

The Abrahamic Faith (2 of 2)

by Art Katz

The sermon explores the depth of Abrahamic faith as total surrender to God, emphasizing the significance of covenant and community in our relationship with Him.

Duration: 45:31

Scripture: Genesis 28:16, Exodus 20:20, Job 13:15, Zechariah 12:10, Romans 11:36, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Jude 1:3

Topics: "Abrahamic Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding and maintaining the covenant with God. They highlight how divorce within the church reflects a loss of the sense of covenant. The speaker also discusses the need to fight for the true meaning of faith in a world that diminishes its significance. They emphasize the fear of God and the awe and respect that should accompany our relationship with Him. The sermon concludes with a reminder to nurture and cultivate a sense of God's dread and otherness.

Transcript

Jehovah reckoned Abram's faith to him as righteousness, by making a covenant with him, by taking Abram into covenant fellowship with himself. When it says he imputed righteousness, because Abram believed, as I said before, he imputed his life. He gave his life in covenant.

You give me your beggarly life, I give you mine. That you have given me yours is indicated by the slaying of these animals. You're identified with them.

On that day he made a covenant. Abraham's faith was Abraham's act. Faith was an act.

It's not just a mental assent. It's an obedience, and the killing of the animals indicates an obedience unto death. This is cat smell sweeping up there, Rich.

If faith is not a faith unto death, is it really a faith? No. Then what does that mean? A faith unto death. Could you give me a synonym? When you say a faith unto death.

If it's not a faith unto death, it's not faith. A faith unto the final end. Okay.

It's a faith that goes all the way. It's all the way. It has no thought for itself, no regard for the consequence, what it may be, our benefit or our loss.

It's all the way. It's unto death. Or it's not faith.

If there's any hedging, any reservation, any conditional holding back, any partialness instead of totality, it is not Abrahamic faith. And when God saw that faith, he made a covenant with him in that day. If Abraham had thought, well, I'll give him this animal, but I won't give him that.

I'll give this portion, but I won't give that. There would not have been covenant. There's a requirement for totality.

Because God gives himself in totality. Because that's his nature. And so he brought Abraham into covenant fellowship with himself.

Wow. Yeah. What greater gift.

What... How giving God is. The givingness of himself to a man. Because I am thy great reward.

I'm your shield. That's why you don't... Don't be afraid. You have me.

Not just my support. Or when you're in a crisis clutch situation. From this covenant time on, I am with you, in you.

I am your very life, your support, your sustenance, your all. Walk thou before me and be thou perfect. I am the Lord God Almighty.

He says to Abraham in another place, I'm giving my life, I'm giving you all. Why should you be afraid? I'm your security, your wisdom, your courage. Because you give your all.

Okay. Remember when Jacob slept on a rock? When the sun came down on Jacob, the sun set on Jacob. Isn't it remarkable? Every pivotal key episode in the patriarchal history of the nation of Israel somehow takes place in darkness.

When the sun was set on Jacob is more than just the sun going down. The sun means anything in which Jacob had hoped has been demolished. He's a fugitive.

He's in flight. He's in fear for his very life. The sun has set on every Jacob aspect of his life.

Then God appears to him in a dream. And he sees the ladder set up to the heavens. Remember that? And he says, how dreadful is this place.

You know when we say awful? You see, we have lost the meaning of words. Dread and awe is the very sense of the otherness of God. And we have lost that sense.

There is no fear of God in the church. But when he comes in wrath, men will hide themselves in the cleft of rocks and say to the mountains, Fall on us, to flee from the face of him who comes. The fear of God will smite men who are today blasphemers, who use the name of Jesus as a curse without thinking twice.

Then, great fear. It is for us to nurture, cultivate and hold this sense of God, the sense of his dread. So that don't be afraid is not don't be afraid of me.

Don't make me a commonplace, I'm not your buddy. There's a respect. I'm something other.

And yet, I'm joining with you. And I'll be your defense. So we need not to confuse these kinds of fear.

