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THE SON OF PROMISE



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PORTRAITS OF CHRIST IN GENESIS

BOOKLET No. 4

M. R. De HAAN, M.D.

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THE SON OF PROMISE

Four messages in an extended series of studies in Genesis by the late Dr. M. R. De Haan, delivered by Richard W. De Haan over a special network of leading radio stations throughout the world.

1

The book of Genesis contains 50 chapters, and is the book of beginnings. Science may continue its search for the beginning of things, but they will never find a better answer than the opening verse of the Bible, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Of the 50 chapters in Genesis, the first eleven chapters cover a span of almost two thousand years, while the last thirty-nine chapters cover a period of less than four hundred years. Only eleven chapters to tell us what happened the first two thousand years on earth — thirty-nine chapters to tell us what happened in the comparatively brief four hundred years following. The first eleven chapters cover the record of creation, the fall, the coming of the flood, the building of the tower of Babel, and give the brief history of a large number of individuals. However, soon after the flood, man again forgot God and drifted into idolatry. Before the knowledge of the Lord should disappear from the earth completely, God stepped in, and called a man by the name of Abram (later called Abraham), and in sovereign grace He separated him from his idolatrous family in Ur of the Chaldees. This was to be a new beginning, in

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order to carry out God's plan of redemption through His son, Jesus Christ. Abraham's history begins in the closing verses of Genesis 11, and then in Genesis 12 we read:

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee (Genesis 12:1).

God is now to abandon the nations, and begin to deal with one particular nation, the descendants of Abram through Isaac and Jacob. The entire balance of the book of Genesis (chapters 12 to 50) are therefore occupied with four men: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Believing as we do in the divine purpose, pattern, and inspiration of the Scriptures, there must be a reason for the emphasis on the history of just these four men. We believe we have the answer in the purpose for which the book was written. The Bible is the book of REDEMPTION. While it is scientifically infallible, it is not primarily a book of science. While it is geographically accurate, it is not a world atlas. While it predicts the international and political fortunes of the nations, it is not primarily a book on political science. All these matters are secondary to the one purpose of the book: to reveal the plan of redemption through the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. It began in the promise of the seed of the woman, was elaborated in the slaying of an animal to provide coats of skins, it was illustrated in God's provision of an Ark of salvation.

THE LIGHT BRIGHTENS

When we come to this new section of the book, beginning with the history of Abraham, the typology and purpose of the book of Genesis becomes more clear. In the history of these four men, Abraham,

Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, we have the four great steps in the redemptive plan. Abraham is the example of SOVEREIGN ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION. He lived with his family in Ur of the Chaldees and was a member of an idol-worshipping family (See Joshua 24:2). There were other members in this nation and in this family, who probably were no worse than Abraham, but God picked him out from among all the rest, and separated him unto Himself.

Just as Abraham illustrates God's sovereign election, so Isaac is the example of God's SOVEREIGN GRACE in calling him. He was the youngest of Abraham's children. Ishmael was the elder of the two and Abraham had chosen Ishmael to be the heir, but God said NO,

...In Isaac shall thy seed be called (Genesis 21:12).

When we come to Jacob we find a most striking illustration of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH THROUGH GRACE. Again, Jacob was the younger of the twins, and legally the birthright should have gone to Esau. But Jacob, by conniving and scheming with his mother, deprived Esau of his portion and deceived his blind father, was driven into a far country where he by scheming and clever dealing almost ruined his Uncle Laban. Jacob was a crook, a deceiver, a supplanter, a rascal. By comparison, Esau was a gentleman, but grace turns nature upside down, and God in sovereign grace chose Jacob and said, "The elder shall serve the younger," (Genesis 25:23); and again, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Romans 9:13). Jacob then is the example of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH WITHOUT WORKS.

Now we come to Joseph who represents our GLO-RIFICATION. Sold by his brethren, he was exalted

to the throne of Egypt. In Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, we see the four steps of our redemption:

1. Sovereign predestination.
2. Effective calling.
3. Justification by faith.
4. Glorification by grace.

I am quite sure the Apostle Paul must have had this in mind when he wrote in Romans 8,

For whom he did foreknow, he also did PRE-DESTINATE to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also CALLED: and whom he called, them he also JUSTIFIED: and whom he justified, them he also GLORIFIED (Romans 8:29, 30).

