



Have you ever asked yourself why the Lord prophesies? Why not just do the thing? Why the build up. What is God trying to get at in us? And does anyone here have this story... God said this thing and then He did it. No one has that story. You see there are three pieces in the puzzle of all prophetic things:

1. The prophetic word of the Lord
2. Nothing or delay... or, opposition and death
3. The word coming to pass

What is God doing? Today I want us to take a look at these very important Divine seasons. I want us to explore together the nature of our God.

I. THE JOURNEY IS ALL ABOUT FELLOWSHIP

- A. Every now and then we need to consider what this life is really about. I mean it's not about just making money, or even discovering your calling. It's all about love and communion, or love and fellowship. Every test, every valley, each and every mountain is about fellowship and love. But we can't really see it. And by can't... I mean can't.

James 2

[23] and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God.

- B. God is far better than we can imagine. He's far better than we know or give Him credit. His kindness is always disarming. Many of you know that I have taken on a new undertaking. I'm homeschooling my children... for real. They're getting the whole treatment: Latin, Science, English, Bible, etc.
- C. And I've gone through just about every emotion common to man. Every couple of days I have an epiphany: This season is not just about Latin, and it's not just about what God is doing in my children... He has brought me into this season to do something in me. And the thing with God is that He's never doing just one thing. Every season of obedience is transformative. It doesn't matter what it looks like to other people, it doesn't even matter what it looks like to you!
- D. All this week, I really hadn't prayed or studied like I should have. I've been completely immersed in studying either American history, or Alexander the Great, or websites and blogs, or finding houses. I hadn't prayed or studied like I should. And I was driving into prayer Friday night, kind of dreading the prayer meeting. I was dreading it only because I thought I would feel condemned.
- E. And the meeting started. And I spent the first few minutes thinking about my guilt. But when I finally considered Jesus I heard Him say the sweetest things to me. He's kind. You see... all obedience is worship. All obedience is pleasing to the Lord. To us, one thing looks more important. Preaching in other countries seems more important than washing the dishes. God sees rightly. And real freedom is to see like He sees.
- F. Do we believe God? Are we in fellowship? Are we friends?



II. THE STORY OF ABRAHAM-THE PART HE KNEW ABOUT

- A. When Abraham was 75 years old he had no heir, and the Lord promised him a son. And then nothing happened. So Abraham and Sarah had an idea. Maybe Abraham should sleep with Hagar and make the word flesh. And Ishmael was born... along with jealousy and strife.
- B. And then 24 years later, the Lord show up and speaks the same word again... Sarah will have a son by Abraham. 24 years later!

Genesis 18

[18:1] And the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. [2] He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth [3] and said, "O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant. [4] Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, [5] while I bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." [6] And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quick! Three seahs of fine flour! Knead it, and make cakes." [7] And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it quickly. [8] Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

[9] They said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "She is in the tent." [10] The LORD said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. [11] Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. [12] So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?" [13] The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' [14] Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son." [15] But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. He said, "No, but you did laugh."

- C. What's absolutely astounding to me in the scriptures is the way the word of the Lord never changes. It's like He just resumes the conversation.
- D. It's interesting to me that Sarah laughed. It seems to me, that we only laugh like this when the thing can't cause pain anymore when it's touched. Hearing the prophetic word doesn't cause pain... it produces laughter. Sarah had died to the word. She had given up. I think we all would have!
- E. The prophetic word came and produced hope... then nothing happened and their hope died...then the prophetic word came and resurrected hope...then the word became flesh! This is always the pattern with God. It's always goes something like this.

Genesis 22

[22:1] After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." [2] He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." [3] So Abraham rose



early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

- F. So Abraham arose early in the morning... The line always strikes me. I wonder if he slept at all that night? He set his heart to obey. Abraham cut the wood. Can you imagine the physical-ness of cutting the wood, the violence of splitting those logs into pieces? Surely Abraham would have been thinking of the violence he would have to perform on the Isaac, the son he loved.

[4] On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. [5] Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you." [6] And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. [7] And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" [8] Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

- G. Have you ever really envisioned this scene? Three days... the agony of Abraham! He got up early in the morning, but then there was a journey. How did he bear this journey?
- H. He lays the wood upon Isaac. Isaac, literally a walking sacrifice. Do you see the foreshadowing? This wasn't really about Abraham and Isaac. This is a story about the Father and His Son Jesus.

[9] When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. [10] Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. [11] But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." [12] He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." [13] And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. [14] So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

[15] And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven [16] and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, [17] I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, [18] and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

- I. It's awful. There is something so terrible about this story. We don't like it. I mean even though the killing is stopped, the whole scene is so terrible we don't really want to talk about it. Why the test in the first place? It's extreme. And it's even a little cruel when we consider it from Abraham's perspective. But there is something we may have missed...

III. WHO IS THE STORY ABOUT?



-
- A. The story is really not about Abraham at all... it's about the Father. Thousands of years later, the Father and His Son would carry out their own version of this story. Jesus would carry a cross, and the Father would allow it all to unfold, raising His own arm to work salvation.
 - B. The story is about our Heavenly Father. There is no way that Abraham could have known it. So what was the point for Abraham? Was it about knowing that His life was a prophetic sign and that this test was really about foreshadowing The Prophetic event of all history? I mean that's huge. But Abraham didn't know that. And it's just not enough... It's not consistent.
 - C. God is timeless. He's exists out of time. And although we wouldn't see the events of the cross for thousands of years, Christ was the lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. God the Father was calling out for fellowship. He called Abraham into His own experience as a Father. This is why He calls Abraham friend.

James 2

[18] But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. [19] You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! [20] Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? [21] Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? [22] You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; [23] and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God.

- D. God called Abraham a friend because he was one. Abraham didn't understand that he was being brought into fellowship with the suffering of God, but he was! Thousands of years later, the disciples would read the Torah in wonder at the Father who called out for fellowship.
- E. There are some things that we are just not going to understand. No one in our day will understand. There are times when God calls out to us in fellowship. You don't have to understand everything to be a friend.

1 Corinthians 13

[12] For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

Remember that the journey is all about communion: love and fellowship. Consider the Lord's desire to reach out to Abraham, thousands of years before the cross, the Father was reaching out to be known. He is calling out to us.... revealing Himself. Enter into fellowship.

Benediction:

[24] The LORD bless you and keep you;

[25] the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

[26] the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

[27] "So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."