

Visions of God - Part 4

by David Adams

The sermon delves into Abraham's faith journey, emphasizing the significance of his willingness to sacrifice Isaac and its foreshadowing of Christ's ultimate sacrifice.

Duration: 49:24

Scripture: Genesis 22:3-4, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 28:19, John 17:1

Topics: "Biblical Prophecy", "Divine Encounters"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts a visit to a president where he was asked to speak for three hours. Unsure of what to talk about for such a long time, he decides to discuss the endings of the four Gospels. He starts with Matthew 28 and the Great Commission, where Jesus instructs his disciples to preach the Gospel to all nations. The speaker then mentions a prayer in John 17, where Jesus declares that the hour has come. He connects this to the promise made to Abraham in Genesis, where God promises to provide a sacrifice on the mount. The speaker briefly mentions the use of clocks and concludes by mentioning Jacob's encounters with God and the significance of certain places in biblical history.

Transcript

Oh, good morning to you all. Let me tell you what you did this morning. You woke up this morning, you looked out the window, you might have opened the door and stepped out, and you said, you saw that fog and the rain and the drizzle, and you said, this is the day that follows Wednesday, so it must be Thursday.

Very well. I knew you would. I just knew you would.

You probably finished it though in a different way than I did. Habits of a lifetime die hard, don't they? I want this morning, I wish this morning, if I may, to make a few closing comments on the life of Abraham and then move over to the life of Jacob. I felt that time-wise we should not spend any longer with Abraham, and then there's chapter 22, and what do we do with that? We must make some comments, even though it's only brief, on chapter 22 in connection with Mount Moriah.

And as you will know, this is the culmination of God's dealings with Abraham. This is a high water mark. This is the place where we rise to heights that previously we had not known, and this is the point that's carried over into the New Testament, which our Lord makes reference Himself when He was here.

It was the ultimate in God's walk with Abraham. It was the ultimate in Abraham's walk with God. No higher point of experience could have been had by any man when he was here than Abraham had in chapter 22 of Genesis.

He has walked with the Lord, as you know, from the time the God of glory appeared unto him first in Ur of the Chaldees. He's come through Haran or Charon, he's come down into the land, and from the land he's gone down into Egypt with its disastrous consequences. He's come back up out of Egypt again.

He's had those dealings with Hagar in chapter 16 and chapter 21, and he's had the experience with Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, in chapter 20. And now when we come to chapter 22, we reach what I like to call, at any rate, the ultimate in his experiences with God. I don't know of anything that's comparable in the Old Testament with this passage that we have here, and I doubt if any man has come to the height that Abraham did come in his acknowledgement, in his appreciation and in his honoring of God as Abraham did.

So we're not going to go into the details of the chapter. We all know the story very well. We know that Abraham did on this occasion what he had done earlier when he left Ur of the Chaldees.

He left the place where he was, not knowing where he was going, because God appeared unto him, and he said, Get thee into the place that I will show thee of. Take thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him there as a sacrifice or an offering unto me. So Abraham rises up early in the morning.

He is going on a very difficult journey. It's the last difficult journey of his life. God has exacted of him the expression of his faith such as none of us have been required to do.

Through these varied experiences in receiving this son, and you know as we were commenting yesterday morning just exactly what was involved in Abraham getting Isaac, and that Sarah being the mother rather than Hagar, and you know all the testings and the trials, and finally Abraham in his advanced years comes to be the father of the one whose the covenant promised. And now that Isaac has grown considerably and Abraham is much older even now than he was, for he was 100 years old when Isaac was born, when his heart laughed, now what will his heart do? How will his heart react now when God says to him, Get into the place that I will tell thee of, and take thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him there to me upon an altar for a burnt offering. We are not told, but the instantaneous response of this man of faith and trust and confidence in God is sufficient to assure us that there was no vacillation, there was no doubting, there was no hesitation in the heart of Abraham.

He didn't protest, he didn't have anything to say to the Lord as to why this should be. I have waited all these years, and now you have given me the promised heir, and now you're requesting that I give him back again in sacrifice. No such comments are given to us, no such reasoning of his heart, we don't know.

But we do know that he rose up early in the morning, as it says here in verse 3 of chapter 22, and he prepared his animals and two of his young men with him and Isaac his son, and he made the preparation for the sacrifice. And then it was on the third day when God revealed to him, as we have it in verse 4, he saw the place afar off. That so significant place, that so remarkable place, that place that stands out and will stand out forever in the history of mankind, and doubtless in the history of the universe.

