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[ 0 : 00 ] But the Lord's good all the time, and I need to remind myself of Romans 8, don't I? He will glorify himself, he is glorifying himself, but he will ultimately glorify himself, showing himself gracious, showing himself righteous.

He will display himself and display, as it were, trophies, the church who he has redeemed by his own blood on the cross.

That's a wonderful thing. So, when I get discouraged about my circumstance, I need to look at the cross, and remind myself, he became sin for me, so that I might be the righteousness of God in him. But it is in him. Mankind does not get a free pass. We are accepted of God in the beloved, not apart from the beloved.

So, I should remember that. But I'm thankful that God's good all the time. Circumstances sometimes oppress.

[ 1 : 17 ] But the Lord's good. The Lord is always good. So, remembering that, we have ongoing physical ailments and other things.

And then, some of us have family members that we're concerned about. They're either straight or have never come. And so we pray for them, too.

And that's a burden that sometimes, at least emotionally, is more painful than some of the others. It's a struggle. Okay. Roger Neff, would you ask God's blessing on our time this morning, please? Thank you. Well, you just followed me in. And thank you for the grace you've had.

I know you've heard you've been in the early stages. I can't imagine you're doing in such a wicked world. What's going on today? It's a long subject.

[ 2 : 20 ] We're waiting for you to come. We're here in the air. We don't want to push it. We're here to deliver it. Thank you for that. Thank you for the people that are coming. We're happy today.

And we're here with them. We're here with them. Amen. Okay.

So, where'd we leave last week? Yeah, we're ready to begin chapter 22.

We left Abraham. He has just made a covenant with Abimelech. All right. Now, look at at least your first two verses.

Look those over. Now, it came about after these things, that is, after the things that were in chapter 21, that God tested Abraham and said to him, Abraham, and he said, here I am, and I'm not going on yet.

[ 3 : 30 ] I have a question for you. What's this business about God testing? It's the same word that is used and translated in your King James as tempt.

Now, hold on. Go to James. James. Your memory runs right to James, doesn't it?

What's it say? Don't say when you are tempted that you are... Okay. Finish it, though.

For God tempts no man with... Evil. There's the qualifier. That's a big qualifier, isn't it?

So, the trying... By the way, does the God who created and knows where every Adam is...

[ 4 : 34 ] He knows where John's hair is. Right? He knows the sparrow that fell this morning.

The prophets say he gives the young lion his prey. This God, didn't he know what Abraham was going to do?

Well, I know I'm jumping ahead, but roll that around and we'll get back to it. Okay? Verse 2. And he said... Who said?

Okay, I wanted to make sure I had it right. And God said, Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, of which I will tell you.

Now, what's the... What's the test? Kill your kid.

[ 5 : 58 ] Now, not just kill him. I mean... Yeah, offer him. I know Isaac's a teenager, but... No, the deal is, offer him as what?

As a sacrifice, as a burnt offering, a complete offering. See, at this point, we are... This is prior to... What? Well, it's way prior to the cross, and it's prior to the law. Steve?

That's what he says. Yeah. Well, there you go. No, I know what you're saying, though.

That will be used, will it not? You may have heard it used. But God declared, this is going to be your son.

[ 7 : 01 ] Now, let... I'm going to digress for a minute here, and run to... run to... Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the only begotten son of... of God. Right. So, but Paul's going to come in later, and say, we're all, that is, all Christians, are sons of God.

Now, is that a contradiction, John? No. No, no. Because, for one thing, we're pulling them out of context, and out of, out of their order, out of their dispensation, and trying to cross them over.

Jesus is the only begotten. He's the only son that God bore, if you will, that, that he, the Holy Spirit came upon Mary.

This is the only one that ever happened that way. That's what he's saying for that. Now, here we are with Ishmael and Isaac, and you brought it up.

[ 8 : 26 ] Ishmael, well, yeah, Steve brought it up. Ishmael is a, is a son of God, or a son of, of Abraham, in my, the way I normally think of things, right?

But not the way, yeah, not the way God declared it. Because God had declared a son of promise, right?

A son of promise. The promise is going to be realized through Isaac, not through Ishmael. Ishmael has no claim to the sonship.

Now, how that all works out, I'm glad I live in, in the day of grace. Because how all that works out, I don't know.

But I do know this, that if God said it, he's right. That much I do know. Because the judge of the earth cannot be unrighteous.

[ 9 : 35 ] God cannot be unrighteous. It's impossible. There are a few things God can't do, right? He can't lie. He can't deny himself.

