

SIGN STUDY #3: ABRAHAM AND THE GREAT SACRIFICE

The Ranks (37):83-113

(83) Verily among those who followed his Way was Abraham.

(84) Behold! he approached his Lord with a sound heart.

(85) Behold! he said to his father and to his people, **(1) "What is that which ye worship?"**

(86) "Is it a falsehood- gods other than Allah- that ye desire?"

(87) "Then what is your idea about the Lord of the worlds?"

(88) **(2) Then did he cast a glance at the Stars.**

(89) And he said, "I am indeed sick (at heart)!"

(90) So they turned away from him, and departed.

(91) Then did he turn to their gods and said, "will ye not eat (of the offerings before you)?..."

(92) "What is the matter with you that ye speak not (intelligently)?"

(93) Then did he turn upon them, striking (them) with the right hand.

(94) Then came (the worshippers) with hurried steps, and faced (him).

(95) He said: "Worship ye that which ye have (yourselves) carved?"

(96) "But Allah has created you and your handwork!"

(97) **(3) They said, "Build him a furnace, and throw him into the blazing fire!"**

(98) (This failing), they then sought a stratagem against him, but We made them the ones most humiliated!

(99) He said: **(4) "I will go to my Lord! He will surely guide me!**

(1) Abraham was distressed by his own people worshiping false gods.

(2) Why look at the stars, God used stars to demonstrate what God will do for him.

Genesis 15:5 He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

(3) Even though the people threw Abraham in a great fire God caused the flames to be cool around him. The Prophets (21):69 We said, "O Fire! be thou cool, and (a means of) safety for Abraham!"

(4) Just like Abraham, it is always best to go straight to the Lord for guidance when we are in time of need.

(100) "O my Lord! Grant me a righteous (son)!"

(101) **(5) So We gave him the good news of a boy ready to suffer and forbear.**

(102) Then, when (the son) reached (the age of) (serious) work with him, he said: **(6) "O my son! I see in vision that I offer thee in sacrifice: Now see what is thy view!"** (The son) said: "O my father! **(7) Do as thou art commanded: thou will find me, if Allah so wills one practicing Patience and Constancy!"**

(103) So when they had both submitted their wills (to Allah), and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead (for sacrifice),

(104) We called out to him "O Abraham!

(105) **(8) "Thou hast already fulfilled the vision!" - thus indeed do We reward those who do right.**

(106) For this was obviously a trial-

(107) **(9) And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice:**

(108) And We left (this blessing) for him among generations (to come) in later times:

(109) "Peace and salutation to Abraham!"

(110) Thus indeed do We reward those who do right.

(111) **(10) For he was one of our believing Servants.**

(112) And We gave him the good news of Isaac - a prophet,- one of the Righteous.

(113) We blessed him and Isaac: but of their progeny are (some) that do right, and (some) that obviously do wrong, to their own souls.

(5) Even though Abraham's son was never sacrificed, it must have been a great deal of anguish to walk off to a presumed execution.

(6) Abraham simply obeyed what the Lord told him to do even when it was going to cost him everything. Abraham did not try to save his son himself but just trusted God.

(7) Abraham's son is ready to submit to God even to his own death!

(8) God showed his great Mercy to Abraham by not letting him go through with the sacrifice. His Mercy alone is huge, but it is only part of the reward that God promises.

(9) Even though God spared Abraham's son, a sacrifice was still required. God satisfied the debt that Abraham owed and provided a great sacrifice, or something far greater than Abraham could ever give. When God gives a sacrifice, it will always be momentous!

(10) Abraham is considered a believer because he believed and submitted (103) and received God's Mercy through sacrifice (107)

Genesis 12: 1-4

¹ The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

² "I will make you into a great nation
and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you."

⁴ So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

(1) God told Abraham to leave his country and Abraham simply obeyed. His faith is commended in Hebrews 11:8 "By faith **Abraham**, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going."

Genesis 15:1-6

¹ After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision:

"Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield, ^[a]

your very great reward. ^[b] "

² But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit ^[c] my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

⁴ Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir." ⁵ He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

⁶ Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

(1) Again, Abraham showed great faith in God. Because of this he was "credited" as righteous. This doesn't mean that he was perfect (if he was perfect, he wouldn't need to be credited), but simply that due to his submitting to God he was viewed by God as righteous.

Genesis 22:1-19

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, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."

³ Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled 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. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. ⁵ He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. **(1) We will worship and then we will come back to you.**"

⁶ Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, ⁷ Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied.

"The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

⁸ Abraham answered, **(2) "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."** And the two of them went on together.

⁹ When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of

the wood. ¹⁰ Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Here I am," he replied.

¹² "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

¹³ **(3) Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram ^[a] caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.** ¹⁴ So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

¹⁵ The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time ¹⁶ and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, ¹⁸ and through your offspring ^[b] all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

¹⁹ Then Abraham returned to his servants, and they set off together for Beersheba. And Abraham stayed in Beersheba.

(1) Abraham believed that he and his son would somehow come back down the mountain after the sacrifice. Hebrews 11:19 says "Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death."

(2) Although Abraham was on his way to sacrifice his son, he still envisioned that it is actually God who will bring the sacrifice and that it will come in the form of a lamb.

(3) Again, even though the son would no longer be sacrificed, a sacrifice was still needed.

Main Points of the story:

1. Abraham was determined to obey God even when it cost what was most precious to him.
2. Abraham was a true believer because he acted upon his faith.
3. God was pleased with Abraham and provided a great sacrifice.

Spiritual meaning of the story:

Even though Abraham may have actually sacrificed a ram, his story is quite clear that God still requires the correct sacrifice from each of us and that God provided something much greater that Abraham could ever have given. Just like Adam accepted the robe of righteousness and Noah believed in God and boarded the ark, we can see that God is willing to supply a momentous sacrifice on our behalf for those who are willing to receive it.

Application:

Am I looking out for a momentous sacrifice in my own life and willing to accept it when God provides it?