For it was here that we had another comparable experience, you remember, in the connection with the life of David the king, and also something finally in the days of our Lord himself. They saw the place afar off.

I'm reminded of the words of the Master in John chapter 17, and there were five words there at the opening of that steward's son's prayer, sometimes called the High Priestly Prayer, that's only a small portion of the prayer actually, the prayer rather is an account of a steward's son speaking to his father concerning the commission that was given to him, the mission that he had now fully accomplished.

But those five words are, to me, the most poignant words that we have between the Master and his father in all the New Testament, and they are these, Father, the hour is come. There is so much wrapped up in those five words, or the two words even, the hour. Abraham is going to give us a picture of exactly what was going on in terms of human experience between the father and his son on the journey to the cross.

It was but a three-day journey for Abraham. It was millennia or millennial long for the father and his son. It even went back from before time was, certainly as Peter says, before the world was ordained.

And how long that was we cannot measure, we cannot compute, that the father and the son were moving together all through these pages of human history, through these pages of the Old Testament, through the lives of the prophets, the sayings of the prophets, the sacrifices of Israel, the countless sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood, and on down even into the days of the New Testament. These two have been traveling together from before the world was, with this, the place, in view. And our Lord says, Father, the hour is come.

I cannot tell you at times how that appeals to me. There is more depth of pathos, there's more depth of feeling, there's something awesome about those words. You'll recall in the Gospel by John particularly, we read frequently, they couldn't do this, they couldn't do that, that couldn't happen to him, something else couldn't happen to him because his hour was not yet come.

And then in the garden when he was betrayed, and Judah came with the band, he said, this is your hour, and the power of darkness. But just before that happened, standing on the edge of the garden, he lifts up his eyes to heaven, and he encompasses, he brings together all the previous thousands of years, and the plan from before the world was, he brings them all together, and he looks to his father and he says, Father, the hour is come. What tremendous things are wrapped up in those words.

And then the Master followed by saying, Father, glorify thy son, that thy son also may glorify thee. And I don't know how you associate that or what meaning you put upon that, because it is often linked with passages later on in that chapter, John 17, and the Lord is looking forward to the time when he shall be resurrected, he shall be glorified, he shall be caught up into heaven. May I suggest to you, rather, that it can be linked with those five words, Father, the hour is come, because it is directly associated with those words.

That's when the Master said it. These are the circumstances under which he said, Father, glorify thy son. Take you back in measure, perhaps, to chapter 12 of John, when the Greeks came up to the feast and they said to Philip, I suppose they picked Philip because he had a Greek name, and they said, we would see Jesus.

And Philip and Andrew go to the Lord and they say, there are some folks here, these Greek folks here, and they want to see you. And the Lord said, the hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Except the corner if we'd fall into the ground and die divides alone, and who he would ever have been alone, singularly alone, solitarily alone, in all the fullness of his own personal completeness, if he hadn't fallen into the ground to die.

And it was only because he was to go into the ground to die, that corn of wheat was to fall into the ground to die, that it bore much fruit. You and I are here this morning as the result of that corn of wheat falling into the ground and die. But what he had said was, it now is the hour that the Son of Man should be glorified, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die.

It abideth alone. When is a man then to be glorified? When he dies to self and lives to God. For if we live to self, we die, but if we die to self, we live.

And the Lord has given us himself as the example and proof of that. Now that the Son of Man glorified, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. And it was through that death he was to be glorified, as well as to glorify God.

So he looks to heaven and he says, Father, the hour has come. Glorify thy Son. Where? How? In the hour, by the cross.

So Abraham and Isaac journey together, as we have in the early part of this chapter. Let me call your attention to the fact that as they're going, they're talking. But you have several times mentioned about this offering.

At the close of verse 2, offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee of. He hadn't told them yet. And then in verse 3, towards the close, he claimed the wood for the burnt offering.

And then farther down, verse 6, Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and so on. And then Isaac says at the close of verse 7, Where is the lamb for a burnt or ascending offering? And Abraham replies in verse 8, My son God will provide himself a lamb for the ascending offering. Now, this story is so very well known, and it is used so frequently, that perhaps we have come to a final conclusion as to what the teaching really is.

And it is used often in Sunday school, as every Sunday school teacher knows, and every Sunday school teacher has used, I suppose, as a picture of reconciliation, a picture of substitution, particularly. And the substitution we teach in the boys and the girls in the Sunday school here, a marvellous picture. Isaac is to be the offering, he's laid upon the altar, and then there's a provision made for him.

