Message Two

The Offering of Isaac and Experiencing God as the One Who Gives Life to the Dead

Scripture Reading: Gen. 22:1-18; Heb. 11:17-19; Rom. 4:17

I. God tested Abraham by instructing him to take his only son, Isaac, and offer him as a burnt offering—Gen. 22:1-2:

A. The life at Beer-sheba produces a burnt offering (Isaac) that is offered to God:
   1. Isaac's source of living made him a burnt offering, one who was offered to God for His satisfaction—vv. 2, 7-9:
      a. The Hebrew word for *burnt offering* literally means "that which goes up" and denotes something that ascends to God—Lev. 1:3, footnote 1.
      b. The burnt offering typifies Christ not mainly in His redeeming man from sin but in His living a life that is perfect and absolutely for God and for God's satisfaction and in His being the life that enables God's people to have such a living—v. 9; John 5:19, 30; 6:38; 7:18; 8:29; 14:24; 2 Cor. 5:15; Gal. 2:19-20.
      c. The burnt offering is God's food that God may enjoy it and be satisfied—Num. 28:2.
   2. The proper church life produces burnt offerings—Lev. 1:1-2; Rom. 12:1-2:
      a. The living, growing, and calling on the name of Jehovah, El Olam, at Beer-sheba are all for the producing of a burnt offering—Gen. 21:33; 22:1-2.
      b. The more we stay in the church life, the more it will bring us from Beer-sheba to Moriah.

B. Like Abraham, we need to learn the lesson of offering back to God what He has given to us—vv. 1-18; Rom. 11:36:
   1. Everything concerning Isaac was of God and by God, and God required that Abraham offer Isaac back to Him as a burnt offering—Gen. 22:1-2.
   2. Isaac, a type of Christ as the promised seed (Gal. 3:16), was given to Abraham by God, yet God asked Abraham to give back to God what God had given him; this surely was a test to Abraham—Gen. 22:1; Heb. 11:17.
   3. Here we see a basic principle in God's economy: all that God has given us, even what He has wrought into us and through us, must eventually be offered back to Him, that we may live a life of faith, not holding on to anything, even to the things given by God, but relying only on Him.
   4. The highest demand from God is to give back to Him what He has given us.

II. In Genesis 22:1-18 we see Abraham's obedience of faith—Heb. 11:17-19:

A. Abraham did not initiate anything or do anything according to his concept.

B. The faith that had been infused into Abraham brought him to Mount Moriah, which is another name for Mount Zion, and enabled him to offer Isaac as a burnt offering—Gen. 22:1-2; 2 Chron. 3:1.

III. Abraham called the place where he offered Isaac Jehovah-jireh—Gen. 22:14:

A. Moriah means "the vision of Jah," that is, the vision of Jehovah; on Mount Moriah Abraham saw God, and God saw him—v. 2.

B. Verse 14b can be translated either, "On the mount of Jehovah it will be provided," or "On the mount of Jehovah He will be seen":
   1. On Mount Moriah Abraham experienced God's provision and received a clear vision.
   2. God's provision is with His vision, so whenever we enjoy God's provision, we have a vision in which we see God, and God sees us.

C. Today God's provision is in the church life, where we have the full provision with the clear vision.

D. In the Lord's recovery we are journeying upward to Mount Moriah, where we will offer our Isaac, enjoy God's provision, and have a transparent vision.

IV. After Isaac was offered, he was returned in resurrection for the fulfillment of God's purpose—vv. 16-18; Heb. 11:17-19; Rom. 4:17:

A. In receiving Isaac back, Abraham believed in and experienced God as the One who gives life to the dead—the God of resurrection—Heb. 11:17-19; Rom. 4:17; 2 Cor. 1:9.

B. When Isaac was returned in resurrection, he was no longer a natural Isaac but a resurrected Isaac.

C. After Isaac was offered, he was returned to Abraham in resurrection and became a blessing—Gen. 22:16-18.

D. Everything in our life must pass through the supreme test of death to make a way for the God of resurrection—John 11:25; 2 Cor. 1:9.

E. After we offer to God what we have received of Him, He will return it to us in resurrection—Heb. 11:17-19:

1. Every gift, spiritual blessing, work, and success that we have received of God must pass through death and eventually be brought back to us in resurrection.
2. If we offer to God what we have received of Him and it passes through death, He will return it to us in resurrection, and it will become a blessing for the fulfillment of His purpose—Gen. 22:16-18.
3. God's blessing always comes in resurrection; if we offer our Isaac to God and he is returned to us in resurrection, we will be under God's blessing.

V. By being offered back to God by Abraham, Isaac was multiplied to become the New Jerusalem—vv. 16-18; Rom. 8:29; Rev. 21:2, 7:

A. The New Jerusalem will be the ultimate consummation of Abraham's seed—the sand and the stars—Gen. 22:16-18; Rom. 8:29; Rev. 21:2, 7:

1. In the New Jerusalem those represented by the twelve tribes are the sand, and those represented by the twelve apostles are the stars—vv. 12, 14.
2. The two peoples signified by the sand and the stars will be built together into the New Jerusalem.

B. In Genesis 22 we see a basic principle—that the way to have God's gift multiplied is to offer back to God what He has given to us:

1. One Isaac, offered to God and returned in resurrection, became numberless stars and sand.
2. If we offer our one grain to God and allow Him to put it to death, it will be returned to us in resurrection, and we will see multiplication under God's blessing—John 12:24.

VI. Mount Moriah, the place of God's choice, eventually became Mount Zion, the site of the temple and the center of the good land; in our spiritual experience Mount Moriah eventually becomes Mount Zion—Gen. 22:2, 14; 2 Chron. 3:1; Heb. 11:17-19; 12:22-23; Rev. 14:1-5:

A. Abraham was the first to worship God with the burnt offering on Mount Zion—v. 1.

B. Later, Abraham's descendants, the children of Israel, were commanded by God to go three times a year to this place to worship God and there to offer to Him their burnt offerings—Deut. 16:16; Psa. 132:13.

C. Today, Abraham's spiritual descendants, the New Testament believers, are on Mount Zion—Heb. 12:22-23.

D. Eventually, we all will join Abraham to worship God on the eternal Mount Zion, the New Jerusalem; the entire New Jerusalem is Zion, the Holy of Holies, the place where God is—Rev. 14:1-5; 21:22.

E. The Lord's recovery is to build up Zion—the reality of the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem—14:1; Eph. 4:16; Rev. 21:2.