

## 86. The Gospel of John—8:56-59

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### *“The Light of the World” Pt.13*

(9/8/19)

In our study in John’s gospel we are currently in chapter 8 where we came across one of the seven “I Am” statements of Jesus that John built his gospel around—“**I AM, the Light of the world**” (v.12).

Every time Jesus called Himself “I AM”, He was declaring that He was the voice from the burning bush (Exodus 3:13-14) where God identified Himself to Moses as the great ‘I AM’.

It was His constant declarations of Divinity that put Him at odds with the Pharisees and led to this explosive confrontation that we are studying in chapter 8 where He went ‘four-rounds’ with these Jewish leaders.

**A. Round One—Light and Darkness (v.12–20)**

**B. Round Two—Life and Death (v.21–30)**

**C. Round Three—Freedom and Bondage (v.31–47)**

**D. Round Four—Honor and Dishonor (v.48–59)**

Last week in our study we entered into the final round of this confrontation where Jesus tells these men that even though they didn’t honor Him as God’s Son or Messiah—the only honor He sought was the honor of His Father in heaven.

**John 8:48-56 (NKJV)**

<sup>48</sup> Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a

Samaritan and have a demon?"<sup>49</sup> Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me."<sup>50</sup> And I do not seek My *own* glory; there is One who seeks and judges.<sup>51</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death."<sup>52</sup> Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.'<sup>53</sup> Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Whom do You make Yourself out to be?"<sup>54</sup> Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God."<sup>55</sup> Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word."<sup>56</sup> Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad."

The question we began to look at last time was—"when did Abraham see Jesus' day", and for that matter "what was this 'day' the Lord is referring to?"

As I said last week, I believe that when Jesus said that Abraham rejoiced in seeing *His day*—that it was a reference to Genesis 22 where the Lord commanded Abraham to take his son Isaac up to Mount Moriah and offer him there to God.

Jesus said in Psalm 40:7 (quoted in Heb.10:7) that the entire O.T. was written about Him.

Also, in John 5:39 He told the Pharisees, "*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.*"

Genesis 22 is one of the greatest typological chapters in the Bible to demonstrate this very thing—as God uses a type to communicate the greatest truth in the Bible!

**Genesis 22:1-2 (NKJV)**

**<sup>1</sup>Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." <sup>2</sup>Then He said, "Take now 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."**

Mount Moriah is Calvary (Golgotha)—the very same mount that 2000 years later another Father would offer His only begotten Son whom He loved for the sins of the world.

As we said last week, the word ‘**Moriah**’ in Hebrew means “*Foreseen of Jehovah.*”

In other words, the cross was not some hastily pieced together ‘plan B’ when Adam blew it—it was foreseen, it was the very plan of redemption God had in place from the beginning of the creation. (Revelation 13:8)

**Genesis 22:3-4 (NKJV)**

**<sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. <sup>4</sup> Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.**

Paul the apostle says something about the gospel that we need to bring in here—that Jesus Christ died, was buried and rose again the third day—“*according to the Scriptures.*” (1Cor.15:4)

The question is—where in the Old Testament Scriptures did it predict Messiah would die and resurrect on the third day?—many believe it was right here in Genesis 22 in type!

It took Abraham 3 days to get to Mt. Moriah. For those three days Isaac was dead in his mind—ever since God told him to offer him on that mount.

As we’re about to see when he got there and began to offer Isaac—God stopped him and at that point Isaac, in the mind of Abraham, was ‘resurrected’. (Confirmed in Hebrews 11:19)

**Genesis 22:5 (NKJV)**

**<sup>5</sup> And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad [Hebrew means ‘young man’ in his twenties or thirties] and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."**

I believe Isaac was in his early thirties (possibly 33) at this time—the same age Jesus was when He climbed that very same mount—Mount Calvary many years later to be offered.

**Genesis 22:6-8 (NKJV)**

**6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. 7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" 8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.**

You see Isaac knew that worship meant a sacrifice and that involved the killing of an animal—he acknowledges they have the fire and the wood, but where was the lamb for the offering?

To which Abraham responds—**"My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb..."** (NKJV)—the **KJV** of verse 8 communicates what Abraham actually said and believed—

**Genesis 22:8 (KJV)**

**8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb...**

In other words, Abraham is not saying *"God will provide for Himself a lamb"*—what Abraham is saying is that *"God will provide Himself to be the Lamb!"*

As I said last time—this is the first place in the O.T. where the word **'lamb'** appears.

