

KIBC Sunday Worship Servic

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June 14, 2020

Title of the Message: "The Lord Will Provide"

Text: Genesis 22:1-14

22:1 Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham! "Here I am, he replied."

22:2 Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you."

22:3 Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.

22:4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.

22:5 He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.

22:6 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.

22:7 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?"

22:8 Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son. And the two of them went on together.

22:9 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.

22:10 Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

22:11 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am, he replied."

22:12 "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."

22:13 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.

22:14 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.

Introduction

We are very happy to celebrate the 22nd Anniversary of Kitahama church today.

The Lord guided me to teach about "the faith of Abraham." Today, I would like to study what kind of faith Abraham, who is called the father of faith, had. Abraham had a "decisive moment" four times in his faith life.

1. Genesis Chapter 12

It was at the moment when Abraham left Haran. Haran was located in the northsouth of Mesopotamia, of the east area of the Euphrates. He lived there for more than 75 years and was given a great vision.

12:1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

- He believed in God's word and left for a long journey. He was 75 years old at that time. The

adventure of his faith had just begun.

2. Genesis Chapter 15

He had been married to Sarai for 60 years and remained childless. As he had almost given up, God spoke to him.

15:5 He took him outside and said, “Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them. Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.

- He received a promise from God in the reality beyond the realm of possibility.

3. Genesis Chapter 17

- It was at the moment when “circumcision” became part of the people of God’s covenant.

17:10 This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised.

4. Genesis Chapter 22

• It was at the moment when he tried to slay his only son Isaac and sacrifice him as a burnt offering.

22:2 Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

- These are four crucial stages where Abraham had made decisions, who was called the father of faith. We may have to make a decision in life this year. How did Abraham make these important decisions? Let’s study the following two points.

Learning Points

1. A Contradiction of Faith

1. What did Isaac mean to Abraham?

- As you know, he had Ishmael by Hagar, a female servant, before he had Isaac the son promised by God. Hagar and Ishmael left Abraham after horrible struggling between Sara and Hagar. We cannot imagine how sad Abraham was, because Ishmael was his son.

- Only Isaac, who was the promised son, was left for Abraham. He was the son God had given, who was born from Sarah who was barren. Abraham must have devoted his entire interest to Isaac. He might have relationship with God, but he was gradually caught by parental affection, the love of flesh without knowing. It is possible to imagine, isn’t it?

- Abraham thought first Isaac was the promised son God had given, but he came to think that he belonged him. Of course, he knew that his beloved son came from God, but gradually he came to think of him as his own. It is natural human feeling and also a dangerous one.

- We should be careful too. Abraham was given Isaac by only God’s grace. It was not his deed or efforts, but only by God’s grace. The big problem of faith lies here. People thank God, “How wonderful! God, I give thanks to You!” At the time, they are gradually caught by the fact of God’s grace and focus only on it.

- It is God who is to be glorified, who gives us such grace. The greater the gifts are, the more we should praise Him, rejoice, serve Him and seek Him.

- My friends, this is the “**contradiction of faith**”, that God tests our human affection and flesh. Abraham was tested his faith. If he sacrificed Isaac, would God’s promise happen?

God said,

Genesis 15:5 “He took him outside and said, “Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them. Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

Therefore, the faith itself was tested.

- When Abraham was told to offer his dear son and sacrifice him, he might have thought, **“This is a contradiction of faith”**. We know nothing is meaningful without faith; on the other hand, faith can become self-approving faith. We cling onto our faith and come to insist on our viewpoint. This is why Abraham was tested.

2. Confronting a Trial in Faith

- Let’s think about **“confronting a trial in faith”**.

Abraham had been tested before and he had received the answers. He knew how far he should trust in God and the time the promise was fulfilled. However, it is quite different this time.

Genesis 2:22 Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

- My friends, it is natural that Abraham thought, “God, it is unreasonable. It is You who gave me Isaac. I believed that he was your gift.” Here is a serious problem of faith. God showed him an unpredictable way. It is **“contradiction of faith,”** isn’t it? God wanted to teach Abraham that **the true faith was to keep following God, by saying “Yes” and moving forward**. The true faith is to go forward, trusting in what God said, even if the way is uncertain. When we clearly learned this point, our faith becomes genuine one. Abraham had faithfully followed what the Lord told.

3. A Three Days’ Journey

Genesis 22:4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.

- As Abraham was at Beersheba at that time, it took 62km to get to Moriah in Jerusalem, a three days’ journey.

- Why did God tell him to go to a place of three days’ away? Abraham needed three days to be tested. My friends, taking Isaac, Abraham was tested day after day and every single moment. If he had had to do what God told him to do nearby, it must have been easy for him to finish quickly. However, three days’ in distance meant for Abraham the hard way to be tested. Even if he makes a strong decision, he will be discouraged to follow through time goes by.

- Faith is not an instantaneous, emotional or sensational thing. A three-day walk couldn’t change it. It is the matter of fact that relates to one’s whole existence. Offering Isaac must have been more painful for Abraham than to sacrifice himself. I imagine the three days of Abraham like Jesus’ every step toward the cross. How heavy the cross was, upon which he was crucified. If He had not trusted in God, He couldn’t even take one step.