That's why in Romans chapter 1 you get the whole issue of the sin business and the wrath of God being poured out upon mankind.

mind. Yes, it is because of behaviors, but the behaviors stem from one thing, and what is it? They refuse to acknowledge God as God.

That is, all men, this comes back to our Genesis chapter 1. Remember, in the beginning, God created, created, right?

In the beginning, God created. Now, in the natural, I didn't mean to digress this far, but I'm on a roll. So, there's a natural revelation, and I look outside, and I see plants.

[ 10 : 47 ] I think, that's pretty complex. complex. And, I look in the mirror, and I dig a little eyelash out of my eye, and I say, that's pretty complex.

That must have happened by accident. Right? There, there you go. Isn't evolution marvelous? So, here's the deal.

God says, look, I gave you natural revelation, and you can know, just by nature, that I exist, and that I am not part of that nature.

I have to exist independent of it. So, the scripture most often describes God as the one word, most often used of God, holy, apart, the one who is not contained.

Now, does that prevent God from acting in history and in his creation? Does he act within creation? Does he act in history?

[ 11 : 57 ] Yes. But he is not contained within it. And he is not circumscribed, not only is he not circumscribed by it, but he is not restricted by it.

God will be true, though every man, every human, let's, and I know this is a what if that you can't get into, but I'm going to pretend anyway.

What if every human rejected Jesus Christ as Savior? Is that going to destroy God and his plan?

God will do it. And that's why he says time and again in the prophets, is God a man that he should lie or the son of man that he should repent?

And the answer is rhetorical. What is it? No. No. So he says, have I not said it, and I will do it. So, back here.

[13:13] So now, God says, let's go back then to James. What then, what does it say in James about temptation?

It's James chapter one. It's pretty easy to find. Let no man say when he is tempted that he is okay, now, well, we'll finish the verse first and then get into the rest of it.

Someone read that verse for us, please, where that's found. James 1, 13, if you're looking for it. the shall keep ■■■ this this fear is nothing but you'll push it games by theNI drives you'll grab it away. The testing of God, where God says he tested Abraham, is that, does God know what Abraham's going to do? Well, when he came to the garden and looked for Adam, he said, where are you? Did he know where Adam was? Yeah. Did he know what Adam had done? But he asked him anyway. Here, it says, he is testing Abraham.

[14:57] I suspect this is for Abraham's benefit and mine. God already knows what Abraham's going to do. He's going to reiterate it after the fact.

But God already knows what Abraham's going to do. It's not like God's looking for information. Well, I wonder what I have to do now. Oh, they ate the fruit I told them not to.

What will we do? It's not like that. Because from the fount, we are told by the apostle that our salvation was worked out in God's mind since when?

The beginning. The beginning. It was in God's mind in the beginning. So, God's going to prove himself gracious and righteous and holy and just.

And it's a wonderful thing that he provides that for us. You know, by the way, we opened with prayer. We'll have prayer in the service.

[16:09] Most of us prayed this morning. Is it not amazing that the God of the universe, the eternal God, allows me to even talk to him?

And he actually listens. Wow. That's pretty amazing. Okay. The temptation that's spoken of in James is a temptation toward what?

Evil. So, God does not tempt me with evil things. And I wish he had stopped there. But he didn't. Because when I'm tempted to do wrong, it's because of what?

My own lust. It's my own heart. That's what makes grace so amazing. Or one of the many things that makes grace so amazing.

Because the God who knows me, loves me. And while we were his enemies, Christ died for us. And while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

[17:26] That's pretty amazing. Okay. Now, God, we already went over thine only son.

And what did he tell Abraham to do with his only son? Offer him as what? A burnt offering.

Right. Now, well, I'll get to that maybe. I'm going to jump ahead if I'm not careful.

So, a couple of things do need to be dealt with. One is the human sacrifice.

We dealt with the only son business. But what about this human sacrifice business? Have you ever thought about that? What God told him to do?

[18:26] Now, Abraham's from Ur of the Chaldees, right? So, in Mesopotamia, some things were going on atop those ziggurats.

So, he may have been acquainted. It does not say that he ever participated. I'm not saying that Abraham participated in human sacrifice.

But he, he was aware of human sacrifice. Nevertheless, God has emphasized something here.

Take your only son, the one who you love, and you offer him to me as a burnt offering.

Now, what, what would entice Abraham to do that?

First of all, let's take care of that human sacrifice. What is God going to later say to the children of Israel when he gives them the law? After the law, he has brought them out of Egypt.

[19:38] He has given them the law at Sinai. He has led them toward Canaan. He said, I'm taking you to Canaan. And when you get there, you're going to see stuff. What does he tell them?