There is darkness, clouds, judgment, wrath, fire, is the setting of Israel's final history. Its last episode in earth, before it comes into the same union that Abraham did. Is Israel presently in this covenant relation? It has forfeited their covenant.

But he makes with them a new covenant. And that brings up the question, why if this text is symbolic of Israel's final coming into this through clouds and darkness and wrath and fire, how is it that Abraham slept through it in his vision? After driving away these devouring birds, it says, and Abraham slept. Where does it say that? In verse 12.

A deep sleep fell upon Abraham, and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him. And it came about when the sun had set, verse 17, that it was very dark. This is that same time.

And behold, there appeared a smoking of the flaming torch, which passed between these pieces. On that day, the Lord made a covenant with Abraham. Because his sleep incapacitated him from being an actual participant.

Because in the covenant that is made, the two who make the covenant pass through the pieces. In this covenant, it is only the flaming torch and the smoking pot, symbolic of God and his glory, alone. Abraham is sleeping and out of the picture altogether as participant.

Because this is a vision given by God, it's every detail is divinely ordered. So if God in the detail sees that Abraham, a deep sleep comes over him, is not taking a nap. This is something that's come from God to keep him out from being participant.

And my question is, why? And then Jim rightly says, hey, that's just like Israel. In a certain sense, they will be out of it also. Something will happen to them and for them, but independent of them.

And that even when their repentance comes, it comes as a gift. When the Lord comes in Zechariah 12, to save Israel out of its final extremity, when two-thirds of Jerusalem has already been lost, and one-third has yet to pass through the fire, it says, upon the city of David and on Jerusalem comes the spirit of supplication and of prayer. And they shall see him whom they have pierced and mourn for him as one mourns for one's only son and be in bitterness as one is in bitterness for one's firstborn.

Actually, grace and supplication. Grace and supplication. Do you know how I read that? God does not allow Israel in any way, out of its own religiosity, its own ethicality, to exhibit itself.

It is pure grace. It is pure gift. Even the ability to mourn and repent is given by the gift of the spirit of supplication.

And the repentance is a gift of God. Isn't that what the scripture tells us? It's the goodness of God that leadeth men unto repentance. Because God is God and no flesh will share his glory.

That's why Paul ends the great drama of Israel and the church in Romans 9-11, for of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. He could have said, to whom alone be glory forever. Because if it's not alone his glory, it's not his glory.

We don't know God as we ought. And that's why we touch his glory and seek to find a place in it and mix our own motives with his work and make it impure and unpriestly. He will not be owing to any man or to

any nation.

Israel is a witness nation of man. In its finest ability. And God will not allow it to succeed on that basis at all.

He didn't allow Abraham to succeed on that basis. When Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he looked upon his body as being dead and was beyond all human hope, Abraham believed in God. Jesus would not trust himself to any man for he knew what was in man.

Although they said that he must be Messiah because they saw the miraculous things that he did. But he would not allow himself to be known by them or to be received of them on the basis of what they saw with their natural eyes. For he would not entrust himself to man.

And even his cousin John the Baptist, who grew up with him and must have recognized the exceptional quality of this relative, did not introduce him to Israel as the Messiah in the waters of Jordan on the basis of his natural knowledge. But when the dove came down and abode on him, that was the revelation that this is the Chosen One, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. It was not John's natural knowledge that was the basis for communicating to Israel who this one is.

It was the confirmation of the dove from heaven and the voice of the Father, This is my Son in whom I am well pleased. How we need to have that so etched in our hearts. God will not be beholden to any man.

He will not trust in any man's flesh. Abraham had to sleep for this is God's covenant and Israel will sleep and receive an everlasting covenant. I will make a new covenant with you.

Not the covenant of the kind that I made with your fathers which they broke, though I was a husband unto them. And this shall be my covenant. I will write it in your hearts and in your spirits and I will be in you to fulfill it.

It will no more be men telling one another about God. You shall all know me. Not by virtue of your Talmudic expertise but by the impartation of myself in your heart and in your spirit.

That's what makes this new. And it's not only new, it's everlasting. You know why? You'll never break it.