And so our Lord became the provision for us poor, miserable sinners. And he becomes the sin offering for us. Well, you will see that repeatedly, it is not a sin offering, and it is not a sinner finding a substitute.

That is an application, but that cannot be the interpretation. When I was a young Christian, I used to hear frequently, it said very dramatically and very definitively off the platform, that the Bible passages only have one interpretation and many applications. And, of course, I accepted that as being the final word on the subject for a long time, until I began to read a little for myself, and do a little thinking for yourself.

That can be dangerous, but anyway, try it once in a while. And I discovered that that's a very acceptable statement, because somebody of importance said it, and somebody else of importance picked it up and repeated it, and if you repeat anything enough times, everybody takes it for granted that's the way it is. But that's not necessarily true, I may say to you.

I can give you several examples from the Scripture, where the Bible has two or more interpretations, made so by the Spirit of God Himself. He is not restricted to one interpretation of any passage. I know there may be multiple applications, I realize that, but nevertheless, it is not true that the Bible passages only have

one interpretation and many applications.

Now, I know you don't want any examples for that, because you'll find them yourself, but nevertheless, that is so. Now, we have used this passage here in Genesis 22 as a sample of the sinner being delivered, and so the Lord is the ram caught in the thicket, I have no question about that, and then the one who should be upon the altar slain is relieved, and He has provided a substitute for him, and then we apply that to the sinner and to the death of Christ. But it is not so.

There is no suggestion of a sin offering anywhere here, there's no trespass offering anywhere here. This is a burnt offering, this is an ascending offering, and repeatedly, as I have pointed out to you, in this chapter, it is always stated as a burnt offering, always stated as a sin offering, whether it were to be Isaac himself, or whether it were to be the ram of consecration in the thicket, it was always to be a burnt offering. When you say that spoils the picture, no, it doesn't spoil the picture at all.

In fact, it enhances the picture. If you want to say, well, the ram caught in the thicket by its horns was the substitute for the man, for the boy, yes, very well, but does that alter the fact that it was to be a burnt offering? Isaac was to be a burnt offering, he was to be an ascending offering, and why are you and I here if we, in our entirety, in our whole life, spirit, soul and body, have not been meant to be to God constantly an ascending offering? I suggested to you last evening that there are seven offerings in the New Testament priesthood which a priest may offer. Here is one of them.

The Christian himself is to be an ascending offering, a burnt offering, with nothing for anyone else but wholly for God. And Isaac was to be that ascending offering, that burnt offering, and yes, there was a provision made. And the angel of the Lord, it's remarkable, I think, here, that he should be called the angel of the Lord, because it is the same one who in verse 1 says, God Elohim, the triune God, did test or prove Abraham.

The same one who is the angel of the Lord in verse 11, and at the close of verse 18, he says, thou hast to obey my voice. So, when the angel of the Lord speaks and says, thou hast to obey my voice, it's the voice of verse 1, the voice of the triune God. Now, the angel of the Lord comes to Abraham at the time when his hand is raised to sway his son, and he calls to him out of heaven, and he shows him a substitute.

So, there's a ram caught in the thicket, and I've wondered about that, and I don't want to strain these things too far, but I have wondered at times that this ram caught in the thicket with its horns, it says, is not a picture of the master when he was here in his consecration of life. And let me suggest to you that this probably is the mountain sheep, the two-pronged mountain sheep, and because it speaks of his horns in the plural, and may I suggest to you that it's the title of the Lord Jesus as he was here, as he came, the consecrated one. But what do the two horns represent to us, do you suppose? Well, may I say to you, let me suggest this to you, that you remember he said in John chapter 12, again, he said, now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour? How can I say that? Because it was for this cause came I unto this hour.

That's why he was here, in total, in full consecration, to be the whole burnt offering first to God. Now that's on our behalf, I recognize that. While there is part of the burnt offering of himself that was strictly for his father, it was, the burnt offering was to be accepted for the offerer, you remember, in Leviticus 3. So, the burnt offering, while it was wholly for God, the whole thing went up in smoke, as an ascending offering to the Lord.

Nevertheless, the offerer was associated with the offering. So, our Lord was here. Well, what are the horns? Well, I like to think of it this way, anyway, if you'll allow me the privilege.

I like to think of the fact that the very fact he was here, he said, for this cause came I. How did he come? He came via the Virgin's womb. Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not. The sacrifice and offering of transgression for sin thou didst not delight in.

