

**Hebrews 6.14**  
**Genesis 22.1-19**  
**Birthed in Promise**

Today I want to step sideways out of the text into the context of the promise. I want us to think about what our response is to the promise and how our affections and our obedience are connected not only to the promise itself, but to each other. There is a connection between obedience and blessing, between obedience and love and that connection is both profound and powerful. Important and beautiful. It is the very essence of vital faith. For we cannot believe God without loving Him; consider: if we doubt his power we despise Him as a liar, and if we doubt His nature we might believe what He can do but we are never at peace with it, for we have no basis of real trust. To really get to the bottom of this promise and what it tells us about Abraham, and more importantly about God Himself, we must see it in its context.

**Genesis 22.1-19**

# I. THIS MOMENT IS PIVOTAL

A. The original context of the promise given was the offering of Isaac, who is the promised son.

B. Much sorrow and trial has been endured to even come to this place

1. Years of wandering

2. Battle, war, conflict in the family

3. Exile of the first son Ishmael

4. Year after year of waiting.

a) Abraham was 75 when Isaac was first promised in a passing manner.

b) He was 86 when Ishmael was born

c) He was 99 when God gave him the covenant of circumcision and gave the time marker for the coming of Isaac

d) He was 100 years old when Isaac was born.

C. In Isaac, Abraham has everything that he was promised, that mattered to Him.

D. God had promised offspring when He first called Abraham out of his home in Haran

**Genesis 12.1-3, 7**

**Genesis 13.14-17**

E. When God gave the specific promise of Isaac, he had been shown the land and seen the faithfulness of God in delivering him, in providing, in protecting... but the one thing he longed for, he lacked. A child.

**Genesis 15.1-6**

F. Now, God called him to offer up on the altar the son of the promise.

## **II. BELIEF IS NOT STATIC**

A. Belief is not a singular event, but a continuum. It is an ongoing way of life.

- B. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness when the promise was given.
- C. But he also continued to believe and demonstrate with his life that he trusted in God
- D. There are peaks and valleys
  1. Lying about his relationship to Sarah (twice) out of fear is not a high point
  2. Agreeing to father a child by Hagar instead of through his wife Sarah, was not a high point (and the world still bears the consequence of that lapse in belief)
  3. The submission to the decision of Lot when he offered to allow Lot to choose first was an act of faith
  4. The rescue of Lot
  5. His honoring of the King of Salem
  6. All acts of faith, all testimonies that He believed God would do everything He promised...

E. None of these fluctuations altered the basic character of Abraham's life.

1. He believed God
2. He obeyed God.
3. He loved God
4. He trusted God
5. This was his position, this was his identity

### **III. BELIEF REQUIRES COURAGE**

A. Let's return now to this pivotal moment in Abraham's life, and indeed in scripture itself

B. He has the son of promise, and God calls him to sacrifice him on the altar

1. How do we surrender what we have been given?
2. How do we surrender what we have longed for?
3. How do we surrender what we love?
4. More importantly, why? Why would God call him to do this thing?

C. Abraham believed that whatever God had already promised was as real as if he held it in his hand, as if he possessed it fully.

D. Further, he believed that since God had promised it, no circumstance could alter that promise, and anything that seemed to alter it or alter its path would simply be overcome or circumnavigated.

E. This confident courage is born out of love and faith.

F. As for the why?

#### **IV. LOVE IS WASTED ON THE WRONG THINGS**

A. Here is the heart of the "test" –

1. It is important for us to understand that God was not in doubt about anything. He never is
2. The testing was a proving and a purification

3. It was to demonstrate to Abraham, and to Isaac that if you give your love to anything less than God it will never be all that it should be. But when God is the first object of your love, of your life, then everything in your life lives in the blessing of that love.

B. Abraham's love was still immature in many ways.

1. The promise for Abraham was everything that he lived for
2. It was everything that he lived by.
3. It shaped him and guided his actions, his wanderings and his choices.
4. He was always seeking after the heir, after this boy and all of the things that we see in scripture happening to him grow out of that.

C. But in this moment God called him to love God more than the promise. He called Abraham to trust Him more. To shift his faith from the promise to the promiser

1. He was determined to follow his God because he loved Him. He trusted that God could be trusted.
2. He had to believe that in some way he could not understand God would sort this out because God was bigger and could be trusted.
3. He had to know that so fundamentally that it shaped and changed everything about who he was and what he was willing to do.
4. If he does not believe God, if he loves Isaac more, if he refuses to obey, then his faith is not what we have been called to emulate.

## **V. BELIEF IS ALWAYS CONNECTED TO OBEDIENCE**

- A. You cannot know God without loving
- B. You cannot love God without believing
- C. You cannot believe God without obeying
- D. This is the ultimate trifecta of faith - love, belief, obedience. And this is the essence of salvation itself.



E. For we cannot be saved without the faith to believe that God keeps His promises. It is never about our doing, our trying or our best efforts. For all of our righteousness is filthy rags, but it is about taking God at His word

1. That if we repent of our sin and call upon Jesus God will hear and honor His word
2. He will count our sin as punished in the death of Christ
3. He will credit the full meritorious righteousness of Jesus to our account as if WE had done every right and perfect thing that Jesus ever did.
4. And know that one glorious day, Jesus will return and take us to be with Him forever,
5. That we have a promised inheritance and have been adopted as sons and daughters of the Most High God...

F. It is ALWAYS about trusting and knowing that He will keep every promise He ever made. And this promise of God, (that we will pick up next time) is as much for us as it ever was for Abraham.

Because we are the promised increase and we have both inherited and through that inheritance ARE the promised blessing.

G. This promised blessing is the reality that God has given us the faith of our father Abraham. This faith is something that God plants in our breast in the moment that He calls us to life. It makes the dead text live, and the dry and barren promise bear fruit that will transform a life for all of eternity.