

February 25, 2024

Genesis Behind the Curtain: Abraham – Part 3
Episode 5: “Wood” You Believe It? Isaac’s Heavy Burden
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Genesis 22:6-18

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, “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 Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram 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 all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”

- 1. God turns burdens into blessings.**
- 2. God blesses open hands.**

- 1. God turns burdens into blessings. Vs. 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
 - a. Never Alone: In Vs. 6** we see a representation of not only the passion of Christ, but also a metaphor of the trinity.
 - i. Issac faithfully followed despite feeling forsakenness.

“Satan loves to whisper lies of isolation and alienation into the ears of believers. But we must cling to the truth that God is always with us, and His love never fails.”

Billy Graham
 - b. Isaac, the Christ figure, not only has to carry a metaphoric cross, but seems to be betrayed by his Father.**
 - i. Isaac becomes the one from whom the blessing is passed and reckoned.**
 - 1. Genesis 21:12** But God said to him, ‘Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.’
 - a. Issac laid his burden down and Jesus did not stay on the cross.**

2. God blesses open hands Vs. 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 all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”

- a. In the word “because”, we see that outcomes are many times dependent upon our actions.
- b. What are we withholding?
- c. Abraham receives a blessing beyond measure: Abraham becomes a nation.
 - i. **Jesus and Measures:** Luke 6:38 (NIV): "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Practical Takeaways:

- 1. **Reevaluate your burdens:** Ask God for his perspective on your burdens.
- 2. **Work on letting go:** Understand what letting go looks like and expect the reward.

Discussion Questions for Small Groups:

- 1. How does the story of Abraham and Isaac carrying the wood for the burnt offering speak to how God might turn a burden into a blessing. Has God ever turned your burden into a blessing?
- 2. In what ways do we often feel burdened or isolated in our faith journeys, and how can we find reassurance in the knowledge that God is always with us, even in our darkest moments?
- 3. Discuss the significance of Isaac's role as a Christ figure in this passage, particularly in relation to carrying his own burden and feeling forsaken by his father. How does this relate to our understanding of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross?
- 4. Reflect on the idea that God blesses open hands. What are some practical ways we can cultivate open-heartedness and generosity in our lives, and how might these actions lead to blessings from God?
- 5. Consider the promise of blessing that God makes to Abraham in response to his obedience. How does this challenge our perceptions of blessing and encourage us to trust in God's provision, even when it requires sacrifice on our part?