- If the relationship between Abraham and God had been based on a mere physical relationship, his faith would have been destroyed. He trusted in God who was invisible over what he could see. Jesus Christ carried the cross for three years toward Calvary. He walked to crucify Himself as the lamb of sacrifice to God. If he didn’t have faith in God the Father in Heaven, he couldn’t go forward.

The life of Abraham who left for the region of Moriah was painful and he was facing “contradiction in faith.” However, God’s plan wasn’t finished, but was just beginning.

2. On the Mountain of the Lord it will be Provided (Verses 5-14)

1. The Faith of Abraham

22:2 “Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

- Abraham faithfully followed what God said to him.

The Scripture says,

22:5 He said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.

- Abraham didn't take his servant, so that he might be hindered from sacrificing his son. We learn of Abraham's faithful mind and attitude to try to do God's will.

22:6 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.

- Abraham placed **“the wood for the burnt offering”** on Isaac and he himself **“carried fire and the knife”**. And they went on to Moriah

- My friends. We see Isaac who carried the wood for the burnt offering and was going to be killed. What a cruel picture we see. Isaac relates in a way to Jesus who walked to Golgotha carrying the cross which he was crucified on. Isaac was the irreplaceable son of Abraham who was as precious as his life. Can you imagine how Abraham felt?

22:7 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?”

- My friends, being asked this by Isaac, **Abraham his father, might have felt as if he were stabbed his heart with a knife for a moment.** Even though Isaac asked him simply and quietly, **it was the most painful question that Abraham couldn't bear to hear.** Abraham answered as below,

22:8 Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son. And the two of them went on together.

- Abraham couldn't tell him, “It's you”. His answer was that everything is in God's hands. If he had not had such strong faith, he couldn't have left his home or kept walking toward Moriah. Abraham had really learned to trust God and leave his pain in His hands and follow him completely during those three days.

- If his decision had not been seriously made, he would have been discouraged and the decision would have disappeared. If the faith is temporal one, it will be tested with the passage of time. The true faith gradually becomes firm with the passages of time.

- Abraham confessed his faith, **“God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering.”** Abraham trusted in God completely.

22:9 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.

- When they arrived at Mt. Moriah, the faith of Abraham also reached its highest point. The reason God guided Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans to Mt. Moriah is to see his perfect faith. There must have been many happenings and events throughout of Abraham's life.

- God makes us experience lots of things in our life: sad and painful experiences, happy and wonderful experiences. And our faith grows to completion through each experience.

By the way, what did Isaac do at that time? Nothing was written about him. However, we can learn by the context that he entrusted himself to his father's care. Isaac loved his father and

completely relied on him and left himself in his hands. Isaac reminds me of Jesus who completely trusted in God the Father. What was Abraham's state of mind at that time? "What will happen if I kill the son God promised?" He might not ask God any more at this point, "What is going to happen to the promise that God has made?" It is based on human common knowledge. However, Abraham must have trusted and followed God without any condition at that time.

It is written in Hebrews Chapter 11, Verses 17-19.

11:17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,

11:18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.

11:19 Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.

- Abraham believed that his God was Almighty and also believed completely in what He said about Isaac.

Genesis 17:1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless.

God Almighty (El Shaddai) is the absolute existence who creates things out of nothing.

Therefore, Abraham believed in God Almighty straightly and walked with faith before Him as God told him, **"Walk before me faithfully and be blameless."**

2. What did God Expect of Abraham?

22:10 Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

22:11 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am, he replied."

- When Abraham took the knife to slay Isaac, it means that he had already offered up his son in his heart. At the moment, the angel of the Lord called out to him. **What God wanted was not body of Isaac, but heart of Abraham. It is faith of Abraham.** God never asks for human sacrifices.

Psalms 51:16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

51:17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

- When God came to realize Abraham's mind, He told him to stop the sacrifice.

Genesis 22:12 "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."

22:13 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.

- Here we see the man who was walking before God.

Genesis "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and blameless."

The most important thing is to walk before God Almighty faithfully and blamelessly. God is seeking such persons.

3. "Jehovah Jireh" (On the Mountain of the Lord it will be Provided)

22:14 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.

- This verse encourages us. It is a very powerful verse. The Lord surely provides us what we need. The Lord provided a ram as a burnt offering for Abraham.

- God also will provide what we need in our life. Didn't we often experience, “The Lord Will Provide” although they were small things. God provided at that time and at that place. I can't imagine what happened if God didn't provide.

- My friends. God will surely provide in future. God keeps His promise. He will surely guide you with the promise “The Lord Will Provide.”

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to us all. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

- He who trusts in the Lord and follows Him can consider any place he walks is the place of “The Lord Will Provide”. The Lord always provides what we need. We can't grow in faith without such experiences.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: “The Lord Will Provide”

- We celebrate the 22nd Anniversary of our church today. We have learned about the crucial decision in life of Abraham, the father of faith. We may also have to “make a decision in faith” this year. I would like to summarize today's message with Abraham's word in conclusion.

Genesis 22:14 So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said.

- When we live a life looking up to the Lord, trusting in the Lord and walking with the Lord, we can lead a life confessing, “The Lord Will Provide.” God our Lord is “the Lord of Preparation”. Let's give thanks to God even if you may be stuck in a dead end or have trials, the Lord will surely provide a way out.

- We would like to start our Christian life with the faith: “The Lord Will Provide”.

God bless you!