

A TEST OF LOVE – PART TWO

This is your Friend and Minister, Dr. Joshua Uhiara, bringing you healing word from the Master, a program of the Master's Vessel Ministry which lets you know that Jesus loves you as you are, but loves you so much that He will not leave you as you are.

We are back, friends, to continue from where we stopped last time, discussing A Test of Love: God testing Abraham – as we find in Genesis 22. We read last time from verses 1 to 14. In the interest of time...now let me refresh our memory by reading just from 1- 5

Genesis 22:1-5

Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!"

And he said, "Here I am."

² Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." ³ So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. ⁵ And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."

PRAYER:

We have come again, dear Lord, to search Your Word; and we trust that You will refresh us by Your Word through the instrumentality of Your Spirit, in Jesus Name. Amen!

Last time we saw that testing is something that we are familiar with; because you don't have to go to school to know anything about testing, because all of life is full of testing or tests. We differentiated between testing and temptation. And we said that when God is the source, it is test; when it is the devil, it is temptation. And we

saw some of the things or the differences between the test and the temptation: one from God and one from the earth – from the devil, the resultant effect of those.

Then we looked at the context of the test. We said that the context of the test is seen in the passage that goes before Genesis 22: and that is Genesis 21. Three things were there in the context.

Then we looked at what I call the commonsensical reasons for the test and God was trying to prove to the devil and to reassure Abraham concerning his love for him.

Let us quickly go to the next point,

- Consideration of God's choice of words

This is interesting, in my Judgment.

Genesis 22:2

² Then He [God] said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

First, let us consider the word: your son – your only son. Why did God choose those words? Was Isaac the only son of Abraham? Yes and no – because Ismael was thirteen years older than Isaac. And Ismael was the son of Abraham through Hagar, the maid of Sarah. It looks like God was trying to make this point: that He recognizes and acknowledges only that which He Himself does – the product of faith, not of the flesh; the product of the Holy Spirit, not of human soul. Ismael was the product of Sarah's wisdom, an expediency executed by Abraham and Hagar. On the other hand Isaac was a product of God's promise that came through faith and at God's time.

Friend, examine your service for God to see whether it is produced by the flesh or produced by the Spirit of God. Anything that is produced by the flesh is unacceptable to God. It's not recognized by God. The flesh availeth nothing, the scripture says. It is only the Spirit that gives life.

Second, let us consider the words: whom you love. God said, your son Isaac, your only son whom you love. Abraham's test was a test of love. It would not have

been much of a test for Abraham if he did not love Isaac; and he loved him dearly: a son of his old age. He was a hundred years when Isaac was born. And Abraham must have doted on this boy. Abraham each day, he will look at him and rejoice in his heart, this is the one who is going to carry out the promise that God made to me. He loved him. You will not mind if you were asked to give up what you hate. I suspect you would gladly say, thanks! Good riddance to bad rubbish! But not so what you love, and what you love so much. Abraham loved his son.

God was asking Abraham, in other words, do you love me more than your son; just as the Lord Jesus Christ asked Peter at the sea of Galilee when He rose from the dead: Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me more than these? It was a test of love.

Let us compare the test results. If you are wondering what I mean by comparing test result, I have in mind Abraham's test result and ours, if and it is true that God tests His people today. How do our test results compare with Abraham's?

May I announce to you that Abraham passed God's test in flying colors.

Genesis 22:9-12

⁹ Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

¹¹ But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

So he said, "Here I am."

¹² And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

That's God speaking. And it says the angel of the Lord. That's Abraham's test result. Excellent result! Abraham, your love for God is not just potential when God said for now I know. You begin to wonder, what doesn't God know? For now I

know, what He is saying is, what was potential is now actual. Abraham passed the test because, first and foremost, he loved God more than he loved his son. But some spiritual disciplines Abraham had learned over time must have served him well at this time of testing. Just like somebody who has disciplined himself or herself to study, apply yourself; that will prepare you for the time when you will be tested on that subject.

Let me observe some of them

1. Abraham had learned that God's commands were not negotiable.

They were not open to human input. Hence he kept this from Sarah. If Sarah had known that Abraham was going to sacrifice Isaac to God I bet you she would have said, "Over my dead body". Wasn't it for the sake of this same Isaac that Sarah insisted that Abraham should send away Hagar and her son Ishmael?

2. Abraham had learned to obey God promptly. Verse 3 of our text said:
*³So Abraham rose **early** in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son...*

Early!

When God met Abraham, in Genesis 17, and entered into covenant with him, and told him that the seal of the covenant was circumcision, and that he was going to circumcise himself and every male in his household, the bible said: immediately Abraham had learned to obey God promptly.

3. To Abraham sacrifice was part and parcel of worship.

Because in Genesis 22:5 Abraham said to his young men: *⁵And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."*

To him, sacrifice was worship. And not only that, Abraham had learned to give to God with a sense not of loss – but of gain, because he said the: lad and I would come back. He was not going to lose his son. He was giving this his son to God with a sense of gain. He had also learned that God was able to supply whatever he demanded, because Isaac asked the father: father, here is the wood and the fire, but where is the lamb? And Abraham said, my son, God will provide for Himself a lamb for a burnt

offering. He learned that when God commanded he will provide. Abraham knew how to build an altar strong enough to withstand the weight of the sacrifice God demanded of him. Altars speak of prayer, and without prayer you cannot sacrifice anything to God. Those who do not pray cannot make sacrifices to God.

4. And finally, Abraham had learned that half measures must be excluded from his relationship with God.

Because in verse 10 the bible said, Abraham stretched out his hand, and took a knife to slay his son. Abraham was not wishy-washy in his relationship with God. He meant business. He was going all the way unlike some of us. As far as God was concerned, Abraham sacrificed his son Isaac as confirmed by:

Hebrew11:17.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

He offered him. God said he offered him up. How does your test result compare with Abraham's? How do my test results compare with Abraham's? Are you willing to give up what you love so much for God's sake? Don't forget that GOD will not test you with what you hate but with what you love; just as the devil will not tempt you with what you are not capable of doing but what you can do.

How do you respond to God's 'delays'? Delays in quote. The delays that God permits in your life; how do you respond? Do you throw a tantrum? Do you backslide as a result? Do you walk away from God?

Young lady, you feel that God is delaying? But He never delays. The young man that you are expecting is not coming quickly and so you go and marry a nonbeliever.

Finally, how willing are we to allow God's will to override ours? Your will, not mine, O Lord, is for all intent and purposes – an expression of superlative love. That was the kind of love Jesus had for the Father. What about you, friend?

PRAYER:

Father, we want to say thank You again for leading us through this time when we reasoned in Your Word. Let the entrance of your Word produce the desired effects in all who have heard me. I ask this in Jesus Name. Amen!