ISAAC TYPE OF CHRIST

In this series of messages we have been especially occupied with the various types, shadows, and figures of the Lord Jesus in the book of Genesis. As we move along the types and shadows become more clear, and when we come to the story of Isaac we have such a clear picture of the coming Son of Promise that one scarcely knows where to begin. Isaac, the son of Abraham, is a clear and unmistakable picture of the Lord Jesus Christ in His MIRACULOUS CONCEPTION and VIRGIN BIRTH, in His WILLING OBEDIENCE to the Father, in His SACRIFICE upon the altar, and in His RESURRECTION. We shall take them up in their order. The Apostle Paul says in Galatians that the Gospel was preached before unto Abraham, and we shall have no difficulty finding the Gospel in the story of the birth, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as pictured in Isaac.

A SON OF PROMISE

The first thing we would have you notice about Isaac was that he was promised long before he was born. When Abraham left his native land, the Lord promised him a seed (Genesis 12:3). But even though long delayed, God kept His promise. Over twenty-five years dragged by between the promise of a seed and the birth of Isaac. God made promise of the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15, and almost four thousand years went by before it was fulfilled. Notice further that the birth of Isaac was exactly at the appointed time. Of his birth we read:

And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him (Genesis 21:1, 2).

In all this he is a perfect type of the Lord Jesus Christ. He too was promised many years before, and His birth seemed to be long delayed, but when the time came which God had promised, the seed was born. Jesus too was born in the fullness of time, born of a woman, and made under the law (Galatians 4:4).

THE STRIKING PARALLEL

The whole story of the birth of Isaac bears such a striking parallel to the birth of Jesus Christ that we call your attention to a number of similar situations which cannot be overlooked:

1. The birth of Isaac was by a supernatural conception, and the birth involved a miracle. Of this we shall have more to say later.

2. The birth of Isaac was foretold long before the time of his birth, and his name was announced before he was born. The Lord said to Abraham when He gave promise of the son:

... and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant... (Genesis 17:19).

The name of Jesus, the antitype of Isaac, was also announced beforehand. We read in Matthew 1, concerning Joseph the husband of Mary, while debating what to do with Mary his wife after he found that she was with child:

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord, appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:20, 21).

3. Abraham was confused when God promised him a son in his old age by his senile wife, Sarah. We read in Genesis 17:15,

And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her...

Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, ... shall Sarah, that is ninety years old bear? (Genesis 17:15-17).

When Joseph found Mary to be with child, he was equally confused, and being the just man that he was he sought to protect Mary from shame and to put her away privately. Matthew tells us:

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

But while he thought on these things, behold,

the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:19, 20).

4. The same parallel exists between the reactions of Sarah and Mary before the supernaturally conceived children were born. When the Lord came to Abraham and promised him a son by his ninety-year-old Sarah, it completely confused her and she considered it utterly impossible. The record is plain:

And he [God] said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life, and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? (Genesis 18:10, 12).

She just could not understand it, and it confused her, but the Lord came to her with the answer:

And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

IS ANY THING TOO HARD FOR THE LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah SHALL HAVE A SON (Genesis 18:13, 14).

One cannot fail to see the very same reaction and God's answer to Mary when she was confused about her own unexplainable condition. An angel from Heaven came to Mary just as the celestial visitors had come to Abraham's tent, and

...the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb,

and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS (Luke 1:30, 31).

This left Mary in a state of utter confusion and so she asked essentially the same question Sarah asked:

*... How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?
And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:34, 35).*

Before leaving this feature, we must call your attention to one verse in Luke 1:37, "For with God nothing shall be impossible." This was spoken on the occasion of the announcement of the angel concerning the birth of John the Baptist. Elizabeth, the cousin of Mary, was barren but God performed a miracle, a supernatural conception, and gave her a son by the name of John, and then the angel adds:

For with God nothing shall be impossible (Luke 1:37).

It is identical in meaning with God's words when announcing the miraculous birth of Isaac when he says in Genesis 18:14, "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?"