You broke all the other ones. You have demonstrated your religious incapacity to fulfill covenant. But now I'll make an enduring and everlasting one.

You'll never break it because you don't keep it. I keep it. I who have made it keep it.

You sleep. This is fellowship. God offers himself in fellowship to Abram.

He gives himself. Because Abram was obedient. What was Abram's faith that made him righteous? He cut up the sacrifice.

He laid it open. He parted the parts. It's an irretrievable giving.

You know that word? Something that cannot be taken back again. Humpty Dumpty fell off the wall and all the king's men could not put him together again. You're not going to take back.

You're not going to grab this back. Once your commitment is covenant, that's it. How do you like that for marriage? And if you don't like it for marriage, how then do you like it for God? This is the basis for

marriage.

Irretrievable. No taking back. Once and for all.

Unto death. And when you do it with that readiness of mind, the covenant-keeping God is there to supply the life that makes that union possible as against every stupefying, shrieking difficulty and impossibility. How can it work? A Jew with a Gentile.

A Brooklyn University intellectual with a simple girl who had to make signs to communicate in the first time of coming together with Inga. And you're in union and something has to come from that and it's got to be enduring against every futility and hopelessness, defeat and despair. Yes, God is in covenant.

And as we said the other day, the fact that divorce is as rife in the church as it is in the world is the statement of how much the church has lost its sense of covenant. And the God of covenant is the God who creates it and the God who keeps it and the God who fulfills it. And if you don't know God, as the covenant-making and the covenant-keeping, do you really know Him? And maybe that's why we've got to go through the fire.

That's why we have to pass through the smoke. Because it's got to burn up, among other things, an inadequate concept of God that was convenient for us, but was not Him. And isn't that exactly Israel's condition? Even its religious condition, let alone its secular condition? They simply do not know as they ought to know.

And you cannot know except through the fire. So what is this faith that God honored by coming into covenant fellowship with Abram himself, giving himself? It's to trust, to believe. He gives the Hebrew words here, oman, from ha-amin, which means to trust, as well as to believe.

It expresses that state of mind which is sure of its object and relies firmly upon it. As denoting conduct toward God as a firm, inward, personal, self-surrendering reliance upon a personal being. This is the most beautiful definition of faith that I have ever read.

Because here's a scholar who has the advantage of the Hebrew language and burrows into the root of the Hebrew words to give us a dimension of its meaning beyond what we have allowed, quote, faith to become in our time, which is creedal faith, where you subscribe to the correctness of doctrine. Yes, I believe that. Jesus was born of a virgin.

There's believing and believing. What is the kind of believing that God honors by giving himself in communion and in union in covenant? Which, by the way, is renewed every time you take the cup of covenant. The Lord's Supper is a renewing of this compact of agreement.

And we're eating and drinking the water fresh. We're drawing again, we're showing again, we're cast upon his life because the journey is too great for us. Eat and drink, the angel said to Elijah, a second time.

And what have we done with that sacrament? We've made it a religious plastic cup and a little wafer. We take it all together when we're not together. And that's what the scripture says, is contend for the faith once and for all, given the saints.

We've got to fight for the saints. We've got to fight for a true meaning of faith in an age in which it is deprecated and made something other than what God understood with Abram. But that's what we're doing

here.

We're not just renewing something, we're fighting for something. And that's why the birds are coming down wanting to devour us. Giving me a blind eye and fear and everything, breaking loose and losing the thing.

And isn't it worth showing, if my hand were not upon you, and if my light shadow were not with you, you guys would be devastated and bowled over. This building would be in flames. There'd be bulldozers pushing it in.

What they did in Waco, Texas, they would do with you. The fact that they haven't is that my hand of restraint is upon you and you're not in the arrogant spirit of those men who defied the public authorities and ended in the way that they did. As your faith is, so be it unto you.

And your faith is the meaning that you understand in coming to the communion table. And that you're not only in communion with God in authenticity, in the sacrificial giving up of yourself, as you have come in union with your spouse in giving up your singleness, but also with the church. You're giving your life up also to others in the church.

