice of God when he was

made sin for us. He willingly watched as his father stretched forth his hand. He willingly watched as his father said,

Zechariah 13:7: Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

John 10: 17: Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18: No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Believer, considering Christ willingly gave himself for us, is it reasonable to willingly believe God, to willingly lay down our life and everything dear to us for Christ? Yes!

Next, we see substitution.

Genesis 22: 10: And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11: And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12: And he said, 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. 13: And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering [catch these last six words] in the stead of his son.

This ram pictured Christ, the believer's Substitute. It was a Lamb—just as Abraham had said—God provided himself a Lamb. It was caught—like as Christ was bound by his covenant promise, bound by divine justice on the cross when he was made sin for his people. It was in a thicket—like as Christ was crowned with a crown of thorns. It was offered in the stead of his son—like as God took Christ and offered Christ in place of all God's elect sons.

Sinner, you are under the condemnation of the law. The law has you bound. The fire of justice is about to consume you for all eternity. But God has provided himself a lamb in his Son. God has satisfied justice for a number of elect people that no man knows

Was justice satisfied for you? When God has made us see our sin, our guilt and made us behold Christ is our only hope then we know Christ did this for us. Christ satisfied justice for particular sinners by taking our place and Christ brings us to believe Christ has accomplished this work for us. Do you believe Christ?

That boy was life to Abraham—as dear to Abraham as your own life is to you! When Abraham saw his life about to die but then saw this substitute to take the place of his son, to die so that his son would live. Reckon Abraham had to be talked into laying hold of that ram? Neither does the sinner to whom God has revealed his sin and showed him Christ crucified in his place.

V. LASTLY, NOTICE, THE ANGEL OF THE LORD CALLED ABRAHAM OUT OF HEAVEN.

Christ calls his people effectually to life and faith in him. We hear his voice in our heart through this gospel we preach. Also, Christ calls us to the trial to grow us in grace and in faith. But when Christ has proven us, Christ calls for the trial to end—**Gen 22: 12: And he said, 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.**

God knew, before, that Abraham feared him—that Abraham had this child-like, reverence and affection and submission to God--Psalm 1: 6 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish. God gave Abraham that fear. It means he approved of his fear: his faith, his love and his obedience. It means “Now I have made known to the world that thou fearest me.” That is the reason for our trial.

Look to Christ for example. God the Father knew from eternity that Christ his Son feared and revered and believed him. But by Christ coming forth to accomplish the work of redemption for his people—now God has manifest that he approves of Christ’s faith and fear of him—now God has manifest it to the world that Christ is the Faithful One and the Holy One. So it is that God tries his child to make his works of grace in his child known before heaven and earth—to glorify himself.

The end of the trial is always to bring us nearer to Christ our Substitute—Genesis 22: 13: And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns—The trial of our faith is make us lift up our eyes, to look to behold Christ on the cross

Genesis 22: 13: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son—the trial is to make us lay hold of Christ by faith.

Genesis 22: 13: and Abraham...offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son—the trial is to make us offer up Christ in our stead to God through faith in him.

Lastly, the trial is to bring us to this resolve—**Genesis 22: 14: And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said *to this day*, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.**

Through faith we behold, Jehovahjireh, in all his fiery wrath against our sin on Calvary’s mountain. But we also behold Jehovahjireh in all his justice and mercy on Calvary’s mountain. Now Jehovahjireh—in all his glory is seen in heavenly Mt. Zion at God’s right hand and there we sit in him.

Believer, because Christ has quenched the fire of justice against us, because Christ has made righteousness and peace kiss in harmony, because Christ is risen and reigning for and in each of his people—we shall see Christ’s glory both now and forever in the mount of the LORD. That is the end of God-given faith, that is the end of every trial and that shall be our ultimate end in glory--In the mount of the LORD God’s glory shall be seen in Christ triumphing over all!

Amen!