Surely this will make a good verse with which to close this chapter. We have seen only a few of the striking details of the birth of Isaac as a type and figure of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. In our next message we shall show that the supernatural conception of Isaac was just as great a miracle as the Virgin Birth of Christ. The same is true of the birth of John the Baptist. To those who deny the Virgin Birth and the record of the miracles in the book of Genesis we would merely ask the question in Genesis 18:14, "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?" and

answer it with the words of the angel in Luke 1:37, "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

Applied to the plan of redemption, the answer is the same. The greatest sinner can be saved by simply turning to the Christ of God, believing that with Him nothing is impossible.

Do you know that the birth of Isaac, the son of Abraham and Sarah, was a wonderful miracle? Do you know that the birth of John the Baptist was also the result of a supernatural act of God? Isaac, the son of Abraham is one of the clearest types of the Lord Jesus Christ in the entire Old Testament. Usually he is seen as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ as he was taken to Mount Moriah and placed there upon the altar of sacrifice by his father Abraham. This certainly was the most dramatic incident in the typology of Isaac as a figure of Christ dying on the Cross, but it by no means exhausts the figure of Isaac as a shadow of Christ. Paul in Galatians tells us that the Gospel was preached to Abraham (Galatians 3:8). This Gospel which God revealed to Abraham included not only the sacrificial death of the promised Son, but also His supernatural conception and virgin birth as well as His resurrection and His second coming.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

In this chapter we want to be occupied with the supernatural conception and miraculous birth of Isaac as an outstanding type of Jesus Christ and the absolute faith in the Virgin Birth in order to be saved. No one can be saved who denies the Virgin Birth of Christ for without the Virgin Birth Jesus was just a man and could not be deity. And if Jesus is not God, He could not atone for the infinite guilt of sin of mankind, or bear the eternal punishment of Hell for sinners. The Virgin Birth is as essential a doctrine as the substitutionary death and bodily resurrection of Jesus. No wonder Satan's attack is leveled against this particular doctrine. We have already seen in a faint outline the prophecy of this Virgin Birth in the first

promise of the Redeemer, when He is called the SEED OF THE WOMAN, and not the seed of the MAN. However, when we come to the birth of Isaac, the portrait of Jesus becomes crystal-clear. Among the portraits of Jesus in the figures in the Old Testament, none is more clearly and easily recognizable than the man Isaac, with the possible exception of Joseph, and the institution of the Passover in Exodus.

ABRAHAM AND SARAH

When Abraham was still in his prime the Lord called him out of Ur of the Chaldees to migrate to the land of Canaan. God promised the land for a possession, and a seed in whom all the families of the earth would be blessed. On the way from Ur of the Chaldees to Canaan he stopped at Haran, and tarried there for an indefinite time. When Abraham finally left Haran to go to Canaan, he was seventy-five years old (Genesis 12:4). How old he was when he left his homeland we cannot tell, for we do not know how long he tarried in Haran, where he left his father. Finally he arrived in the promised land and became exceedingly prosperous. A quarrel erupted between him and his nephew Lot concerning lands, and it was then that God once more repeated His promise of a seed to Abraham. The promise was clear. God said:

For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth... (Genesis 13:15, 16).

But the years dragged wearily on and on, and still there was no sign of the fulfillment of God's promise that He would give a son to Abraham and Sarah. Finally they both became old — too old to have children in the ordinary course of nature. Abraham recognized this, and complained rather bitterly to

the Lord of His apparent failure to keep His word. Abraham was now 100 years old and Sarah was 90. God came to them and repeated the promise of a son. Now it became a matter of faith, and God put Abraham to the test to see whether he would trust the Lord to do the impossible. We must remember that at this time both Abraham and Sarah had long ago passed the age of parenthood. The Bible leaves no doubt in this matter. Notice the following Scriptures:

Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai (Genesis 16:1, 2).

We mention this here to show that although Abraham believed God and was called the father of the faithful, he also had lapses of faith. There were times in his life when serious doubts and questions arose in his mind. It was in one of these depressed states that the enemy found occasion to tempt him, and as a result, Ishmael, the "son of doubt," was born to trouble Abraham and his descendants ever after. When Ishmael was born Abraham was about 87 years old. Another 13 years passed by, and in this period of time Abraham became an impotent old man. Sarah already was barren, and now Abraham became impotent. But still the promise of God was unfulfilled. If He was to fulfill this promise, it could only be by a miracle of God to rejuvenate a senile old couple so they could become parents. The need for a supernatural miracle is emphasized over and over again. In Genesis 18 we read,

Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it [had] ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women (Genesis 18:11).

