

Double Intensity

By Charles Lawson

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Bible Text: Genesis 22:10-11
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C/O Charles Lawson
2100 Woodrow Drive
Knoxville, Tennessee 37918

Website: pastorcharleslawson.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/templebc

Please open to Genesis 22:11. I'm going to call your attention tonight to what I'm sure you're probably already aware of but I just thought tonight would be a good opportunity to point your mind to some of the things that we find in the Bible, throughout Scripture, that are a little different. The Bible says in verse 10, chapter 22 of Genesis,

“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.”

Father, bless this holy book now in Jesus' name. Amen.

You can be seated.

If you'll notice, his name is mentioned two times, “Abraham, Abraham,” so what that gives us is that there is an intensity in what's going on here. When God mentions your name twice, he's got a reason for it. He's going to do something and here we find in Genesis 22:11, as you well know, that he had brought Isaac to the top of Moriah to offer him up unto God. He was willing to sacrifice the very gift and promise of God in trust and obedience to the Lord, to trust God to take care of what needed to be done. How in the world could his seed be propagated without the promise and yet he put it into the hands of the Lord and the Lord said, “Abraham, Abraham.” He's reminding us that we're to go out here tonight and offer up our children to God; it's not our place to shed blood of any kind. The blood has already been shed and you have no business at all trying to take the life of anyone and make them a sacrifice unto God. The Bible tells us plainly that we have an altar that they know not of that served the tabernacle. Our altar is not a blood altar, the altar is the one that's already been made, Christ made the altar and sacrificed his blood.

But what you have here is obedience to God. God honors obedience. He said, “I would rather have obedience than sacrifice,” and Abraham was obedient to God. People will give God money, they will give God a lot of things but they won't give him obedience and obedience is the thing that makes all the difference in the world because the opposite of obedience is rebellion and the Bible says rebellion is as the son of witchcraft so, therefore, rebellion becomes a spiritual thing that comes between you and God. Just obey

the Almighty and so he said, "Abraham, Abraham, I want your attention. Hear me and hear me well." God swore by himself that because you have done this thing, this thing, this thing right here, no one ever before, no one ever since had risen to the height that Abraham did at Moriah when in absolute and complete surrender and obedience to God, he was willing to offer up his son, the son that came by promise.

In the book of Genesis 46:2, we find the Lord doing this again, "And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I." Notice the contrast between Israel and Jacob and notice the double, the intensity, "Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I." If you look at Genesis 46 in context, this is when Jacob was torn about going down to Egypt. He didn't want to go and yet God Almighty told him. Look what he says in verse 3, he said, "Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation." You'll go down with your sons, you'll come out as a nation. This is a very, what you might say, a very important time in the history of Israel and God Almighty is saying to Jacob, "If you'll do what I say to do, I'm going to bless you as I did your father Abraham. Go on down into Egypt."

Now, why did he want him in Egypt? Because God had already sent Joseph before into Egypt to preserve much life and so, therefore, he was choosing something for Jacob that Jacob on his own would not have chosen but the outcome of it was much better than anything Jacob could ever imagine because when they came out of Egypt 400 years later, they came out of Egypt a nation that had been delivered by the blood, that had the Passover, the blood sacrifice had been given to them and they had a leader by the name of Moses. All of this happened because they had been in Egypt for 400 years and Jacob obeyed the voice of God and went with his sons into Egypt.

In the book of Exodus 3:4 we find this double intensity again. "And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I." Moses is standing on holy ground; he's standing before a bush that burns and is not consumed. This is the sight of the sovereignty of God. God alone is able to do this. The bush represents the history of Israel; it's Israel in another light; it's Israel in another type. It's God dealing with his people: ever burning but never consumed. Always the brunt of the hatred of the world and they are blamed for all the problems of the world but they are the chosen people of God and they, being the chosen people of God, have a future and their future is in the book of Romans 11, Romans 9, and God Almighty is one day going to raise up Israel and the fact of the matter is, right now, at this very hour while you're listening to this preacher, Israel has young men in their schools over there studying the word of God, the Old Testament, preparing for the coming of the Messiah. They little understand that the Messiah has already come but when he comes the second time, they're going to see him as he is and this time when they see him, they're going to mourn for him as one that mourneth for his only son.

Folks, think about this: the Jew, Israel, has handed to you the word of God. God intended to preserve these people. They have been hated. They have been chased. They have been driven out of countries. They have been crucified. They have been beaten to death. Hitler killed six million of them and yet they are still here today and they're going to be here

until the Second Advent. “Moses, Moses, you see the bush burning but it's not consumed.” God's the only one that could do something like that.