You would enjoy your privacy, but the demands of the body require your participation. And you give yourself in communion. And if it's not in truth with those with whom we're joined horizontally, how is it true with him vertically? And some of you have heard me say that when the gospel came to Scotland through this Irish missionary, Columbo, that before they came to the Scottish mainland, they lived on an island off the coast of Scotland from Ireland for two years.

And then after that, the Lord released them to come before the stronghold of the Picts, P-I-C-T-S, this ancient pagan people who were notorious for bloodshed and violence. And they had a double-walled fortress. And Columbo, according to church legend, stood before that impenetrable fortress, and they were just weak men themselves, and he made the sign of the cross.

And when he made the sign of the cross, the gate opened up itself. And when the king saw this, he fell on his face, and he had his entire nation subscribed to Columbo's God. And that's how the gospel came to Scotland, of which we have a piece sitting at this table.

Now, my question is, how come the gate opened? How come every formidable opposition to the truth of God had to open because a man made a gesture, because it was not an empty gesture or a vain gesture or a mere religious gesticulation. It was a truth, a statement of truth that is both vertical and horizontal, that they were in union with God and with each other. That's why they had two years on the island together, establishing the truth of their reality as church.

And that truth opened the gate against which no man can stand. What has God said about the church? The gates of hell will not prevail against you. That's if you are the church, the covenant honoring and covenant keeping church.

If you're just church in name, if you're just institutional, ceremonial, something else, nothing will be moved. So this covenant, I can't say enough for it, what this means and the depth of it and how its first expression requires all of these symbolic elements, the animals cut in half, not just something given in part, in totality. Full, the full measure, nothing withheld, and God honors it by his own glory passing through while the co-covenant party sleeps.

Not in indifference or boredom or tiredness, but in the sleep that God puts upon him to show, I exclusively have given this covenant, you didn't call for it, and I exclusively will keep it. That's why it's everlasting. But it requires an inward, personal, self-surrendering reliance upon a personal being, especially upon the source of all being, because it is sure of its object and relies firmly upon it in an inward, personal, self-surrendering reliance unto death.

Yea, though he slay me, yet will I trust him. It is unconditional trust in the Lord and his word, even where the natural course of events furnishes no ground for hope or expectation. This is Delitzsch writing, and I penciled in where he says, even, I wrote especially, where the natural course of events furnishes no ground for hope or expectation.

Isn't that the picture, in many ways, of the church and the gospel to the Jew? They have all the marvels. They have everything going for them. They're the man of the year.

They have the B'nai B'rith plaque on their wall. They've never raised their voices to their wives. They are the most exemplary, cultured, and ethical, moral people.

And here we are, knockabouts. We're struggling to make it through. We see our defects daily.

We're nothing. Our iniquity is ever before us. And God calls us to stand before them and bring to them the power of the gospel.

Everything militates against it. It is an ultimate collision of impossibilities. What is faith? Faith believes in the word of God, especially where the natural course of events furnishes no ground for hope or expectation.

Because the word of God says, this gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Faith acts on the word of God despite every natural appearance to the contrary. Could you repeat that again? Who said what I said? Yeah, yeah.

Faith acts according to his word, especially where the natural course of events furnishes no ground for hope or expectation. Faith is believing the word of God in action against everything that is to the contrary. And by this faith, Abraham was placed in living fellowship with God.

And that's why righteousness was accounted to him. For the life of God is the righteousness of God. He didn't receive a virtue, an ethical category.

He received the life of God. And the life of God is righteous. And it's the only source of righteousness.

That's why God could say, depart from me, you workers of iniquity, for I never knew you. But Lord, didn't we do this? Didn't we do that? Yeah, you did a lot of things. But you did not do it out of my life.

You did it out of your own religious energy, out of your own natural ability. And it's unrighteous, it's wicked. You're a worker of iniquity.

The only thing that would have made that work righteous is if its fulfillment had come out of the energy of my life. It's not what the work is, it's the source by which it is performed. And that life is available only in communion by covenant relating people who trust God totally.