Don't do it. In fact, don't have anything to do with it.

Now, I'm going to speak metaphorically for myself. This doesn't apply to you, I know.

But, I could avoid a lot of problems in life if I didn't have anything to do with some of that stuff, right?

If I avoided what the world says and what the world does, I don't mean you can withdraw from it.

We know that from 1 Corinthians. You can't get out of it, but don't be, don't be of it. You are in the world, but you're not of the world.

[20:52] That's what he's talking about. He says, you have to live through it, but you don't have to be part of it. And time and again, he'll tell the church, don't do or don't think this way.

Don't be deceived, he says frequently, doesn't he? Don't be deceived. God is not mocked. That's the one that came to my mind. What?

Yeah, it's the seed in the harvest, isn't it, Roger? You reap what you, you reap what you sow. Now, life's going to be tough enough anyway.

I don't need to make it worse. I don't need to be stupid about it, do I? It's going to be plenty hard.

So, I used to tell the boys at OR, look, the law of the harvest, you reap what you sow.

If you want to raise corn, don't sow thistle. It's not, that part's fairly simple to understand.

[ 22 : 04 ] The understanding's not the hard part, is it? That's not where I stumble. Kind of like Mark Twain supposedly said.

You know, it's not the parts of the Bible that I understand, or that I don't understand that bother me. It's the parts I do understand that bother me. The parts I can comprehend.

That's what bugs me. It's not a mind issue there, is it? It's a heart issue. It's a, I don't want it to be.

So, back to this. Okay. He tells, in Deuteronomy, he says, when you come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

There shall not be found among you anyone that makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire. That was a sacrifice, a child sacrifice.

[ 23 : 11 ] And it happens all the time. millions. Millions. On the altar of convenience, usually, eh?

I want, I want to do what I want. I just don't want any consequence. I'm sure it's been said hundreds of thousands of times.

Yeah, you do have a choice. We are pro-choice. You made the choice early. You made the choice early. Anyway, back to this.

And he also, he mentions it in Jeremiah. They built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the, of the son of Hinnom, who caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire into Molech, which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind.

It's an abomination to God. But here he's testing, he's testing Abraham. But, you remember when Jesus and his disciples were in Bethany, and, I think they were in Bethany, and someone came to him and said, hey, your friend Lazarus is really sick.

[ 24 : 54 ] What did Jesus do? What did he do? He waited. In Mary and Martha's mind, Jesus wasn't right on time.

He was three days late. But Jesus didn't go to that tomb or to that, to Capernaum.

He didn't go there to heal Lazarus. He went to raise him from the dead. He didn't, remember, he didn't leave the village until Lazarus was dead.

And he said, okay guys, now it's time to go. Our friend Lazarus is asleep. The euphemism. Well, it's something like that here, isn't it?

God's not going to call Abraham, I'm going to jump ahead. God's not going to call Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. He's calling him, though, to a point so that Abraham will recognize and maybe Isaac will recognize because, well, we'll get into that.

[ 26 : 10 ] You just roll that one around. Okay. Now, read on then. Read on the next few verses. And let's think about this.

When God made the covenant with Abraham, and by covenant, I mean the promise, because God went through the covenant by himself, alone.

I know I drum on that, but that's important to me to remember on whom this relies.

On whom does my ultimate salvation and my eternal life rely? Is this a joint venture? it depends solely upon the work of Christ upon the cross.

Without that, I can be the best day I ever lived with the best intentions I've ever had are not good enough and never would be.

[ 27 : 36 ] even Harry needs the Lord Jesus Christ. Right? Now, what we all do.

Well, and all the world does whether they know it or not. So, when he gave Abraham that promise, he said, through Isaac shall this promise come true.

He said, through Isaac shall your descendants be named. They will inherit what I've promised to you. They'll inherit the land. They will inherit the position of blessing to all the world.

that's going to be through Isaac. And now he comes and he says, I want you to sacrifice him. Now, so what would possess Abraham to do that?

When he thinks, that had to run through his mind, didn't it? Well, wait a minute. I just kicked Ishmael out. I asked you, Lord, oh, that Ishmael may live before you.

[ 29 : 01 ] And God said, no, send him away. It's through Isaac that this is going to happen. And now you're coming to me, Lord, and you're saying this.

Has God changed his mind? Has he? No. He didn't change his mind. He already knows what he's going to do.

He knows how this is going to work out. But what about Abraham? Hebrews chapter 11.

Go to Hebrews chapter 11 and tell me what God said about Abraham in Hebrews chapter 11. Well, he was a friend of God.

but he had faith and specifically what about this faith?