In 1 Samuel 3:10, “And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.” Have you noticed how the natural inclination is that when you hear your name two times like that it is, “Here am I, Lord. Speak. What do you want to say?” Now, you may not hear your name spoken like that as Samuel did in a case like this but you may hear your name like that too. You may hear God come to you in a time you least expect him and here he said, “Samuel, Samuel.” What's happening here in the book of 1 Samuel is God is about to take Eli down and his two sons Hophni and Phinehas are going to die. They died on the battlefield; they'd been carrying the Ark of the Covenant and the Philistines took it from them and they died. When Eli heard word that his sons had died, he fell off a precipice that he was sitting on. He fell off of it; he was a heavy man; he was an old man. He fell off and he died and the house of Eli, the priest, came tumbling down. That was in prophesy; that was prophesied to happen and it happened. Some folks don't realize that when God says something is going to happen, it's going to happen and you're not going to change it. It's going to happen. “Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” But he's no respecter of persons. If you can choose and you can choose, you can choose to follow the Lord. Your house may come down but you can live for God and you can live for the Lord and God will bless you for he is no respecter of persons. “Samuel, Samuel.” He's about to take a priesthood down and he did. He took it down. I like the way the Scripture says this, “And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.” Now, you know the story if you've read it, the first time God spoke and the second time God spoke, Samuel went to Eli and Eli perceived that it was God speaking to the young man and so he told him what to say.

In the book of Luke 10:41, “And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” This is an intimate thing: he loved Martha and Mary and Lazarus. He's speaking to her not so much as the Lord, as her Master and Lord which he certainly was and is, but he was speaking to her on the level of, “Martha, Martha, I have something to say to you. You mean well, you're doing the best you can, but you're overlooking the most important part in your life and Mary chose that.” You say, “What is that, Preacher?” It's not the Lord's work that we're here for. “Oh, what a horrible thing.” We're here for the Lord. You put the cart before the horse. Everybody gets so involved in the ministry that they forget the one they're ministering. Some preachers get so carried away with their preaching that they forget about the one they're preaching about. It's not about what we're doing, it's about who he is. He is our very life. Mary said, “It doesn't make any difference what happens, whether anybody gets fed or not, I'm going to sit down at his feet. He's got something to say and I need to hear it.” She understood she was going to die if she didn't hear something from the Savior.

Martha was busy doing things and all the things she did were good things, he never one time said anything she did was bad, but in the age that you live in today, you can overwhelm yourself with information. Information overload. You can't read every paper, go to every website, get on every blog, go to everybody's Facebook and read every email and talk to everybody on the phone and tweet and whatever else you do, today because if you do, you'll spend your whole day just literally covered completely with your mind with so much and so much of it is just useless, meaningless nothing. If you're not spending time with God every single day, then you're Martha and a lot of people get the idea, "Well, if I just do these things for the Lord it'll fill up the vacuum in my life." No, it won't. It'll create a bigger vacuum. A lot of people have the idea, "Well, if I serve the Lord, if I do these things for God, if I live for him and all that, that'll fill up this hunger in my soul," but you'll find that it won't fill up that hunger in your soul. The only one that can fill up that hunger in your soul is the Lord and the only way that God will fill up that hunger in your soul is to pray to him and commune with him.

Let me say as I've said to you before: if you can't pray but 30 seconds or a minute, pray that 30 seconds or pray that minute. The first thing you know you'll be praying two minutes and then two turns to five, then five to ten, ten to fifteen, thirty. Sometimes you can pray all day and all night but pray. Never judge your spiritual prayer life by somebody else and what they tell you they do. If they do something, good for them. Good for them but you have your own life that you have to live. And so Mary chose the spiritual part and, friend, you've got to do that. You've got to do that. A lot of people have the idea, "Well, I get excited about God's work and get excited about the things of the Lord and get excited about all these things." That's all good, folks, but that will not fill up the vacuum in your life. You're putting the cart before the horse. Get in there and get alone with God first, first and then all these other things will take their place. You don't live for things, you live for the Lord. So he said, "Martha, Martha, you mean well, you do." Martha was a good woman.