And what do we make then of these animals? One of every species of the animal suitable for sacrifice? And Abraham took these and divided them in the midst and placed one half opposite to the other? Well, we can ask the question, what if Abraham omitted even so much as one of these animals, even the smallest of them, say one of the birds, the dove, what if he gave everything but one? Would God give him like a high batting average? You know, you come in, and you hit three out of ten, you're a candidate for the Hall of Fame. The beauty of this is, and the point of this is, totality. The big thing and the small thing.

And you cannot omit anything. You hold nothing back for yourself. Remember when God gave the commandment to Saul, who was then king, through the prophet Samuel, to destroy the Amalekites and to spare not infant, suckling, camel, sheep, oxen, ass? And they did most of that.

But they spared Amalek, the king of the Amalekites, and the best of the sheep and the oxen, to make a sacrifice unto the Lord. And it says Samuel wept all the night. What does God say to Saul the next day through the prophet? Obedience is better than sacrifice.

And as you did not obey the Lord, I will remove from you your kingdom. Partial obedience is disobedience. You can quote me.

Partial obedience is disobedience. When God calls for the ox, the ass, the whatever, as well as the birds. Maybe the birds are the little thing that you would think, well, you can get away with or hold back for yourself, is the final measure of the totality to which you give yourself.

So we need to interpret these symbols. Here's what I wrote in the margin about what it means to give of every species of animal suitable for sacrifice. Abram took these and divided them in the midst.

Totally, all that was required, irretrievably, that means cannot be taken back. You're not going to glue these pieces together again. Once they are cut and separated, that's it.

You don't take back your singleness, your single status. You don't reserve for yourself your own name. We just received, this is interesting, the coincidence of a letter from Europe where, and we know this precious family over the years, they are now divorced.

And instead of changing the address label, we sent this newsletter with the same address label to Mrs... Well, the first is her own name, and the second is the name of her husband. And she takes the envelope with the label and puts it into her new envelope and sends it back and crosses out his name. And she's making clear that I'm now divorced, I don't want his name.

But what needs to be made clear to her, what probably made your divorce inevitable was that you never crossed out your name when you came into covenant with that man and took his name, his identity, his purpose, and his being totally for your own. There were the seeds of the destruction of that marriage from the beginning. And she has told me in private conversation, I never gave myself over to my husband.

I always had doubt whether this was made in heaven. I said to her, once it is consummated, whatever its origin, it's made. Once it is consummated, whatever its origin, it's made in heaven.

If you've read Ben Israel, you know how I came together with Inga, not under the most auspicious circumstances. And I fought against it, and I was trying to make the best of the bad thing, but it wasn't working, until I came to a place in my understanding and faith that whatever the origin, once it is established in marriage, it is made in heaven. And you have no out.

You have no out. You can't point back to, well, I don't know, I had doubts at that time. That's the enemy.

Those are the birds coming down from heaven to devour. And you've got to fight them off. Fight off those thoughts that want to nullify covenant in which God, His part, and will bring it to fulfillment for His glory, not your compatibility.

The issue of marriage is not your getting along. That's right. It's not your compatibility and your enjoyment.

It's His glory. That's right. It's an enactment.

It's a depiction of the covenant-making God. And if it fails in your marriage, how shall it succeed with Israel? That's right. I remember I had a meeting in Canada, and through separate doors came a German couple whom I had known for years.

The ex-wife through one door, they had already begun their divorce proceedings, and the husband through another, and they sat in on a message on Israel and God's last day's restoration because He's obligated, because of the covenant that I have made with you. The deliverer shall come out of Zion when the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, and so, as it is written, the deliverer shall come out of Zion and take transgression from Jacob according to the covenant that I have made with them. They may have failed.

They may not have been faithful, but I have made that covenant, and I'm under obligation to fulfill it, despite them. That's why Abraham slept. It's not his ability.

I who made it will fulfill it. And so, I gave an invitation for people who are going to stand with God's purposes for Israel. And she stood in one part of the room, and he stood in the other.