But a body hast thou prepared me. You follow that from Exodus 21 through Psalm 40 and on to Hebrews 10, because that's the story, as you recall. The born ear, in Exodus 21, the servant forever.

When you come to Psalm 40, you read it again, mine ear has he digged, or opened, or bored through. And that's where he says, sacrifice and offering, and burnt offerings, and offering for sin thou wouldest not. Then said I, lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of me.

I delight to do thy will, O my God. So, he speaks about the born ear, and he speaks about the sacrifice in Psalm 40. When you come over to Hebrews chapter 10, Psalm 40 is repeated, but it's added this to it.

Instead of the born ear, what you have is a body hast thou prepared me. Now, the Lord is here in his human body, and this body has been specially prepared to be the burnt offering. So, the fact he is here in the flesh, this one horn I suggest to you, and the fact that he being God is here, or he says even as man before Abraham was, I am, my father and I are one.

The very fact that you have someone here who combines in himself the human side, or the human body, and the divine side, for he is God and man complete, he's caught in a thicket by the horns. Because he says, for this cause came I unto this hour. If I were not here, then this might not have happened, but because I am here, it has to happen.

So, the one who is present in John chapter 12 is the God man, and he is caught for the sacrifice of the burnt offering. So, we may see pictures and types of our Lord wherever we look carefully. And so, as it was in this case, the angel of the Lord spoke to Abraham, stayed his hand, and then he looked and he saw the ram caught in the thicket by his horns.

After Abraham then, relieving his son, puts the ram upon the altar and offers him for a sacrifice, then it says the angel of the Lord calls unto him again, and that's verse 15. And then he makes a very strong statement, and he says this if you notice, verse 16. By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son and only son, that in blessing I will bless thee.

And so, he goes on to the multiplication of his seed, and in thy seed, verse 18, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. And Christ comes to the front in the word of the angels after the sacrifice has been made. God puts himself under oath.

Now, you will recall Psalm 110, verse 4, that says, The Lord swore and will not repent, thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. And when you go over to the epistles of the Hebrews, that whole theme is developed of a priest under oath, and the contrast is made between the Levitical priesthood, the Aaronic priesthood, and the Melchizedek priesthood, because the one is a priesthood by oath, and the other is a priesthood by inheritance. It is hereditary, and so the sons of Aaron each successively passed on the high priestly office to their successors.

But our Lord, being a priest after the order of Melchizedek, there is no cessation, there is no termination. He has neither beginning of days, nobody went before him, he succeeded no one in his office, he does not have end of life, he shall never have a successor after him. He is the high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

You recall in the high priest's palace on the night of our Lord's betrayal, when the high priest put the Lord under oath, and said, We adjure thee by the living God, thou tellest if thou be the Christ or not, and he said, Thou sayest, and so on. The high priest renteth garments. Now, what does that indicate? Well, in the Old Testament you'll find it indicates different things.

Sometimes it's an exclamation of very much a surprise, a punishment. Sometimes it's an exclamation of grief when they rent their clothes. And then, as the case of Samuel and Saul, it indicated a cessation, a termination of an office.

And I suggest to you, when the high priest rent his garment that night when the Lord stood before him, it was the termination of the Aaronic high priesthood. There was to be no high priest after that, as far as theology is concerned, and there never again will be. It's the last high priest after the order of Aaron that ever was to stand representatively in the presence of God.

Because, you say, well, but then you read about the high priest in Acts chapter 5. I know you do, but the rent garment that night, as far as I can consider, the rent garment that indicated that there's no more a high priestly service. The veil of the temple is rent in twain, and the rent garments of the high priest correspond with the rent veil in the temple, and now there's no more Aaronic high priesthood. And there never will be again.

Now, some of you are going to say to me, yes, but Brother Dave, over in the prophecy of Ezekiel, rather, we have priests after the order of Zadok offering sacrifices in the millennium. That's true, and there will be animal sacrifices offered again in Jerusalem, and likely elsewhere, in the millennium. I don't have any difficulty with that, do you? Yes, some of you do.

Well, I know a lot of people do. I don't have any difficulty whatsoever with the animal sacrifice in the millennium period. But, however, did you notice, though, the sons of Zadok are to be engaged in the priestly ministry, but there's no high priest in the millennium after the order of Aaron.

Why? Because that's when our Lord takes his place as the Melchizedek high priest for the nation of Israel, and that'll be after the battle in the valley, as I suggested to you the other night, and Genesis 14. Very well, then. So, what God is doing, he is putting himself under oath.

