



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Numbers 13: 1-33

“Israel at Kadesh-Barnea, part I”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the incident that we are to study tonight. We do not thank Thee for the unbelief and lack of trust, which characterize the children of Israel as they came out of Egypt and which so often characterizes our lives. We pray that we may learn from their mistakes. May their example cause us to be more fruitful and more faithful, more useful to Thee and the task that Thou hast given to us of representing our blessed Lord here in the society of which we are a part. We so often Lord fail to do this. Give us courage and boldness. Enable us to truly represent him.

May we take advantage of the many opportunities that each day we have to make others come to know at least what we feel and what we think of him who has loved us and given himself for us, the Lord Jesus Christ and be with us now in this hour.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message We are following Israel from Egypt to the land of Canaan and tonight we are turning from the Book of Exodus to the Book of Numbers and this is the first of three studies of Numbers chapter 13 and chapter 14 in which we have Israel at Kadesh-Barnea, one of the very significant events in the history of Israel, which is so much used by the

Old Testament as illustrative of unbelief and a failure to respond to the direction of the Lord as Israel should have and as we are too in our day as well.

So in our study then from Egypt to Canaan, Kadesh-Barnea and Number Chapter 13. This is July of the second year since Israel has come out of the land of Egypt. Verse 20 of chapter 13 reads, And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes. So that was roughly July of the second year that Israel had come out of the land. This is an important crisis because Israel is brought to the border of the land of the Canaan and they are urged by the Lord to go into the land, but instead of going into the land, they turn away from the land and thus become an example, which the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews calls in the fourth chapter in the 11th verse of his book an example of unbelief. There is a sense in which this particular passage has some applications that are very interesting.

For example, there is an application of it to the nation Israel itself in the present age because just as they had the opportunity to enter into the promise land and enjoy the benefits of that which God had promised to them and hath so abundantly provided for them and just as they turned away from it so when the Lord Jesus, The Messiah finally came in his first coming and started responding to him as a nation, they turned away from him, and together with the Gentiles, they crucified their own Messiah. Romans chapter 9 and verse 1 through chapter 11 and verse 36 tells the sad story of the past, the present, and then also gives us an understanding of the glorious future that the nation has after this long period of discipline, which the nation is suffering in our day.

Then of course it also has an application to individual salvation in a sense that is the way in which the author of the Epistle of the Hebrews uses it because he was writing to Jewish professing Christians. He thought that the great majority of them were truly Christians but some of them were living in such a way that he had doubts about the

genuineness of their profession. And so he sought to stir them on and at the same time, warn them against the dangers of apostasy.

So the letter of the Epistle to the Hebrews is composed of two aspects of Christian truth. There is the constant warning. Five great warnings set out in Hebrews chapter 2, Hebrews chapter 3 and 4, Hebrews chapter 6, Hebrews chapter 10, and again in Hebrews chapter 12, and then between the warnings there is this marvelous presentation of the Lord Jesus as the high priest after the order of Melchizedek whom if we come to know we shall experience the kind of Christian experience of salvation and Christian living that the write of the epistle would have wanted his readers to experience and so this particular experience has its application to individual salvation and the importance of taking advantage of the message that comes to us and when we hear the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that's a challenge to as if we do not know him to appropriate the message and receive eternal life.

I think it also has a special application to individual sanctification as well because remember the same principle by which we are saved is the principle by which we are sanctified. We are saved by grace through the instrumentality of faith, we are sanctified. We grow in grace and we may progress on the principle of grace through the instrumentality of faith.

Just think of the eleventh chapter of the Epistle of the Hebrews and all of those great men of faith who in the example that they lived of a life of grace through faith show us the kind of Christian life that the Lord would have us live as well.

Now these two chapters go together, Numbers chapter 13 and Numbers chapter 14 because they both are concerned with Israel's experience at Kadesh-Barnea and in chapter 13 we have reconnaissance and the report that the spies give and then in chapter 14 and verse 1 through verse 10, there is a full expression of the rebellion that the people underwent in response to the message of the spies and the admonitions of Caleb and finally in the last part of chapter 14 verse 11 through 45, we see divine retribution upon

them because they sought to do things that the Lord told them not to do and try to make up for what they had failed to do in the beginning, but that was too late.