The first place in the N.T. where the word **'lamb'** appears is in John 1:29—*"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

It's interesting that the first time the word *'lamb'* appears in the New Testament it answers the question of the first time the word *'lamb'* appears in the Old Testament—*"Where is the lamb for the offering?"*—*"Behold, the Lamb...!"*

**"So, the two of them went together." (v.8)**

The prophet Amos said, *"Can two walk together unless they are agreed?"*

I believe that Abraham told Isaac as they were walking up Mt. Moriah, “*You are the sacrifice my son...*”

If Isaac was around 33 years of age at this time—it meant that Abraham was 133 years old!

Isaac could have easily overpowered his father—but instead he submitted to the will of his father which meant he was a willing sacrifice.

Just as Jesus submitted to the will of His Father when He said, “*No one takes My life from Me I give it freely for the sheep*”. (John 10:11, 17-18)

Also, in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed to His Father three times to escape the cross—*“O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”* (Matthew 26:39)

**Genesis 22:9 (NKJV)**

**<sup>9</sup> Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.**

I think with each step up Mt. Moriah and with every task he did before he could offer Isaac—Abraham’s heart (a type of God the Father) must have been breaking more and more.

Yes, he trusted God—but that didn’t mean he enjoyed the thought of inflicting pain and death on his son—any more than God enjoys inflicting pain on any of His sons and daughters. (Explain)

**Genesis 22:10-12 (NKJV)**

**<sup>10</sup> And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. <sup>11</sup> But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” So he said, “Here I am.” <sup>12</sup> And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”**

Here in v.12 God isn't saying, "...now I finally know that you (Abraham) really fear (reverence) Me"—He is speaking anthropomorphically. (Explain)

**Genesis 22:13-14 (NKJV)**

**<sup>13</sup> Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind *him* was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide [Hebrew—'Jehovah-Jireh']; as it is said *to this day*, "In the Mount of The LORD it shall be provided."**

This tells me that Abraham knew he was acting out prophecy!

**John 8:56 (NKJV)**

**<sup>56</sup> Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad.**

Jesus is telling us that Abraham knew the gospel, knew he was acting out prophecy of the 'day' God's Son would come to the earth and die on Mt. Moriah (Calvary) to redeem us from slavery to sin and death that our earthly father Adam had sold us into when he disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden.

Abraham didn't know this Redeemer by name—but he knew God would someday send His Son to die and redeem us from Satan's control and set us free!

In other words—Abraham knew the gospel!

How can I make a claim like that?

I can make it because I'm just repeating what Paul the apostle said in Galatians 3:8 when he said that God preached the gospel to Abraham. (Hold on to that thought)

**Genesis 22:15-16a (NKJV)**

**<sup>15</sup> Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, <sup>16</sup> and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD...**

This tells us conclusively that this *Angel of the Lord* was in fact the—the LORD, Jesus Christ!

The word ‘angel’ means *messenger*—as in a “*supernatural messenger from God*”.

Sometimes it simply refers to an *angel*—and sometimes it is an O.T. preincarnate appearance of Jesus Christ called a ‘theophany’ or ‘Christophany’.

**Genesis 22:15-18 (NKJV)**

**<sup>15</sup> Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, <sup>16</sup> and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son-- <sup>17</sup> blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. <sup>18</sup> In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."**

The ‘**Seed**’ is a reference to Jesus Christ Who is the focus of this whole story (type)—how do we know that the word “Seed” is a reference to Jesus Christ?—

**Galatians 3:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "*And to your Seed,*" who is Christ.

**“In your Seed (Jesus Christ) all the nations of the earth shall be blessed”** (Explain—the gospel!)

**Genesis 22:19 (NKJV)**

<sup>19</sup> So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

The question is “*where’s Isaac?*” Verse 19 says that ‘*Abraham came down from the mount and went home with his two servants*’—not ‘*Abraham and Isaac went home...*’—so again, where is Isaac?

Did he stay up on top of the mount?

Look, I'm sure he came down from Mount Moriah with Abraham—but the Holy Spirit, writing through Moses, chose to leave him out of the narrative (he's there by inference but not by name!).

He *'disappears'* from the record (after his 'resurrection') until we see him coming to meet his bride (Rebekah) in chapter 24—which when you understand that Isaac is a type of Christ and Rebekah a type of the Church (the Bride of Christ), sends shivers up and down your spine to think the Holy Spirit manipulates the narrative to fit the type!