One of the rare occasions when God puts himself under oath, but he says, Abraham, I swear by myself that because you have done this thing, and you have not withheld your son, your only son from me, I am going to do this, and this, and this, and I am going to bring in through you the seed which is Christ, Galatians 3 tells us, in whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. It's the ultimate. It's the high point.

Nothing else could Abraham ever have desired, and I think that's why it says he called the place Jehovah-Jireh. In the mouth of the Lord it shall be seen or perceived, and may I relate that to the Lord's words in the gospel by John, Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day, and he thought I was glad. What day was that? It was the day when the Lord promised to him under oath he would bring in the seed,

not seed as of many, Galatians says, but one, and so he's promising to Abraham now that the result of this experience wherein Abraham did not return, did not keep his son rather, but offered him up to the Lord, he's promising him the Christ, the Messiah, Jehovah-Jireh, in the mouth of the Lord it shall be seen.

Well, there you go. I never did like these quartz cloths. I used to like the wind-up kind because they could run down before you were finished, and now they are finished before I'm run down.

That's modern technology for you. Turn with me now with you briefly for the few moments I have left to chapter 28, and I want to have time for just a few comments in closing this morning regarding Jacob. There are six times in the life of Jacob when the Lord appears to Jacob, and these are very instructive too.

We have a different man altogether than the one we have just been considering. I have stepped over Isaac, the Lord had appeared to Isaac, but then we don't have time, we have to be selective, so I just want to make a few comments about Jacob. Now, the story of Jacob and Esau in connection with the blessing of the birthright you all know very well, and you know that the consequences of that was the whole thing was instigated by his mother, Rebecca.

She paid a and especially in relation to the things of God as the birthright blessing was, must of course reap the consequences, the sad consequences. Subterfuge never has had room in the purposes and plans of God, and so when the Lord looks at Nathanael in John chapter 1, he says, Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile. Not a marvelous thing to say.

An Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile. You say, why did you mention Nathanael? Because he's closely linked to the experience of Jacob. Jacob, because of his treachery in gaining the blessing which stood, the priestly blessing of the father, he hears via his mother that Esau is sworn to kill him.

It's going to work vengeance on his brother because he took away his birthright, you remember, with a mess of lentils, and now he's taken away the blessing by deceit with the venison which was goat meat, and also the hairy garments. So that was Rebecca's doing, her whole thing, and so he's now made afraid of Esau's brother. That fear of his brother is going to last for over 20 years.

But Esau had said, now the old man is ready to die. I'll wait till he's dead, and we have the days of mourning, and then I'll slay my brother Jacob, and I will get the birthright. Well, he couldn't do it, of course, as Romans chapter 9 tells us so clearly.

God had chosen Jacob to be the covenant-carrying vessel, and Jacob it must be. Regardless of his own twisted pathway, the covenant of God made before the boys were born must stand. And so Esau says, well, the old man's ready to die, I'll just wait till he's gone, and then I'll get my own back on Jacob.

Well, now, don't be too sure about the old man passing away that quickly, you see, because they were sure he was just about ready to go. He couldn't see any longer, and was it you folks that were telling how my little grandson told me that my wife and I have been around long enough now, it's time we were going? Well, he thought that when he's five years old. He's eight now, he hasn't been mentioning to me anymore.

He's got different things in his mind now. He has all kinds of things. Don't ask him where he got them from, but he comes up with all kinds of stink prayers when he goes to bed at night.

You know, he tells the Lord what kind of a wife he wants. I don't want an ugly one, and I don't want a fat one, he told the Lord the other night. And I was there on one occasion, there was a thundering lightning

storm on, and we're getting ready for meeting, and the little guy's standing at the front door, and it's lightning and thundering.

He comes back in and goes into the bedroom where his dad was getting dressed for meeting. He said, Papa, I was just talking to God out there. He said, oh, well, what did the Lord say? He said, well, I don't know for sure, but boy, he sure talks awful loud.

He's getting his answer by thunder, you see. Well, he comes up with all kinds of things. When we were down visiting the last time, my wife and I, my wife's trying to get him away from the ninja turtles and some of these other things, you know, so she tells him, you know what you should do? You should be a missionary to the pygmies.

