

## **When Praise Demands a Sacrifice (Parallel: Abraham's Future is Ours Series – Part VIII)**

10/25/2009

1. In Genesis 12 – 20 we saw nine chapters of Abraham waiting for God to fulfill all His promises. Of course, what was really happening was God was waiting for Abraham's faith to mature to the point that he was ready to take on the role as father of a great nation. In Chapter 21, the promised son, Isaac, is born. Read Gen. 22:1 – 2 to see what happens next and talk about how it fits in with the trajectory of all that has happened so far.

2. Pastor Steve offered an alternative ending to the saga started in Gen. 12. In it, God decides that He doesn't really need to force Abraham to kill his son since He already knows that Abraham is loyal to God. Thus, Abraham and Isaac end up with a praise and worship time at the alter on Mount Moriah instead of the emotional scene of a father offering his only son as a burnt offering. While this is a less traumatic path, why would it also be less than satisfactory?

3. Read Gen. 22:3-5 and describe Abraham's reaction to this strange request.

4. Read Gen. 22:6-8 and talk about the role of Isaac in this drama.

5. Pastor Steve then offered an alternative twist to the story in which Isaac indeed dies, but before he can even climb onto the alter. Abraham then leaves the mountain without even noticing the ram in the thicket. Why would this alternative not work in God's bigger plan?

6. Read Gen.22:9-12, one of the great dramatic moments in the Bible, and talk about the actions of both Abraham and Isaac throughout this scene.

7. In Gen. 22:13-14 we see a foreshadow of things to come. See if you can pick it out.

8. Read Hebrews 11:17-19 and consider how this “clarification” 2000 years later, puts the drama on Mt. Moriah is a little different light.
  
9. Pastor Steve ended by suggesting that God expects not only praise and worship, but also sacrifice. Following Him must cost us something or it isn't real. It may be drams, family, career, income, reputation, places, things, images, or something else that you nold dear.. Is there anything that you won't take to Mt. Moriah?
  
10. Read John 12:24-26 and see if that helps put things in perspective.
  
11. Pastor Steve suggested that we will be called to sacrifice at some point. What will it take for you to be ready to answer “Here I am, Lord.”?