In that once Jesus was offered on Calvary, after His resurrection He ascends back to heaven 'disappearing' from the earth—and isn't seen again until we see Him coming to meet His Bride at the rapture!

**John 8:56-59 (NKJV)**

<sup>56</sup> Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad." <sup>57</sup> **Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"** <sup>58</sup> **Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."** <sup>59</sup> **Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.**

This last statement by Jesus in verse 58 can be translated, "*Before Abraham came into being, I AM*".

This is the clearest declaration of divinity in the gospels where Jesus once again refers to Himself as the great, **"I AM"**—"God, the eternally existing One."

In the minds of the Pharisees that was blasphemy, the O.T. punishment for which was stoning—so they picked up stones to kill Him but He slipped thru their ranks (supernaturally) and went His way because the time for His death had not yet come (and it wouldn't be by stoning).

Let's circle-back and finish with how Abraham knew the gospel.

**Galatians 3:6-8 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup> just as Abraham "*believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*"<sup>7</sup> Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. <sup>8</sup> And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, *saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."*

To understand how Abraham knew the gospel (and he wasn't the only Old Testament saint to know it—Jude 14-15)—we have to go back to the fourth day of creation, when God made the sun, moon and stars—

**Genesis 1:14 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> Then God said, "**Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years;**

The Hebrew word for 'seasons' is *moed* which is translated 'feasts' in Leviticus 23:2-3.

Hebrew scholars point out that the most accurate translation of the Hebrew word *moed* is—  
"divine appointment".

So, in other words, part of the purpose of these heavenly bodies (sun, moon and stars) was to announce the coming each year of the feasts of God (7 feasts outlined in Leviticus 23) which were divine appointments where He and His people connected in a very special way.

However Genesis 1:14 gives us another reason why God created the sun, moon, and stars—they would not only be used to mark the passing of time in the sense of days and nights and of the months and seasons of the year—but in v.14 God said they would also be for '**signs**'.

The Hebrew word for "signs" is *oth*, meaning "beacons" or "signals" and suggests that the stars especially were placed in the heavens by God to serve as a beacon to guide the people of earth in a particular direction.

Of course, it begs the question—"what direction?"—and for that matter what did God want to signal or announce to the inhabitants of the earth through the stars?

Well, many believe the stars were given as *astrological* signs to announce important events or to predict a person's future.

However, astrology is an occult, pagan practice and all such forms of fortunetelling are strictly forbidden in Scripture (Deuteronomy 18:10–12; Isaiah 7:12–14).

We know that Satan is a counterfeiter of God's truth and so many see the Zodiac as a satanic counterfeit of the Hebrew Mazzaroth.

What is the Mazzaroth?

Well the precise meaning of the word is uncertain but its context from Scripture has something to do with the constellations—

**Job 38:31-32 (NKJV)**

<sup>31</sup> "Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, Or loose the belt of Orion? <sup>32</sup> Can you bring out Mazzaroth in its season? Or can you guide the Great Bear [Big Dipper] with its cubs?"

There are many who believe that the stars, and in particular the constellations, were placed in the heavens by God to point to and announce to the people of earth—the gospel of His Son!

This, they believe, is what Paul meant in Galatians 3:8 when he said that God preached the gospel to Abraham.

As we have already learned today—it's obvious from Genesis 22 that Abraham knew the gospel and that someday God would send His Son to die for the sins of the world on Mount Moriah—but how exactly did he know the gospel—who preached it to him?

Many believe it was through the Mazzaroth, which some have called the '*Gospel in the stars!*'

Be careful here, some reject this because they believe that what we are saying is that God preached the gospel through the Zodiac.

God doesn't use occult things to preach the gospel (Tarot Cards, Crystal Balls or Ouija Boards etc.)—but He can and does use things like the Mazzaroth which Satan then counterfeited and perverted with the Zodiac.