Pygmies, he said, who are the pygmies? Well, the little fella's just about your size, but they're old, of course, and the people there now aren't going to be there all the time, and by the time you grow up, you should be a missionary to the pygmies. Well, his mother told us afterwards, we remember to tell him that she told us, after we'd gone, the little guy says to his mother about his grandmother, he says, who does she think she is, Miss Prissy, telling me where I have to go? And, uh, well, we thought the thing would die there. Well, we got a call from his dad a little while back, and he said, you know what Noah's saying now? What is he saying? Well, he told him the other day, he's got to go and be a missionary to the pygmies, and I said to him, I don't know where did you get that idea? Well, he said, my abuela told me, that's what I have to do.

Well, he says, how in the world are you going to get to the pygmies and be a missionary? I don't know, but abuela will take care of the whole thing. So, she's not Miss Prissy anymore, she's the instigator of a future missionary. Well, Jacob is going to experience the consequences of his deceit, so he's fleeing for safety from his brother Esau.

Now, as I said, they thought the old man was going to die, and when Jacob comes back 20 years later, the old man is still there. Well, I thought I had buried mine a while ago, I don't mean my father. My father died at 98, and he was a Christian for 88 years, and that was a long lifetime.

No, I'm talking about the old man that we carry with us. We think at times we have him ready for burial, a nice, decent, honorable burial, but it is not so. Now, when Jacob is fleeing from the wrath of his brother, you remember in Genesis chapter 28, he comes to a place which was called Luz at first, and then came to be called Bethel later on, and it's a wilderness place.

And then we have in verse 11, we read about that place, the barrenness of it, he took up the stones, and he put them for his pillows, and laid down that place to sleep, and he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and atop it reached to heaven. Now, when we come to John chapter 1, we discover what this ladder represents. You see lots of pictures, of course, about the ladders that cross, right? But I think John 1 gives us a different slant on that, and the Lord interprets this passage here, in John chapter 1, when he's talking to Nathanael, because when he commented about Nathanael, and said, An Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile, Nathanael heard it, and he said, Rabbi, how do you know me? And the Lord says, When you were under the fig tree, mind you, he had to get out from under that fig tree to know who the Lord was, when you were under the fig tree, he said, I saw you before Philip called you, and Nathanael, because he was a guileless man, he could see that what other people couldn't see, and immediately he said, Rabbi, thou art the son of God, thou art the king of Israel.

What a remarkable confession to make, but that's for the man of the pure heart. Wasn't that how we started? Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, and he looks at Jesus of Nazareth, and he says, thou art son of God, this divine character and title, thou art the king of Israel, this monarchical title and character, he saw it just in a flash like that, and the Lord said to him, because I said when you were under the fig tree, I saw you, and I knew you, seeing was the knowing, do you believe, let me tell you, you'll see something greater than this, now what's greater than seeing a man, being, and knowing him to be the son of God and the king of Israel? The Lord said, hereafter you shall see the heavens open and the angels of God ascending and descending on whom? Son of man. Ah, is it greater to see him then as the son of man, who is going to open the heavens and bring into a permanent relationship of reconciliation and blessing, earth and heaven together? What's going to link earth and heaven together? A man, my friend, from whom the angels ascend, for he is the source of the blessing of the days yet to come, and upon whom the angels of God descend, this is the ladder that Jacob saw.

Notice what it says, it was set up on the earth, that's his humanity. The top reached into heaven, that's his deity, and this is the one through whom Jehovah stands at the top of the ladder, and he speaks to the sleeper, the fugitive from justice, running from the consequences of his sin, but nevertheless the son of the covenant, he speaks to him, and he speaks to him about a marvelous promise, and with this I'm going to have to shut down here. Let's look what he said, atop it reached the heaven, the angels of God ascending and descending on it, that's Christ, the Lord of Jehovah stood above it, and he said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it unto thy seed, and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, thou shalt spread abroad to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south, and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Plural again, I mean singular again, you see, that's in the singular, thy seed, and behold, now notice this for a pilgrim, a wanderer who's to suffer the heat and the drought and the famine and the deceit and so on, and the treachery of the Syrian for 20 years, behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest. Jacob lying at the foot of this ladder, fleeing from the results of his own duplicity, received a covenant promise from God of his continual presence anywhere, everywhere. You say, must have been marvelous for him to have known that.

Did he remember it in the cold of the night when the wolves were tearing the lambs, and he was responsible for the loss? Did he remember it when he was out in the desert or out in the barren fields with the sheep in the heat of the day? Did he remember it when Laban changed his wages 10 times? Did he remember that God had said, behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whithersoever thou goest, and I will be with thee, I will not leave thee alone. What a marvelous promise! The assured presence of God. Did he say it to him every day? No.