We can hardly blame Sarah for laughing at the promise of verse 10,

...I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life, and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son... (Genesis 18:10).

Yes, indeed, God was about to perform a great miracle, the first step in the typical Gospel which was to be preached to Abraham. All this is abundantly confirmed in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul in commenting on the justification of Abraham by faith asks the question:

What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness (Roman 4:1-3).

Abraham BELIEVED GOD! What did he believe? It does not say he believed in God but HE BELIEVED GOD. He believed God's promise of a long-delayed supernaturally born son the type of God's greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is clear from Genesis 15, from which Paul quotes. After Abraham had complained to God for His apparent failure to give him the son He had promised, God repeated the promise, and said concerning Eliezer, Abraham's servant:

...This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if

thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, SO SHALL THY SEED BE (Genesis 15:4, 5).

Now remember this was when Abraham was 100 years old, and Sarah was 90 years, and the record plainly says:

Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women (Genesis 18:11).

It would therefore take a miracle, a supernatural act of God, and Abraham accepted God's promise and we read the next verse:

And he [Abraham] believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness (Genesis 15:6).

This is the verse which Paul quotes in Romans 4:3 to illustrate JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH. How was Abraham justified in the sight of God? By believing God's promise concerning a long-delayed, supernaturally conceived son. God's plan of salvation has not changed today. Following Abraham's example, we too can only be saved by BELIEVING WHAT GOD SAYS concerning His supernaturally conceived, virgin-born Son, Jesus Christ.

Commenting on this faith of Abraham, Paul says in Romans 4 concerning his faith:

Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

And being not weak in faith, he [Abraham] considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb (Romans 4:18, 19).

This passage says Abraham believed IN HOPE AGAINST HOPE; human reason gave no basis for hope. According to nature it was against hope but yet

it says he believed IN HOPE. This hope was founded on the Word of God and not on reason or logic. This will explain the expression, "who against hope believed in hope." The next verse (Romans 4:19) can best be rendered:

And being not weak in faith, he gave no consideration to the fact that he was physically impotent and Sarah's womb was dead.

He realized that it was contrary to nature, but he believed it because God said it, and so:

He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness (Romans 4:20-22).

Abraham believed what God said about his son, just because God said it, and for no other reason. He believed in the same way that we are to believe in the Virgin Birth of Christ. And Sarah, the wife of Abraham, shared in this victorious faith. We read in Hebrews 11:11,

Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Therefore sprang there even of one, and HIM AS GOOD AS DEAD, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude... (Hebrews 11:11, 12).

Isaac then, as a type of Christ, is first and foremost a figure, a shadow, and a prophecy of the Virgin Birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without faith in the Virgin Birth there can be no faith in His atoning death and resurrection. And without faith in these

there is no salvation. God's plan of salvation has not changed. To the question, "How are we justified in God's sight?" — Paul says, "What saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." He believed God's Word concerning the Son. It is the only way of salvation. After showing how Abraham was justified by faith in Romans 4, Paul continues:

Now it [the record of Abraham's faith] was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

BUT FOR US ALSO, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification (Romans 4:23-25).

So we repeat again, and shall repeat again and again, that salvation is believing what God has to say concerning His Son Jesus Christ. All Abraham had was the promise of God. It was contrary to reason and nature, but he believed what God said. In I John 5:9 we read:

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar: because he believeth not the RECORD that God gave of his Son.

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (I John 5:9-11).

To be saved one must accept by faith the record which God has given us concerning His Son Jesus

Christ. The only place where you can find this record is in the Bible, the Word of God. And this Word says:

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God... (I John 5:1).

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

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The birth of Isaac, the son of Abraham, was a miracle, for Isaac was born when Abraham was totally impotent at the age of 100, and Sarah was completely barren at the age of 90. But God had promised to Abraham and Sarah a son, and a seed which would become the blessing of the whole world. Even after the time had passed where, in the natural course of events, Abraham and Sarah could become parents of a child, the Lord reassured them. In Genesis 18:11 we are told that both Abraham and Sarah were old and senile and Sarah laughed at the promise of a son. Then God replied:

Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son (Genesis 18:14).