So let’s tonight as we have been doing, let’s read through chapter 13 that’s our text for tonight and as I read sections of it, I will make a few comments, which I think are appropriate for the particular experience of Israel and our response to it.

Now they have arrived at the borders of the land and you might think that this is the time when they are to go into the land and possess the land and this is going to come to pass because by now they have learned that the Lord is a great God and has done some remarkable things for them. Well let’s see how they respond. And I think it is always good when you are reading the Old Testament to put yourself in the place of the Israelites and just think what you would have done.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Send Thou men that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.”

Now you might think from reading Numbers chapter 13, that it was the Lord God who initiated this particular movement of the spies into the land to find out how things were. Let’s turn over to Deuteronomy chapter 1 and let’s read the account there that Moses gives in that fifth Book of the Old Testament law. Deuteronomy chapter 1 and will just read verses 19 through verse 22. Moses is giving the words of the Lord and he is looking back over their past, they are now ready to enter into the land and so in verse 19 Moses says,

“And when we departed from Horeb, that is where they received the law, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the Lord our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-Barnea. And

I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold, the Lord Thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the Lord God of Thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged. (Now Moses continues) And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come."

Now you can tell from this and what I am going to say something about the very next person just a moment, but you can tell from this that it was the people who initiated the idea of going into spy out the land. Now God permitted it and Moses was pleased when it is obvious that they are not going to go in. He was pleased with the fact that they at least were going to exercise some common sense about going in, but there is already here a lurking distrust of God.

Now the reason for this is really, if you would look back and see the things that the Lord has already told them about the land, you will see that they didn't need any spies at all to know that this was a land that was flowing with milk and honey and furthermore the Lord had promised it to them. So what's the point of sending in spies? It's the land that he has promised to them. He says it is a marvelous land and furthermore, "I am going to give it to you." So you can see that when they come to Moses and say now what we need to do Moses is to send in some spies and find out really what that land is like and all about those people in the land that they already are beginning to express the distrust that lies in their hearts.

On Sunday we had been looking at the Book of Acts and when the apostle received his Macedonian call in Troas, he did not respond. You know we might get in some difficulty if we go out to Philippi. Why don't we send Silas and Timothy, Luke? Why don't we send them ahead of us and find out how the land lies over there in Philippi? Because remember that's a Roman city and a Roman garrison is there and when

we land, they may put us in the Aegean or put us on the boat back to Troas. So why shouldn’t we spy out the land? But he didn’t send Timothy to investigate. He didn’t send Silas to investigate. They understood that God had spoken to them and they responded in faith. Furthermore just remember this, the children of Israel are being constantly led by the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire and so they can trust that and if the pillar of cloud in the daytime moves into the land beyond Kadesh-Barnea that’s where they are to go. So the idea of spying out the land is ultimately something that came from the men and not from the Lord.

Now in a moment, we will turn back to Exodus chapter 6, we will point out what God has already said about the land, Exodus 30 and 6, so you will see how it reveals a lurking distrust to even suggest that we go into the land and spy it out. Well now in verse 3 through verse 16, Moses gives us the names of the men who are involved in this mission. And I am going to ask you a question when we finish reading all of these names. You needn’t worry about the pronunciation; I know how to pronounce all of these words. I haven’t even bothered to look at the pronunciation. It just comes naturally to me to pronounce words correctly. So just sit back and relax as I read the names of all of these individuals.

They have their names in the word of God. There is undoubtedly some reason for it. And we read Moses by the commandment of the Lord sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel.

“And these were their names: of the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur. Of the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori. Incidentally the word Shefat or here as Shaphat is the word that means to judge in Hebrew and so this is the man whose name was judge. Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh. Of the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph. Of the tribe of Ephraim, Oshea the son of Nun.”