Dr. D. James Kennedy writes on this subject using Genesis 1:14 where God said He made the stars *"for signs"* as a launching off point—

*"A sign is something which proclaims a message. What is the message proclaimed by the stars? I would like to talk to you about what might be called... "The Gospel in the Stars."*

*We are told [in Psalm 19:1-3]: **"The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."***

*God gave to all of the world a proclamation of the Gospel in the stars. A picture is worth a thousand words, we are told, and God has indeed painted the sky and made it a picture gallery, replete with the glories of his redemption.*

*There exists in the writings of virtually all civilized nations a description of the major stars in the heavens—something which might be called the "constellations of the zodiac" or the "signs of the zodiac," of which there are twelve. If you go back in time to Rome, or beyond that to Greece, or before that to Egypt, or to Persia, or Assyria, or Babylonia —regardless of how far back you go, there is a remarkable phenomenon: All nations had the same twelve signs, representing the same twelve things, placed in the same order.*

*Archaeologists, historians and antiquarians have searched the dustiest libraries, uncovered the oldest tablets, ciphered the most difficult hieroglyphics, and have failed to discover how it is that all over the world, the same signs exist.*

*Remarkably, the stars in the heavens which represent those twelve signs bear absolutely no resemblance to the pictures or the signs themselves—for example, what we call the Big Dipper has been called Ursa Major (Great Bear). One thing is that it does not look like is a great bear! Neither do any of the other signs look like what they are supposed to represent.*

*Where did their names come from? The Bible tells us that God has named all of the stars, the host of heaven—that He has numbered them, ordered them and set them in the firmament to be signs.*

*The original meaning (Mazzaroth) was corrupted into something which was demonic (Zodiac), something which was satanic, something which was counterfeit, something which has given birth to what is known as modern astrology, which the Bible repeatedly condemns and warns Christians against. The corruption began in Babylon with the Tower of Babel.*

*It is well that you have nothing to do with modern astrology whatsoever because of its corruption and satanic aspects. But in order that you might appreciate what God has done, let us look briefly at a few pictures of the zodiac.*

*The word “zodiac” is thought to mean “circle of animals,” although some linguists say that it comes from an ancient Hebrew word meaning “a path” or “step”—that it actually is displaying the way (‘steps’, ‘path’) of salvation (i.e.—the gospel) ...”*

I won't read you the entire article but let me whet your appetite to study this on your own.

The Zodiac (a corruption of God's Mazzaroth) starts with '**Virgo**' a picture of a woman—

Dr. Kennedy says:

*“You can look at the stars in Virgo until you are green in the face, and they would never look like a woman! But the picture which has gone with them down through the ages in every nation in the world is a picture of a woman. This woman is clearly identified as a virgin. Virgo means “virgin” in Latin, Hebrew, Greek and Arabic. So the first thing we see is the emphasis upon the virginity of this woman.”*

The next sign is '**Coma**'—

*“**Coma** means ‘the desired’ or ‘the longed for one’—and is a picture of a woman with a child in her lap. The book of Haggai tells us, “**The desire of all nations shall come**” (Haggai 2:7). Jesus Christ is the Desire of all nations who was to come.”*

The fourth sign is '**Crux**'

Kennedy says,

*“Crux, [is] the Southern Cross. This is one constellation which looks like that for which it is named, because it consists of four stars placed very clearly in the shape of a cross, as if God did not want us to miss it. In Hebrew it is called Adom which means “cutting off.” Christ is that One who was ‘cut off’ out of the land of the living for our sins.” (Daniel 9:26)*

The last sign is '**Leo**'

Kennedy—

*“Finally, we come to Leo the Lion—a picture of Christ who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, coming again. He is coming this time not in humiliation but in great power and glory. The Lion's claws are right over Hydra, the serpent, who He is about to finally and totally destroy.”*

Dr. Kennedy finishes by saying,

*“The art gallery of God painted in the sky is a great and glorious picture. All ancient traditions, all ancient mythologies, all pagan religions...are all nothing more than corruptions of the ancient [gospel] given by God to Adam and written in the celestial sky for all the world to see. How glorious it is that whether we talk about the special revelation God has given to us in His Word, or the general revelation which He has given to us in nature, the story is always the same: the seed of the woman will destroy the seed of the serpent. At last there came that One who was born of a woman, who came to die and rise again that we might live forever. I hope that as you go out on a given evening and look up at the glories of the starry skies, you will be more impressed than ever with the greatness and wonder of our God and the majesty of His grace and mercy.”*

And so, the next time you read in Psalm 19, **“the heavens declare the glory of God...”** maybe you’ll have a deeper understanding and greater appreciation of what those words mean!

I believe that God has been ‘preaching the gospel’ since day 4 or the creation—when He made the stars and gave them the names that mark out the path of salvation.

The stars of the heavens still preach the gospel—but now God has other ‘luminaries’ to preach the gospel—His Church.

We are now the ‘light of the world’ that God has sent into all the world to preach the good news (gospel) of salvation!

“Let your light so shine!”