Luke 22:31, "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." Do you see the double intensity? "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." I'm so glad the Lord said "Satan hath desired" and before he can come and just destroy me, he has to get permission. I'm glad for that and I don't think my Lord is in any hurry to turn me over to the devil. Now, when you read 1 Corinthians, you'll find out a man had his father's wife and he said, "Turn such an one over to Satan." Satan has the power of death; he can kill you. But he said plainly in 1 Corinthians 5 "that the spirit may be saved." Amen. He can't do that. He can't take that but he can kill the body. This is why the Lord Jesus says, "Don't fear him that can destroy the flesh and destroy the body. Don't fear him but fear him that hath the power to destroy both," what? "Body and soul in hell." There is only one that can do that. Satan doesn't have that power. You say, "Doesn't Satan take you to hell and punish you?" No, when Satan winds up in the pit, he'll have enough to take care of himself. He'll be screaming in the lake of fire and he won't be punishing anybody. He'll be down there screaming and screaming in hellfire and damnation. He won't be pitchfork punishing anybody, demons down there punishing people. No, no, no, no, no, when a demon winds up in the pit and they're not there yet and when Satan winds up there, it'll be all they can

do to handle it for themselves. You've got that right. That's all a medieval creation. That has no basis in the Scripture. The Bible says that they'll be punished, separated, from the presence of God before the holy angels. Hellfire itself is plenty of punishment.

Don't go there. I urge you tonight, don't go there. That's what the cross was about, to keep you out of hell. Don't go there. Don't go there. I don't think that any man that chooses to go to hell is in his right mind. I don't really believe it, I believe your mind has been so warped and distorted by the devil and by sin that you haven't really considered where you're headed if you go to hell. Think about dying and lifting up your eyes in hell and there you are and you're not going to get out of there and you can't do a thing about it and you burn in hell. Man, you don't want to go to hell. You don't want to go to hell.

But here's what Simon Peter said, "And the Lord said, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." Peter had something to say about that because he learned firsthand. Look at 1 Peter 5:8. Remember now, this is one that wound up in the hands of Satan. Satan couldn't kill him but the Lord Jesus says, "I prayed for you that your faith fail not." Now look at 1 Peter 5:8. Here's Peter, the same Peter and look what he says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Do you see that? He's not writing from the idea, "Well, this is what Satan's about." No, no, no, he's writing from, "Let me tell you what it's like. I was there. I've been there," and he has, he was. Peter literally fell into the hands of Satan and when he did, Satan sifted him and boy, did he ever sift him. He said, "He hath desired to sift you as wheat."

But notice what it says in verse 9, "Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." I know Christians that have suffered and when they go through suffering, they're surprised because they suffered. God knows you wouldn't call that down on anybody and it's not man's place to do that, it's not my place. My place is to come to your side and pray for you when you go through that, it's to help you. It's to do everything that I possibly can to remove as much suffering as I can. Folks, if you've been in this world a little while, you'll find out there's plenty of suffering to go around. I'll tell you something else that there's plenty to go around too and that's trouble. Young people like to go looking for trouble: you're a fool. You don't have to look for it, it'll find you and there's more trouble in this world that you don't want anything to do with, believe me. This world is full of trouble. It's full of trouble and it's full of suffering. It's everywhere and if you've lived any time at all on this earth, you thank God for the fact that he's a sovereign God and he won't let anything overtake you. Anything, any temptation. He'll never leave you; he'll never forsake you. Thanks be unto God for that. Peter said he wants to devour you and he wants to sift you. He wants to destroy your faith.

In Acts 9:3, "And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Everybody has got to hear that. You may not hear everything of all these others and circumstances like these people did but everybody in this house, everybody on the face of this earth has got to hear that at one

time or another. It may not be in exactly those words but what it is is “Saul, your relationship with me is not right. You are wrong and you are wrong and you are headed for destruction.” If Saul had refused the voice of God on the road to Damascus, the man who wrote the biggest part of the New Testament would have gone to hell. But he received him. “Who art thou, Lord?” Every man's got to give an account to God; we must all give an account. We've got to give an account. God will hold every man accountable for his life and for his sins. Have you given account? Have you ever heard your name called? Have you ever heard your name called? Have you ever heard it? “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” On the road to Damascus he learned something that he didn't know and he had never experienced in his life: he came face-to-face with God. “Why persecutest thou me?” Boy, isn't that something? My, my, my.

Father, in Jesus' name, I pray you would use what I've said tonight for the glory of God. I pray you'd use it, use it to help somebody and we'll give you praise and honor in thy holy name. Amen.