This is Joshua of course in the moment that would be made plain. These terms Oshea, Jehoshua, Joshua all are terms related to the Hebrew word *yashab* which means "to save." So remember Joshua's name in Hebrew is our Lord's name in Greek. That is our Lord's name was Joshua. Our Lord's name was Jesus and in fact in King James Version in Hebrews chapter 4 Joshua is called Jesus and may remember because that's Greek equivalent of Joshua. Oshea is another form of it related to the word *yashab* which means to save.

"Of the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu. Of the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi. Of the tribe of Joseph, namely, of the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi the son of Susi. Of the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli. Of the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael. Of the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi. Of the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi."

Now you see how easy is to pronounce all those words. If you do it with authority, no one will ever suspect that you have any doubt whatsoever about how they are to be pronounced. These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land and Moses called Oshea, the son of Nun, Jehoshua.

Now there are just a couple of things, one observation. You will notice that the tribe of Joseph is not mentioned. Well, there is a reference to Joseph here, verse 11 of the tribe of Joseph, but then namely of the tribe of Manasseh. And then if you remember we also have here the tribe of Ephraim. Do you remember the incident when Joseph brought his two sons to Jacob for the blessing and Jacob made an interesting statement. He said these two boys Ephraim and Manasseh, they Joseph are going to be my sons. They were his grandchildren. But he said they are going to be my sons just as if they were my children, not grandchildren. Beautiful illustration of the doctrine of imputation because they took their place among the sons of Jacob as his sons. And then Jacob went

on to say now Joseph your other children that you have they are yours. But these two are mine. And of course the two, Manasseh and Ephraim make up for the fact that Joseph is no longer the head of the tribe nor is who is the other one, Levi, right, so that the two make the twelve tribes.

Now you will notice that Levi is not mentioned here, for the simple reason of course that Levi was not to have any inheritance in the land. Levi is the tribe, the priestly tribe, and so they do not have any inheritance. Being the priests of the people they were to live off of particular parts of the land, which were given to them and then off of the remains of animal sacrifices that were offered by the people. Now the commission of Moses is given in verse 17 through verse 20.

“And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain: And see the land, what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes.”

Now I would like for you to notice the expression in verse 18 and see the land what it is and then verse 19, and what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad. And verse 20, and what the land is whether it be fat or lean.

Now in the light of that, I want you to turn back to Exodus chapter 3 and verse 8, and remember Moses had already been told all of this and he had told all of this to the children of Israel and now the Lord says in Exodus chapter 3 verse 7, And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry

by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites.

So here is a land flowing with milk and honey. He has already said that’s the kind of land it is and furthermore in the light of the intercourse that these man had already had with people who are coming from Palestine to Egypt and from the people in Egypt, they are ready, had a pretty good idea of what that land was all about, and so this commission that Moses gives asking them to go in and see what the land is, is really itself totally superfluous, God had already told them exactly what the land was, there was no reason to have anything like this. Furthermore, he has said well in verse 14, we read and see whether the people be strong or weak, few or many, and in the light of that turn back to Exodus chapter 6 and notice these great seven-fold promises given by the Lord to the children of Israel as they came out of Egypt.

Back in the beginning of this series of studies From Egypt to Canaan, we looked at Exodus chapter 6 and we notice these marvelous promises that the Lord God gave to the children of Israel. He directs Moses, “Wherefore say unto the children of Israel I am the Lord and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” He has done that. “I will rid you out of their bondage.” He has done that. “I will redeem you with stretched out arm, and with great judgments”. And he has done that. “And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God,” and he has done that. “And ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” He has done all of these things. “And I will bring you in unto the land concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the Lord.” These marvelous seven-fold unconditional promises depended totally upon the faithfulness of a sovereign God. Incidentally that’s kind of promises we have from the Lord God. We have promises from a sovereign

faithful God that he is going to bring us into the possession of eternal life and into the possession of life in heaven eternally. So what do we have to worry about?

Now let’s read on. That’s the commission. Now we read of the searching out of the land. I wonder if they are going to find things different from what the Lord had said,

“So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, incidentally the term Eshcol means cluster and so that’s the name of the place cluster and kept down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes and they bear it between the two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.”

