

031109PM The World of the Bible-06 Moriah

The World of the Bible: Moriah, Golgotha, and Calvary

Slide: Jerusalem Sunspot

Jerusalem should be your favorite city. After all, it's the city that God has chosen for Himself (I Kings 11:13). In Psalm 87:2,3 we read, 'The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the other dwelling places of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, oh city of God.'

Jerusalem! Three thousand years of lifetimes! Abraham and Isaac upon the altar of Moriah, a stone's throw from here!

David, the shepherd-king, watching Bathsheba from a distance.

Jeremiah, mourning for the exiles.

Jesus, teaching in the Temple.

Peter's betrayal.

Jesus, walking the Way of Sorrows! Dying with forgiveness on his lips.

Peter, shouting the good news in the streets on Pentecost! He is risen! Call on His name and live forever with Him!

Ancient maps put Jerusalem In the center of the world, and I think they were right.

Jerusalem is the one place in the Bible God just can't stop talking about. Over 814 times the Word of God records the name of the city of God-Jerusalem.

This evening Jerusalem is the redemptive center of history. This evening there is a hill outside the walls of Jerusalem called Golgotha – where mankind murdered

its Maker on a cross of wood with carpenters tools – yet He made the hill on which it stood!

Jerusalem is also God's timepiece. The final events of world history will culminate there with the glorious return of Jesus Christ to the Mount of Olives.

Slide: Akedah

What about Jerusalem's ancient past? In Genesis 22:2 the Lord asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac on 'Mount Moriah.' The only other passage where this name appears is 2 Chronicles 3:1 where we read, 'Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah...' So, evidently Abraham was asked to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah, which was the exact spot where the temple was later built in Jerusalem. When you look at the temple area today, remember this is where that dramatic event happened.

Slide: Aerial

One of the most intriguing verses in the Bible is in John 8:56. What makes this such an interesting verse? To find out, let's go there. One secret that unlocks the New Testament is to watch the Pharisees when they interact with Christ. Whenever they get upset, it is usually because they realized something. If we follow the reaction of the religious leaders, then we will catch what we might otherwise miss.

Jesus was teaching in the temple area, and he makes this statement which fell like a bombshell. Verse 56 records Jesus saying that there was a day, over 2000 years ago, when Abraham rejoiced to see Jesus. Have you ever wondered when that day was? That day is recorded for us in Genesis 22.

Notice the reaction of the religious leaders. Verse 59 says, "they took up stones to stone Him." Notice they are quite upset. They knew what Jesus had just said, what He claimed – and they hated Him for it. Now think about this. It's only a few months later that Jesus goes to Golgotha carrying His own Cross. Where did He go? John 19:17-18 says Golgotha.

Slide: Abraham

This evening we are looking at Mount Moriah, Golgotha, and Calvary. Where is Golgotha or the Place of the skull located today? Golgotha is located just outside the walls of Jerusalem, not more than 700 m from the spot where King Solomon built the first Jewish Temple. According to Jewish tradition Solomon built the temple on Mount Moriah, commemorating the exact spot where Abraham stretched out Isaac upon the altar of sacrifice (Genesis 22: 1-19). Mount Moriah,

the Temple of Solomon, the place of Isaac sacrifice, and Golgotha -- are all the same place. All mark the place where God bound himself to fulfill the promises of the Abraham the covenant.

Slide: City of David

The crucifixion of Jesus took place in that same "region of Moriah" where over 2000 years before Abraham had stood prepared to offer to God his only son, his innocent son, it God's command. But this time as Jesus was led to the Cross caring the wood upon which he would be offered, there was no ram caught in the bushes to take his place. The ancient prophecy was also a promise. God told Abraham that someday " in the mountain of the Lord -- it will be provided". And now it was provided, in the person of Jesus Christ. He gave Himself for me.

The message of Moriah is a message of love. The first usage of a word in the Bible is always significant. When is the first time the Word love occurs in the Bible? Genesis 22 is the answer. What is the most famous first in the Bible? John 3:16. It's amazing that the first usage of love and the Bible is about a Father offering His Son. And that Father who so loved the world, that He gave his one and only son for the world.

The apostle John writes in his first chapter verse 29 these words " the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world". At the end of his life John wrote another letter, we call it his first epistle of John. In first John 2.1-2 after a lifetime of meditating on the greatest event of all time -- the sacrifice of Jesus Christ said these powerful words --" Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, is the timing sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world".

Slides: Genesis 22 to John 3.16

Think of all the parallels a descendent of Abraham by the name of Jesus came to the Cross, innocent of any crime that he had committed. Jesus was slain fasten to the wood which He had to carry himself to the place of his sacrifice (Jn 19.17). How strangely reminiscent of Genesis 22 where another son of Abraham also carried wood, and was laid on that wood, to be sacrificed.

Isaac was spared by the personal intervention of God. Jesus suffered, bled, and died -- without the intervention of God. God's spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all. God did not spared Jesus so that he could suffer and spare us the wrath of God.

There are many parallels between the life of Jesus and Isaac. Matthew went to great pains to trace the ancestry of Jesus back across 42 unbroken generations - culminating in the birth of Abraham.

Slides: Abraham – Gen 22

Isaac is a wonderful type of Christ, the only Son who was willing to give His life to please His Father.

