

Sense and Nonsense

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

The most written about story in the Hebrew Bible is the story of how God called on Abraham to offer up his son as a sacrifice. From one point of view this story is nonsense. I am not a heretic for making such a statement. My comment is that we cannot make sense of this story.

It is one thing to say something does not make sense and quite another to dismiss the story as pure nonsense. When God called on Abraham to slay his son, Abraham could not make sense of what was happening.

God promised Abraham that through his son Isaac the whole world would be blessed. But when God called on Abraham to slay his son, Isaac did not have any children. How could Isaac’s descendants bless the entire world if Isaac did not have any descendants because of an untimely death?

Abraham was forced into a situation that he could not possibly make any sense of. The promise of God required Isaac to live, marry and produce children, but the command of God to slay his son made the promise of God null and void.

Sometimes in our lives there appears to be nonsense in our situation. God promised to care for us but we lost our job, our home and our health. What kind of care is that? God’s promise does not equal the reality we experience.

When Abraham obeyed God’s command he knew he risked losing God’s promise but he went ahead and did what God called on him to do. What Abraham did was to trust that God knew what He was doing when Abraham did not have any idea what God was doing.

When your life seems to be nonsense, keep walking

with the Lord in spite of your confusion – regardless of your ignorance. Somewhere between the command to sacrifice Isaac and the altar where Isaac was to be slain, Abraham sensed that if his beloved son died he would be raised from the dead (Hebrews 11:17-19). It was those agonizing moments between receiving the command and the realization that God might raise the dead that caused such grief.

If you are in a time of uncertainty like Abraham’s, do what he did. He obeyed God. He trusted God and he worshipped God. Do the same and eventually the Lord will give you victory over the problem. In that day the “nonsense” will make sense.

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