Incidentally, it is sometimes said that the reason that two men had to carry the grapes was because they were so fruitful. It was such large clusters of grapes. Now that’s not true. I have got some clusters on my vines out there. We don’t need two men to carry mine and no man must have compared with those of Eshcol. Well, really the reason seriously that two men carried them is for the freshness of the grapes and the prevention of corruption of the grapes. That’s why they were carried by two men, and so it was not really because they were burdened by the size of the grapes, but rather it was to keep them from spoiling. Now did I read verse 25?

“And they returned from searching the land after forty days. (So that’s the report and now here they are going to give their report to Moses in verse 26 through verse 29.) And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto

him and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. (No one doubted. They were a beautiful illustration of what grapevines should produce.) And they said we came unto the land where there Thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

(And notice in this report everything is really as the Lord had said, they showed the fruit of the land, surely it floweth with milk and honey; this is the fruit of it. Verse 27) “Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.”

So surely, nevertheless, moreover all of this is really the result of previous departure from confident rest in the word of God. So instead of confidently resting in what God has said finding him and his word sufficient, they are looking about them apart from him to find a sense of sufficiency that always fails. That fails in every endeavor for the word of God and the word of God, the God of the word is sufficient for all of our experiences.

I have a man at Trinity who has an office right next to mine. A fine young man, a fine young teacher, very godly young man, we were talking the other day about a particular social problem that the church is concerned with today and in the course of our discussion about it, we were talking about the different approaches to it and particularly the approaches of some evangelicals that are really contrary to the word of God and finally he said, you know it comes down to this. The sufficiency of the word of God for social ethics, how well put that is? The word of God is really sufficient for us.

Now it’s obvious they are going to say that this is something that we should not do and we have Caleb’s appeal in verse 30 and Caleb stilled the people, remember he is the representative of Judah. Caleb stilled the people before Moses and said, “Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.” Now I am sure that it wasn’t because Caleb was an individual who thought that he could overcome all of the people that are in the land after all in that land there are Amalekites, the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Canaanites. It’s quite clear of what is said of Caleb, a man who wholly followed the Lord that he is talking about, what we are able to do with the help of the Lord God. So we are well able. There is a man who trusts the word of God, who trusts the power of God, and of course he receives the blessing of God, not as a meritorious kind of thing, but simply because God had worked in marvelous grace in the heart of Caleb and caused him to be an individual who followed after the Lord God.

Now the ten speak in verse 31, But the men that went up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people; Caleb says, “We are well able to overcome it.” They say we are not able to overcome it. I like something that J. Sidlow Baxter once said, he said the ten put the difficulty between themselves and the Lord God and the two put God between themselves and the difficulty. Those are two different approaches to the problems of life. Do we put the difficulty between us and the Lord or do we put the Lord between us and difficulty? It’s really as simple as that. Most of our problems come specifically to that. Shall we look at the Lord or shall we look at the difficulty? And you know if you get in the habit of looking at the difficulties, it is not long before, it is not a big difficulty that scares you, but it’s a simple little one that begins to scare you because if you start out on the pattern of looking at difficulties, you can find the difficulty in almost anything. And sooner or later, you will be living a life of faithlessness.

You know I love Mr. Spurgeon. He loved Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. And over and over again, Mr. Spurgeon will appeal to incidents in the experience of Christian, and Mr. Spurgeon says with reference to this, Oh, Mr. Timorous was a friend of mine, did you

ever hear what he said to Christian when he met him on the journey? I will tell you what he said. He said, the lions, the lions, the lions. Of course, he didn't say the lions were chained. But he said the lions, the lions, the lions. And then he said, the giants, the giants, the giants, but he never said he carrieth the lambs in his bosom and gently leadeth those that are young but it is the lions, the lions, the lions, the giants, giants, the giants.