Did he remind him of it every night? No. Did he come once a year in 20 years to tell him? No. Why? He had given him this covenant promise at the beginning, and that was to stand for the rest of his life.

Has God made a covenant promise with you? Do you have this individual relationship with God that you know your pathway is determined by Him? He will be with you in all places whithersoever you go. Lo, I am with you all the days, 1928, even to the end of the age. All the days, the good days and the bad days, the bright days and the dull days, I'm with you all the days.

Forgive me a little story, and I'll close this up so you know I'm going to quit. I often don't do that because when I'm speaking and I have my Bible open, everybody else has their Bible open, and I do that, I see the

Christians, they close their Bibles, they close their ears, they shut their eyes, and they wait for me to quit, and I have the best thing I want to tell them yet, but they don't hear. Well, recently, in the last year and a half, we were visiting Cuba, my younger son and I, and we took this long journey, 10 hours, we drove in a rented car down to the eastern part of the island to visit an assembly at the foot of the mountains that has been growing and being prospered and blessed by the Lord in these recent years.

It was a long journey, we didn't find anywhere to drive, to find anything to eat, you buy everything with rations, Coupa, we didn't find anywhere to buy something to drink, and we drove for 10 hours until we got to the far end of the island, and then when we got there, we walked out through the fields to the foot of the mountains, and there was a group of about 90 Christians waiting for us, they apologized because some of them hadn't come down from the mountains, and so on, couldn't all be there, and anyway, it was in a morning, Wednesday morning, when they weren't having normally a gathering, but they'd come together, and the ladies had put their big black pots out in the open air there, and they were cooking up lunch. Don't ask me what the ingredients were. So when we got there, the brethren said, now we're going to have a meeting, now you've come to visit us, you haven't been here for all these years, so we're going to have a meeting, and I said, oh really, how long? Well, they said, lunch won't be until 1 o'clock, and this was 10 30, so don't stop until lunch, and then after we have lunch, we'll have another one the same length, you know, so that was an hour and a half each.

That's a little bit longer than 40 minutes, but anyway, I said, well, all right, and I thought to myself, now what will I tell the saints here for three hours today? I've got to speak for three hours, so I decided in a few minutes, I decided that I would take up a little study with them on the manner in which all the Gospels terminate, the ending of the four Gospels. So I started off at Matthew 28, of course, and that promise that I just quoted you that the Lord said, go into all the world and teach all nations, preach the gospel to every creature, and then he said, oh, I'm with you all the days, and I stress what I've just said to you, all the days, the good days and the bad days, the days at home and the days away from home, when you're alone and when you're with others, all the days, he said, I will be with you all the days, no matter the circumstances, and I made a point of that. Well, the Lord puts off into the test the things we say, doesn't he? I even caught a glimpse of recognition from some face there.

I just saw one, but it does happen. We make certain statements, and we make certain confessions, and we make certain professions, and the preacher makes certain statements like that, and the Lord says, oh, yes, very well. Now, let's see how that works.

We're traveling home two days later after the little conference was over. We're traveling home, and we're driving a rented car, government-owned, of course, everything's government-owned, and on the way down, we had a flat tire. Well, there's a spare there, so we put the spare on, and we got down right to the last town, and there was a big balloon came out of the side of this tire we had just put on, so I said, oh.

Now, you must understand that in Cuba today, you can't buy, borrow, beg, steal, or otherwise acquire a tire. You can't. You just can't, so forget it.

It doesn't matter how much money you can't. You can't acquire a tire, so we put this tire on with the big bolts on the side of it, and we started back up this long trek through the heat of the day back towards the area of Havana. Well, we got outside a large city called Ciudad de Ávila a few miles, and the balloon burst inside of the tires, so the spare was flat on the way down.

That is, the one was the spare, not the one we had originally had on. It was put in the trunk flat, and now this one was the spare tire. It's blown to shreds, to pieces.

It's gone, and there we are at the side of the road, miles from nowhere, and we get out and look at the thing, and there's another brother by the name of Capote with us, and he said to me, he said, this is something. Where do we go from here? Where do we go from here? We've got four wheels, but we've only got three tires, so my son got out, and he said, well, let's jack it up to see what we can do, so they're jacking up the tire. While they're jacking up this tire, I had to take all the luggage out of the trunk.

I was the old man on the job. I could stand and watch these boys work. That part was all right, but while they're working away there, someone said, by the way, I think I heard the preacher say yesterday that, Lo, I am with you all the days, and I think he said good or bad.