And so, after the service, I went up to them and said, what, you believe in God for His honoring of His covenant to Israel in the last days? He will restore them to Himself? How then are you going to a divorce court because you cannot believe it for your own marriage? Where do you think they are today? In marriage. They never went through with it because they were on the horns of a dilemma that they could stand to believe God for Israel, and they could not believe for their own marriage. They saw the terrible contradiction, and they had to go along, though they thought it was hopeless, and they're married to this day, and doing well.

It's because God keeps us in union that what we think is impossible finally is attended in a way that not only just makes it workable, but makes it glorious. I've not yet come to that with anger, but I'm believing for them. So long as we honor the covenant and stay together.

Because God's honor is at stake. He who makes it will keep it. Okay, we've got to move on.

These are precious thoughts and considerations. Listen to what David says, written long before the Hitler time. The choice of sacrificial animals for a transaction which was not strictly a sacrifice was founded upon the symbolic significance of the sacrificial animals.

That is, upon the fact that they represented and took the place of those who offered them. See, these animals stood for something. It's your death that's being depicted in the death of the animal.

In the case before us, they were meant to typify, or to be symbolic of, the promised seed of Abraham. In other words, something was being transacted with those animals that was suggestive of the seed of

Abraham for the generations to come. That they would pass through the fire.

That there's a time when all Israel is somehow symbolized already in the sacrifice that Abraham was putting before God. It's suggestive of the future of the people, of the seed of Abraham himself. And their diversity in the forms of animals that are represented.

You know, this is where you just kind of walk out on a plank or on a tight wire. You're feeling for something. And I appreciate his thought, which is all the more real to us now than it could have been when he wrote it.

That these animals are descriptive and suggestive of the variety of Abraham's descendants. The northern tribes, the southern tribes, the Ashkenazic, the Sephardic, all of the secular, the atheistic, the religious, all of the mishmash that makes up Jewry, God's people, is represented in the diversity of the animals that are put before God that day. And it says in Exodus when they covenanted for the Sinai covenant of the Ten Commandments, not only you who are before us this day, but also those who will be your descendants are caught up, I'm paraphrasing, I don't know the exact words, are caught up and are implicated and are involved in this transaction.

You're not just transacting for yourself, you're transacting for generations yet onward. And that's symbolic. And Delitzsch is saying in the diversity of the animals they represent and typify the promised seed of Abraham.

But in the case before us, the animals represented Abraham and his seed not in the fact that they're being slaughtered as significant as the slaying of that seed, but only what happens to in connection with the slaughtered animals. Birds of prey attempted to eat them and when extreme darkness came on the glory of God passed through them. All the seed of Abraham was concerned.

One of every kind of animal suitable for sacrifice was taken. Well, maybe here I would depart from him and say that it is significant of the slaying of that seed. That out of the death of the remnant comes its restoration.

The eight animals, the eight parts representing resurrection and the day of new beginnings or newness of a restored nation. And that's why the birds wanted to eat that up. They don't want the final meaning of what was represented here.

For it's the end of the birds. It's the end of the false usurping gods of this world. And so the transaction, here's what I'm saying, is finalized in God's approval of that sacrifice.

He validates it by his own presence. Just as he did in darkness over the crucifixion of Jesus when great darkness covered the earth and God brought and received a firstborn son. The birds of prey represented the foes of Israel who would seek to, he writes, eat up, that is, exterminate it.

Isn't that remarkable? That long before the Hitler time he employs this word. To eat up, to devour, is to exterminate. And the fact that Abram frightened them away was a sign that Abram's faith in his relation to the Lord would preserve the whole of his posterity from destruction.

That Israel, here's the punchline, would be saved for Abram's sake. Now you want to hear what I have done with this thought? What does Abram driving the birds away represent? He sleeps through everything else but God allows him this act, this one act, because if those birds had succeeded it would not only have

invalidated the initial covenant but all of its meaning for the future descendants of Abraham's seed, which is yet to take place. That is, the faith of Abraham as an act drives them away.