And so it was. When God had performed the miracle of rejuvenation on Abraham and Sarah He fulfilled His promise. It was not too hard for the Lord. The record is refreshing and encouraging.

And the LORD visited Sarah AS HE HAD SAID, and the LORD did unto Sarah AS HE HAD SPOKEN.

For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the SET TIME of which God had spoken to him (Genesis 21:1, 2).

We call your especial attention to two phrases in these verses. They are, AS HE HAD SAID and AS HE HAD SPOKEN. God kept His Word, and that is the great lesson hidden here but usually overlooked. God did as He had promised even though it was long delayed and apparently impossible. But God "visited Sarah as he had said, and did unto her as he had spoken."

What a portrait of the Greater Son of Abraham, the Lord Jesus Christ. Way back in the Garden of Eden, God had promised a seed of the woman (typified here by Isaac) who would come to be the Redeemer. But the years slipped by, a hundred, a thousand, two thousand years, and yet the promise remained unfulfilled. Years later when the hope became dim and the children of Israel, like Abraham, began to wander, the Lord came to repeat the long-delayed promise and caused Isaiah to cry out in Isaiah 7:14,

...Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

And then another seven centuries passed by and the hope of the coming seed had almost been forgotten by the majority. But God kept His Word, and

...when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

To redeem them that were under the law...
(Galatians 4:4, 5).

A PRACTICAL APPLICATION

We digress here to make a much-needed practical application. One of the lessons we may learn from this account is that God is never in a hurry in working out His plans and purposes either in the world of nations, or in the life of the individual. Men may fret and fume and rant and rave in their concern about the course of world events, but God has all eternity at His disposal, and works out His plans deliberately, and always on time. We need to learn the lesson of Isaiah 28:

...he that believeth shall not make haste (Isaiah 28:16).

We are so apt to become impatient and wonder why

God delays so long. We can understand David as he cries out repeatedly, "Make haste, O God" (Psalm 38:22; 40:13; 70:1). David seems to say, "Hurry up, O Lord! Why does it take you so long?" We too sometimes are tempted to try to hurry up the program of God. We would be glad to lend Him a hand in expediting His program. But God is not in a hurry and His program is running exactly on time, and just as He foretold that it would go. So often we become disturbed by conditions in the world, the increase in crime, violence, and wickedness, the rapid spread of communism, the apostasy of the church, and the threat of a great racial struggle or an atomic conflict. As we behold all these threatening movements we too are tempted to cry, "Make haste O God," and worse still, we try to help Him out. But all these things have been foretold and are under the complete control of our God. Our one and only business is to preach the word, **PREACH THE WORD!** We are never to be diverted from this one commission, by becoming involved in politics, or continuously preaching against communism and apostasy, by spending our time in bringing about social reform, or cleaning up society by the preaching of a social gospel.

As a preacher of the Gospel, I have that one commission, "Preach the Word," and when I depart from this to join the forces which would bring in a man-made Great Society I am unfaithful to my calling. It is not my business as a preacher to spend my time in civil rights demonstrations or seeking to bring in a Utopia on earth during this dispensation. My one task shall be to preach the Word not expecting to solve the problems of the nations until Jesus comes. Today God is calling out a remnant, a select minority of believers in response to the preaching of the Word of God. I believe it is a sin for a Christian who knows

His Bible to become greatly upset about world conditions as though God were not in control any longer. When the last soul has been saved by the preaching of the Gospel, the Church has been raptured, the nations judged, then Jesus the Prince of Peace will return to set up the **GREAT SOCIETY** as promised throughout the Word of God.

A WORD OF CAUTION

So we would issue this word of caution. We must remember, God is still on the Throne. He is still in control and everything is running exactly on time and according to His foreordained plan. We would remind you again of the words of Jesus to His disciples in Matthew 24. They had asked Him the question,

... Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world [age]? (Matthew 24:3).