I think he said it doesn't matter the circumstances, and I think he said it doesn't matter where you are. The Lord said, Lo, I am with you all the days. The preacher's standing there saying, well, Lord, I know where we are, but I don't know where you are right now, and anyway, what do we do when we can't buy a tire? What are we going to do? We're hours from the end of our journey.

Well, nothing bonded. They jacked it up and took that one off, and that was no good. That was dredged, so they took the one out of the trunk, and they went across the highway.

Now, you stay here with the car, and we'll get the first thing back to town. Along came up on the great, big, lumbering Russian tractors, agricultural tractors. They threw the tire up on there and climbed up on, and my boy explained to them what had happened to them.

He said, all right, let's go to town, so they headed back to the town we had left, and he took them through a lot of winding streets, and they ended up in a little old wooden shack, and there were three black men in there working, and there was a police car sitting there, and these policemen had two tires in there getting them mended, so when the Russian tractor driver said, now look, you just get off here, and these men will look after you if there's anything can be done, so they got down. They went in with their tire, and there was a man came in off the street. They didn't know who he was.

He came in off the street about the same time as they did, and he said, what's going on here, and my boy said, well, we're visiting from Canada, and we've had trouble on the highway, and he said, are you both from Canada, and Capote, he doesn't know any English, you know, Capote, the Cuban brother, he's down there and hunched down beside the tire on the floor, and my boy said, and Capote looks up, and he says, yes, and that was the end of it, so he said, the man turned to the black men that work in there, he said, and there's two policemen standing by waiting to get their tires looked after. He said, drop what you're doing and attend to these men. They're visitors to our country, so they came over and took the wheel, and they took it apart, and they said, yes, we can put a patch in it.

We can do this and that and the other thing, and so they fixed it all up and put it back on the wheel and blew the tire up, and my boy said to Capote, he said, I wonder how we're going to get back out where Dad is. The man standing by overheard it, and he said, where are you, man? Oh, he said, we're so many miles out on the highway, or kilometers out on the highway, outside of Cicodiagula. Oh, he said, that's all right, I'll take you in my car.

So, they got in the car, and the tire fixed, and went back out to where I was waiting out there, under the juniper tree, incidentally, and they came back with the tire fixed, and they're putting the tire on, and this man's hunkered down beside them, and he said, where are you men going? I said, we're going back to La Salute. We're going back to Havana area. He said, you can't go to Havana without a spare tire.

He said, if you get on the Autopista, and you head back to, at this time of the day, in the heat of the day, and he says, if you have a flat tire there, he says, you'll rot before anybody finds you, unless the vultures find you first. So, he said, you can't go back to Havana without a spare tire. Follow me.

So, we get in the car, and he got in his car, and we followed him to the very same old shack, back into town, and he went to the men, and he said, take the spare tire out of my car, and put it in the trunk of these men's car. So, we wondered, what's this going on? So, sure enough, went over, and took the spare tire and wheel out of his car, put it in the trunk of our car. He said to us, now, have a good trip.

And my son said to him, what do you owe me? Oh, yeah, he said, you don't owe me anything. He said, you are a visitor to our country. We must look after our visitors.

So, Alfred, he took out a couple of brand new ballpoint pens he had, and a stick of gum, Wrigley's experiment gum, the best. And he said, well, can I give you these? Well, you have no idea what a stick of gum, or a little box of chipelets is worth in Cuba. What the young folks do, they take a stick of gum, but they take the and they put it in their shirt pocket.

That's a sign of prestige. If you have the wrapper, you don't have to have anything in it. But if you have the wrapper, you stick it in your shirt pocket.

And just watch out, now, you belong to the elite, because you have a wrapper out of a stick of gum. So, he had them, and you should have seen a big smile come over his face. My, he said, thank you so much.

That's just wonderful. Come around to my mother-in-law's house, and I'll give you some cold drinks before you start up. So, we went around, and had a cold drink, and took a picture of the man and his wife, who was there, and sent it to him later on.

I wrote him a card. We had a letter back from him. And we're going on our way back again, and I said, by the way, who was it said about, oh, I'm with you all the days? Who is this man? Where did he come from? Who was he to tell the black men to leave the policeman alone, and fix our tire? Who was he to say to us, you can't go there without a spare tire, and give us a tire.

Give us a tire. Well, the entertained angels and the wearers, and the Lord, oftentimes, it's like Abraham with a bimilic, and like Jacob later on with a bimilic. I said,

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