- Both Isaac and Christ were promised sons;
- Both were born miraculously (of course, Christ was born of the Virgin Mary and was sinless);
- Both brought joy to the heart of the father;
- Both were born at the set time.
- Both were persecuted by their brethren and both were obedient unto death.
- Both were about the age 30 (note Genesis 23 gives Sarah's death at age 127, so Isaac was 37 then!
- Christ was crucified between two thieves, and the two young men went with Isaac (v. 3).
- Isaac questioned his father, and Jesus asked, "My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27:46, NKJV)
- Of course, Christ actually died, while Isaac was spared. However, in God's sight Isaac had "died." Hebrews 11:19 says that "in a figure" (that is, symbolically) Isaac was raised from the dead.
- Verse 19 indicates that Abraham returned to the waiting servants, but nothing is said about Isaac. This too is a type; for the next time we see Isaac, he is receiving his bride! (24:62ff) Even so Christ gave Himself on the cross and went back to heaven, and one day will come forth to receive His Bride, the church.¹

Slides: City of David to Cross

Slide: Abraham

Genesis 22:1-19

1. Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."
2. Then He said, "Take now 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."

¹Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*, (Jewish New Testament Publications: The Jewish New Testament Commentary) Clarksville, MD.

3. So Abraham **rose early** in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and **he split the wood** for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.
4. Then **on the third day** Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.
5. And Abraham said to his young men, "**Stay here** with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and **we will come back** to you."
Romans 4.17 (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;
6. So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and **laid it on Isaac** his son (**John 19.17**); and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. **II Corinthians 5.21; Isaiah 53.6** *All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*
7. But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but **where is the lamb** for a burnt offering?"
8. And Abraham said, "My son, **God will provide for Himself the lamb** for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together. **John 1.29**
9. Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.
10. And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.
11. But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am."
12. And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."
13. Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was **a ram** caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. **(This "ram" shows very specifically that the prophecy wasn't fulfilled until THE LAMB was slain)**
14. And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "**In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided.**"
Galatians 3:8 *And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."*
15. Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,
16. and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—

17. blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.
18. In **your seed** all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." **Galatians 3:14-16** that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. 16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.
19. So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

Expect² tests from God (Gen. 22:1–2)³

- *Our faith is not really tested until God asks us to bear what seems unbearable, do what seems unreasonable, and expect what seems impossible.*
- *Faith does not demand explanations; faith rests on promises.*

Focus on promises, not explanations (Gen. 22:3–5)

Depend on God's provision (Gen. 22:6–14)

- *Where* does the Lord provide our needs? In the place of His assignment. Abraham was at the right place, so God could meet his needs. We have no right to expect the provision of God if we are not in the will of God.
- *When* does God meet our needs? Just when we have the need and not a minute before. When you bring your requests to the throne of grace, God answers with mercy and grace "in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). Sometimes it looks like God waits until the last minute to send help, but that is only from our human point of view. *God is never late.*
- *How* does God provide for us? In ways that are usually quite natural. God did not send an angel with a sacrifice; He simply allowed a ram to get caught in a bush at a time when Abraham needed it and in a place where Abraham could get his hands on it. All Abraham needed was one animal, so God did not send a whole flock of sheep.
- *To whom* does God give His provision? To those who trust Him and obey His instructions. When we are doing the will of God, we have the right to expect the provision of God. A deacon in the first church I pastored used

² All of these points are quoted from Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Obedient*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) 1994.

³ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Obedient*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) 1994.

to remind us, "When God's work is done in God's way, it will not lack God's support." God is not obligated to bless my ideas or projects, but He is obligated to support His work if it is done in His way.

- *Why* does God provide our every need? For the great glory of His name! "Hallowed be Thy name" is the first petition in the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9–13), and it governs all the other requests. God was glorified on Mount Moriah because Abraham and Isaac did the will of the Lord and glorified Jesus Christ. We must pause to consider this important truth.

Seek to glorify Christ

If ever two suffering people revealed Jesus Christ, it was Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah. *Their experience is a picture of the Father and the Son and the cross* and is one of the most beautiful types of Christ found anywhere in the Old Testament. Jesus said to the Jews, "Your father, Abraham, rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56).

- In Isaac's miraculous birth, Abraham saw the day of Christ's birth;
- In Isaac's marriage (Gen. 24), he saw the day of Christ's coming for His bride.
- But on Mount Moriah, when Isaac willingly put himself on the altar, Abraham saw the day of Christ's death and resurrection.

Look forward to what God has for you (Gen. 22:15–24)

Beer-sheba, where Abraham dwelt, is about forty-two miles distant from Jerusalem, and it is not to be wondered at that Abraham, Isaac, the two servants, and the ass laden with wood for the burnt-offering, did not reach this place till the *third day*; See Ge 22:4.

Verse 4. The third day] THREE is a mystical number:

- Christ rose from the dead the *third day*, Mt 17:23; 1Co 15:4;
- He was crucified the *third hour* after noon, Mr 15:25;
- On the *third day* Isaac was to be offered up, so it was the *third day* in which Christ also was to be perfected, Lu 13:32;
- the binding of Isaac, Ge 21:9, was also typical, so Christ was bound, Mt 27:2.4

Isaac carried the wood for the burnt-offering, Ge 22:6, so Christ carried the tree whereon he died, Joh 19:17;

- *The Son bore the burden of sin.* It is interesting that the wood is mentioned five times in the narrative and that Isaac did not start carrying the wood until he arrived at Mount Moriah.
- The wood is not just a picture of the cross, for Jesus did not carry His cross all the way to Calvary. The wood seems to also be a picture of the

burden of sin that Jesus bore for us (1 Peter 2:24). Abraham took the wood and "laid it upon Isaac his son" (Gen. 22:6), and "the Lord hath laid on Him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). The fire consumed the wood as a picture of the judgment of God against sin.⁵

⁵Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Obedient*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) 1994.