To this question He gives the answer in the balance of the chapter. He does not say that conditions in the world are going to become better and better as the age progresses. Instead He tells them that things will steadily become worse and worse and worse. He warns them against deceivers and false teachers (verse 4). He says that wars and rumors of wars will increase, there shall be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. He predicts apostasy increasing toward the end of the age, while racial strife will be rampant on every hand and iniquity shall abound. And now pay special and close attention. Right in the middle of all these predictions He inserts this warning. Notice it carefully:

... SEE THAT YE BE NOT TROUBLED: for all these things MUST come to pass, but the end is not yet (Matthew 24:6).

All these things **MUST** come to pass. There is no

stopping them. They are planned, predicted and fore-known. All these things MUST come to pass. If this be so, there is nothing we can do to change it. No need for twisting God's arm to make Him change His mind. No use to try to stop God's prophetic train. In due time, He who said He would come, will come, and He will take care of the entire situation. In the meantime we are to PREACH THE WORD, teach God's people these great truths, alert them to the program of God and the meaning of current events in the light of prophecy, but we are told not to be troubled. We are not to try to hurry God's program. I repeat, for myself, my business is to PREACH THE WORD and let that do the work. I will not be drawn into political battles, civil rights problems, or international squabbles. I refuse to get excited about the spread of communism, knowing that God Himself will take care of all these things in HIS OWN TIME and in HIS OWN WAY. The true preacher is never to be drawn away from his one task by trying to stop the conditions around him which the Lord says MUST COME TO PASS. Do you remember the words of our Lord Jesus to one who would be His disciple but FIRST had to attend to a little business of his own? When Jesus said to this man, "Follow me," the man said:

...Lord, suffer me FIRST to go and bury my father.

Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and PREACH the kingdom of God (Luke 9:59, 60).

There are plenty of people available to bury the dead, but all too few who are available to PREACH the Gospel. The great World Church today has little or no Gospel to preach, but is interested in political reform, social activities, civil rights, international

relationships reform, and the building of a Great Society, while the purpose for which Jesus came and sent us is forgotten.

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).

It took me a long while to learn that God did not expect me to try to convert the world. I recall the day when Paul's words in I Corinthians 4 opened my eyes to my real responsibility as a preacher of the Gospel:

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful (I Corinthians 4:2).

If we are faithful in our task, and trust God to keep His promise, we can live in peace and security in a world filled with violence.

No, God is never in a hurry in the carrying out of His program and plans. We may become impatient, fret and fume at the steady increase of wickedness, threatenings, and violence, but God says:

...see that ye be not troubled: for all these things MUST come to pass... (Matthew 24:6).

When once we grasp this truth that all that which is happening is known to God, yes, foreknown by God, then we can patiently wait for His answer, while we in the meantime are true to His commission:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations (Matthew 28:19).

Why does God seemingly delay His answers? Why does it take Him so long to fulfill His promises? I think we can find the answer in the birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah. God delayed the birth of Isaac until both Abraham and Sarah were sterile. God waited until the powers of nature had been made an end of. We repeat again the statement that Abraham's body was DEAD as far as procreation was concerned,

and the same was true of Sarah's womb (Romans 4:19). That which is dead must be resurrected and quickened. That which is dead cannot revive itself. It is totally impossible to do so, and unless a quickening comes from without, nothing but corruption can result. It is a picture of the total depravity of man in the flesh. This is a humbling truth, distasteful to the proud heart of man, and is therefore rejected by the majority.

Before we close this message, we must make an application and appeal to the sinner.

The sinner too is spiritually dead. He is not only sick, but DEAD. The state of the natural man is far worse than he imagines himself to be. When man fell and sinned, he died a spiritual death, and was immediately cut off from the source of all life, even God. He is alienated from the life of God (Ephesians 4:18). Until by the grace of God the sinner is brought to the realization that he is dead, and totally unable to do anything for himself, he remains in his state of death. What the sinner needs is LIFE, but since he is dead, LIFE must come from without. This God did in the case of Abraham and Sarah. He quickened them by His Spirit, restored life to them and they became the parents of the son who was the great type of the Greater Son of whom it is said,

In him was life; and the life was the light of men (John 1:4).

If you want to be saved, you must abandon all confidence in the flesh, acknowledge you are a hopeless, helpless sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, and need to be saved by a supernatural work of God in the New Birth, whereby the life of God, eternal and everlasting, is imputed to you freely and by grace.