[ 30 : 02 ] It has to do with what we're reading right now. Who has found it? Verse 17. Verse 17. Is that 11, 17?

He's talking about Esau there. There. And how did he know it?

He believed what? That would be 19. Okay, so Abraham believed God and he believed that God was going to fulfill his promise through Isaac, right?

And we read here in Hebrews that he believed that God even though he killed Isaac, God would raise him from the dead. It was a miracle that Isaac was born.

Now, as far as miracles are concerned though, how long does it take me to forget my last miracle? Well, and I'm using that for the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt.

[ 31 : 53 ] They cried out to God. Well, Moses cried out to God. God, they're between the mountains and the sea, and through the valley is coming home.

Pharaoh and his army were trapped. Moses cries out to God, and what does God tell him? Why stand you crying out to me?

Stretch out your hand. Moses raises the rod, what happens? The sea parts, what do they do?

Come on, let's go, we only have five minutes.

We've got to get a million people across. They walk through on dry ground, and he turns around, and what does he do? He raises his rod, what happens?

The sea, well, now they're over on the other side. Now what happens? It closes back over whom? Pharaoh and his army.

[ 33 : 02 ] They see that happen, and in three days, I'm complaining again. It takes me about three days to forget what God just did, and that's a biggie.

That's a biggie. And you see that time and again through their sojourn. And I know we got in, we'll come back now. Okay, so Abraham believed that God was able to do what with Isaac?

Raise him from the dead, even if he had to kill him. So, he's acting upon it. Now, he tells him to go to a place.

Where is it? Moriah. Now, traditionally, the, well, this is, I will show you, I want you to go to what?

The land, the area of Moriah, and I'll show you a mountain, and it's on that mountain that I want you to do this thing.

[ 34 : 17 ] Okay, traditionally, though, and this is in the area of what city? You don't have to whisper it.

Jerusalem. This is in the area of Jerusalem. And traditionally, what's built on, actually, in, in Chronicles, you will read that Solomon did what on Mount Moriah?

He built the temple. David had purchased the land for the temple from a Jebusite. Onan, wasn't it a Jebusite?

Onan the Jebusite? It was his threshing floor. It must have been a big threshing floor, because they're going to build a temple on it. So, the Temple Mount, traditionally, is the very mountain that this happened on.

If that's true, now, it doesn't say that specifically in Scripture. Let me emphasize that. The Scripture, what the Scripture actually says is the area of Moriah, and I'll show you a hill.

[ 35 : 29 ] Tradition says that this was the very hill upon which the temple was built. If, assuming that that's true, Abraham has met somebody from this area, who?

Melchizedek. If it's true that it's that very mountain, this area was Melchizedek's kingdom, city kingdom of Salem, later to be named Jerusalem.

Jerusalem. Jerusalem. Okay. So, finishing up today with verses 3 through 6, look at those.

What does Abraham do? God had told him, offer him up as a burnt offering. What's Abraham do? He gets up and goes.

He loads it up, says he splits the wood, he saddles his donkey, takes a couple of guys with him, and Isaac. And Abraham picks up a firebrand, and off they go.

[ 36 : 53 ] how long does it take him to get there? Takes him about three days to get there. And then what happens? We're at verse 5, if you're trying to, what's Abraham say?

It says he lifted up his eyes and he saw the hill. What's he say? He says something to the two men that are with him. He says you stay here, and then what?

We will go worship and we will come back. We will go worship and return to you.

Abraham believed that God could raise Isaac from the dead, or he believed he would. God and I'm going to stop there because I don't want to delay anymore and I want to give you ample time to meet with Joel and Leah and their family and get to know them.

So any parting comment? John? I had never thought about Abraham in the early Chaldees seeing child sacrifice.

[ 38 : 19 ] And that kind of makes me wonder if God was just not testing his zeal for him as much as they had. Something along that line. Just a thought.

All I know, I don't know that all of them that were offered in Mesopotamia were just children.

There have been human sacrifices offered with adults too in our own continent and south.

but where people get that idea seems beyond me because I was raised here. But I do know this.

The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked. I am far uglier than I want to think about.

[ 39 : 24 ] I'd like to think that I'm impervious to those kinds of things, but nope. I'd like to think that I wouldn't have been the one of the murmurers, but I would have been, wouldn't I?

I would have been. I thank God for his grace and his mercy and his salvation that it is not only is it gone, but we're no more there.

When the Lord, when the Lord God looks upon the believer, he doesn't see Roger anymore.

He sees Jesus. Is that not wonderful? Thank you. Have a wonderful week. God bless you, Joel.

God bless you.