Or, let's say, Abrahamic faith through another seed of Abraham that preserves the sacrifice and enables its final fulfillment in Israel, namely, the church. Lord, give me a grace to try and express this, that there's a seed of Abraham which Paul quite clearly tells us in Galatians is the church who share the faith of Abraham and that their final task is to drive away the birds that would seek to devour the other seed of Abraham which is Israel. They would be saved for the seed of Abram's sake or to say, Zion's sake.

Deliverance will come out of Zion which fits in so well with all that I understand of God's purpose for the church in its last day's posture toward Israel when the birds will come down and seek to exterminate it. The only thing that will preserve a remnant of that people are the seed of Abraham that is the church that will protect, nurture, give refuge and help to preserve that final restoration that concludes the age and establishes God's restored nation and his kingdom and his glory. Are you understanding? It's going to take Abraham's faith on our part to drive those birds away.

This is that Abrahamic faith that drives away the devourers and provides and a very factual and actual fulfillment will take place in the wilderness according to Ezekiel 20. I will meet with you in the wilderness of the nations. Revelation 12 of the woman who is given wings of an eagle and flies into the wilderness where she is kept or fed for three and a half years.

So it's the Abrahamic faith of the seed of Abraham the church, the true church, the remnant church the wilderness church, the overcoming church that preserves the sacrifice from being devoured in that final day. All of that is encompassed in this initial vision that was given Abraham. So I just want to read that again we can end and pray on that.

The thing that takes place when the sun is set which he says is the departure of grace which at one time had shown upon Israel and the commencement of a dark and dreadful period of suffering for Israel's posterity. That's the time of Jacob's trouble yet future. A time of dark and dreadful period that if God did not cut the time short as we heard last night no flesh, no Jewish flesh would survive.

It will exceed every previous tribulation and suffering of Jews including the previous holocaust. Even what was described to us in that holocaust that you said about they hung the strangled children around the neck while they crucified women and that this tribulation will exceed all previous suffering. It's a darkness and a dread that is hard now even to be imagined.

And we even said on the overseas trip we wondered if there is some symbolic significance in the wilderness prophet Elijah being fed by a widow woman with the last of her flour and her oil. And says feed me first. And because she did her oil did not cease nor did her flour exhaust.

That the feeding of the prophet was the very key to the sustenance of a woman who would otherwise have expired. And that the giving of ourselves to the remnant of Israel in the last days tribulation when we cannot buy nor sell nor take the mark of the number of the beast is God's provision for the remnant church in the abundance that he will give because we give and give to them first before ourselves in the wilderness. That's faith.

That's Abrahamic faith that believes in its God. It's a faith unto death and that Israel will be saved then for Zion's sake in that dark and dreadful period of suffering that is yet future when the sun sets on Jacob that

they might become Israel. The things in the beginning have a remarkable indication of things also at the end.

So the restoration of Israel in the last days will be also a judgment on those who have opposed Israel even as those Canaanitish people did and their descendants to this day oppose them. But the point for us now we've got to conclude is that there's a remarkable significance in Abraham driving away the birds that were seeked to devour. The one act allowed him and that is indicative or suggestive of a people of the last days who are the seed of Abraham.

Not the Jewish seed but the Gentile seed. The church of God the Zion of God who drive away those that were seeked to devour that people represented in that sacrifice and also provide for them the things that make for their survival and their return. Go back over this text.

Don't think that it's exhausted. We're only opening and beginning something but remarkable what is given in the book of beginnings. So Lord we bless you and love you.

God of the covenant remarkable what you are willing to give of yourself in totality even the righteousness of your life to those who give of themselves in totality without taking back. Lord we bless you. It's only on that basis that it can be for you what we want in these last days.

When we look about my God we'll be full of discouragement and overwhelming things but it will be the covenant keeping God whose life will be given to us in fellowship and in union that will enable us to succeed in all that is before us in preserving the remnant of Israel in their last days darkness and judgment and fire. Lord write these things in our hearts show it to us in other ways help us to reveal my God the precious new covenant the everlasting covenant to which we have been brought and may it be renewed and strengthened with every eating and drinking of your body and blood in truth. We thank you Lord for this morning in Jesus' holy name.

Amen.

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