4

Isaac, the son of Abraham, was supernaturally conceived, and his birth was a foreshadow of the Virgin Birth of Christ. Concerning this son, God had given Abraham many precious promises. God had promised that this son would become the father of many nations, and that through him the whole world would be blessed. God promised that his offspring would be as the sand of the sea for multitudes, and the stars of the heaven in number. In due time God kept His promise, and when Abraham was 100 years old Isaac was born. He grew up in his father's house and then about thirty years later the Lord came and made a most unusual demand of Abraham. He ordered him to take this promised son and offer him for a sacrifice upon mount Moriah. Abraham was asked to put to death the son whom God had miraculously given him. Now remember that at the time of this demand, Isaac as yet had no seed; in fact, he wasn't even married. How then could Isaac become the father of many nations if he were to die before he had a child? This was the great test which Abraham faced. We read the record in Genesis 22:

And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt [prove] Abraham, and said unto him, . . .

... 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 (Genesis 22:1, 2).

We feel somewhat like Moses when at the burning bush God said to him, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). Truly Genesis 22 is holy ground to be approached only in deepest reverence,

worship, and adoration. We have in this chapter, one of the clearest figures of Calvary to be found anywhere in Scripture. Together with Psalm 22, Exodus 12, and Isaiah 53, they constitute the highest mountain peaks in the Old Testament, in the progressive revelation of Jesus, the Son of God. We saw Him faintly in the Garden in the first promise of a Redeemer. We saw Him in the lamb slain to provide the bloody skins for our first parents' covering. We saw Him in the Ark of Noah. We saw Him in His supernatural conception in the birth of Isaac. This we studied as we beheld the Portrait of Christ in Genesis chapter 21. We urgently recommend that before reading this message, and the one to follow, that you take time to read carefully and prayerfully Genesis 22, from verse 1 through 14. It will be of immense profit to you.

THE CLEAREST OF TYPES

The chapter is inexhaustible and we shall be able to do little more than suggest a few of the striking parallels and similarities between the sacrifice of Isaac and the death of Christ upon Calvary. Notice first of all how Isaac is described in this request of God. He says:

Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest . . . (Genesis 22:2).

Immediately it points us to Abraham's greater Son of whom Isaac is here to be the figure. We recall that well-known verse in John 3:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his ONLY BEGOTTEN SON . . . (John 3:16).

Like Isaac, Jesus was the "only begotten" of the Father. Then God says, "whom thou lovest." All of Abraham's love was centered upon Isaac; all his hopes were concentrated in him. Jesus too was the well-

beloved of the Father, and Luke tells us that at the baptism of Jesus,

. . . a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased (Luke 3:22).

Notice next the place to which Abraham was directed to go as the exact place for the sacrifice of his son. The Lord said,

. . . get thee into the land of Moriah . . . (Genesis 22:2).

The land of Moriah was the region in Palestine where the city of Jerusalem was later built. We are told the exact location by the writer of II Chronicles:

Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah . . . (II Chronicles 3:1).

In this region was located Mount Calvary, if indeed the mount Moriah does not include Calvary. Notice how specific God was in giving instructions as to the exact place of sacrifice.

Notice in the third place that all this was according to a foreknown, foreordained plan. Abraham was directed to go in faith (not knowing whither he went—Hebrews 11:8). God had it all planned and prepared, just as Jesus, the antitype of Isaac, was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Another remarkable figure of the Lord Jesus Christ is a prophecy of His burial and sojourn for three days and three nights in physical death in the tomb. Evidently the place from which Abraham was to take his son to mount Moriah was a three days' journey. Apparently Abraham was still living in the land of the Philistines in Gerar (Genesis 20:1). There seems to be quite a possibility that Isaac was born and raised in this same country. This land of Gerar lay some

sixty miles southwest of mount Moriah, and would take at least three days to reach. We mention this to show the supernatural, infallible inspiration of the record in order to complete the type of the Lord Jesus Christ in Isaac.

DEAD THREE DAYS

The order to sacrifice and put to death his son came to Abraham three days before the act was to take place. Abraham believed God meant business. There could have been no doubt in his mind about the meaning of the words, "offer him there for a burnt offering." Abraham intended to obey God and actually slay his son. From the day the command came until he reached mount Moriah, three days later, Isaac was potentially dead in the mind of Abraham. There was no doubt, as we see from the preparations he made, that Abraham intended literally to carry out God's word. He took wood for the sacrifice, fire for the offering, and a knife to slay his son (Genesis 22:6). For three days, therefore, Abraham considered his son as good as dead. How clearly it is given to us:

Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off (Genesis 22:4).

Then after that, as we shall see, he was restored in a figure of the resurrection. Very likely Paul was thinking of this incident when he says in I Corinthians 15,

...that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES (I Corinthians 15:3, 4).

More about this later. But now notice that this entire transaction was solely between father and son.

No other man was to have a part in it. When Abraham reached the mount, he said unto his young men who had accompanied him:

... Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you (Genesis 22:5).

In the same way, the throngs could follow Jesus from the Garden to the judgment hall and from there to the mount, but when the time for the sacrifice came, all human eyes must be deprived of the sight. What happened between Abraham and Isaac on the mount we may never know here, and so too what transpired between the Father and His Son Jesus Christ during those last three hours of agony we shall never be able to comprehend. It was a transaction between Father and Son. No human eyes were to behold that scene, and so Matthew records, as well as Mark:

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour (Matthew 27:45).

What happened between the Father and the Son during those three dreadful hours we may never know, and we would not tread upon that holy ground. When the final crisis came and the final sacrifice was to be made, God closed the door, snuffed out the lights of heaven, drew a black curtain across the windows of the sky, hung a crepe on Heaven's door, until finally the culmination came in the ultimate, agonizing cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

HE CARRIED THE CROSS

The next verse in Genesis 22 is rich beyond comprehension:

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 (Genesis 22:6).

Abraham laid the wood for the burnt-offering upon Isaac. We surely need to do no more than to quote from John 19:17,

And he [Jesus] bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

Where they crucified him... (John 19:17, 18).

In carrying the wood upon which he was to be sacrificed, Isaac foreshadowed the One who carried His own cross upon which He was to die.

The question arises, how much did Abraham actually know about the typical prophetic meaning of this sacrifice of his son? Was it just an act of blind obedience? or did Abraham understand the meaning of it all? We believe that Abraham understood what all this pointed forward to. Remember that Paul says in Galatians that the Gospel was preached before to Abraham. The amazing thing about the whole transaction is that there is no questioning on the part of Abraham, and no resistance of any kind by the son. The closing sentence of verse 6 is so significant:

...and they went both of them together (Genesis 22:6).

There was a perfect agreement; and when Abraham explained the meaning of it all, there was perfect understanding and complete submission on the part of the son. Notice the question Isaac asked his father as they ascended the mountain of sacrifice:

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? (Genesis 22:7).

We would go slowly here so you will not miss the point of the answer of faith by Abraham:

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

SO THEY WENT BOTH OF THEM TOGETHER. The answer Abraham gave completely satisfied the son. Let us look at the answer again:

...God will provide HIMSELF a lamb....

Notice it does not say, "God will himself provide a lamb," but it says, "God will provide HIMSELF." Translated freely Abraham says God Himself is going to be the Lamb of sacrifice. While it is true that the Lord also supplied a ram in the bushes as a substitute for Isaac, we believe that the balance of the record looked way beyond the sacrifice of Isaac, and Abraham saw afar off the hill of Calvary where God Himself in the person of His Son would be the Lamb of God sacrificed for us. What else can the words of Hebrews 11 mean, when speaking of Abraham and Sarah:

Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead [Abraham], so many as the stars of the sky in multitude....

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them AFAR OFF, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them.... (Hebrews 11:12, 13).

We shall deal at greater length in our next message on the question, "How much did Abraham know about the real significance of the sacrifice of Isaac as a type of the death and the resurrection of Christ?" Abraham was saved by faith in the promises of God,

even though he could not always clearly understand them. At times reason balked at the Word of God, but the record stands:

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, NOT KNOWING WHITHER HE WENT (Hebrews 11:8).

Abraham believed God enough to follow His orders, even though he did not know the way, nor where he was going. In the same way we are to trust the promises of God, without question or excuse.

God said it, and when we believe it, that settles it.

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