I am seeing that in church life. I can remember sitting around tables with deacons particularly, not deacons in Believers Chapel, but deacons. And they are looking at the money that comes in and they are looking at what has been going out. And they say, "We are not going to be able to finance this church. What are we going to do?" And then the schemes begin to develop. It's amazing the schemes that we can device mean a very inventive when it comes to schemes to avoid facing the fact that we are really not trusting the Lord God. That is one of the most disappointing things that a young man can have who is fresh out of seminary and trying to live a life of faith and comes into contact with some older Christians and they are at scheming and it is not long before we being to scheme too because scheming is a kind of thing that is easy to catch. So the lions, the lions, the giants, giants, mean not able.

He says, Look they are stronger than we are. They didn't do any arm wrestling, they didn't do know this. [Johnson laughs] They had said, they are stronger than we are. They brought up an evil report out of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel saying the land through which we have gone to search it, it's a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof. The stronger than we are, I think they forgotten about the God of the apostle who said if God be for us who can be against us. And all those promises that Moses had already told them about how the Lord was going to give them this land, they have forgotten all about that and they don't realize the truth that Paul will later say that the Lord will not give us any kind of testing which we are not able to bear, but he will with the testing make a way of escape, so that we may be able to survive it.

It's a land that eateth up the inhabitants. I think what that means is it is a land that continually changes its population because of the wars that are taking place, for the land of the Canaanites was like that, fighting all the time, struggling all the time, people being killed all of the time, everybody fighting everybody else, like the third world, a century or so ago when it was so difficult for any particular people to survive too long.

And then we read in verse 32, the land eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature. That really was just a lie. That was an exaggeration to justify their disobedience. All the people we saw in it are men of great stature and then verse 33, "And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." That's interesting isn't it? We saw the giants.

Now, I don't know about this because there is a little question about this, the term that is used of the giants is the term Nephilim, that's the term that literally means "fallen ones," but it's doubtful that the sense offered here. I say doubtful, I am not sure, it's not, but it is doubtful. So we may link this up with Genesis chapter 6 and verse 4 and the statement that is made there about the angels of God who taking human form, have come down and cohabited with men on the earth and out of them were born giants Nephilim and that's the term that is used. So that's a possibility, but most Bible students do not really feel that is the teaching.

At any rate, there is no evidence so far as we know that the Nephilim were here and so after all floods taken place, and so it may be that this was manufactured out of old cloth. In fact it seems that they saw no Nephilim when they did enter the land, so that would seem to suggest that they really didn't see Nephilim here. They saw the sons of Anak probably as if they were Nephilim. They probably saw some very large powerful looking individuals and they are trying to justify their position and so they then say we saw giants but later when they went in, there is no reference to remember seeing such, so I wonder if it is simply that they just saw these individuals as powerful men and this is the

way they express it. They saw the giants, but they didn't see God and didn't realize. He is bigger than all of those gods.

Further, they say we were in our own sight as grasshoppers. I like what Ruth Paxson said many years ago, she said, what consummate conceit. They should have said, we saw ourselves as worms, not even grasshoppers. But as worms, that's what we are. But then he says and so we were in their sight. How could they know that? How could they know that in the sight of these individuals they were as grasshoppers? There is no indication of that these were spies in the land. So you can see that this is the report of a group of people who are unbelieving, not responsive to the word of God, and it's no wonder that they come under the retributive judgment of God and even later when they presumptuously try to do later what they should have done this time, God said, "No, they will be judged."

May I conclude by just making one or two points? The basic point made here is the simple one. Shall we take God at his word? Later when the Psalmist is talking about this, he describes it, he says "Yeah, they despised the pleasant land, they believe not his word." That's really the issue. They believe not God's word. Involved is the attitude of the heart. It has often been commented that both of the reports, the report of Caleb, and the report of the ten say just exactly the same thing that God said. There is no difference in the report. They acknowledge that everything was just as God said it was but we are unable to go in. Caleb said it's just as if God said, let's go in. So the reports were identical, but the response was different.

There is an application of this I think to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the facts of the gospel parallel the promise regarding the land. When we preach the gospel, that's precisely what we say to people. We say to them, that out of your sin and guilt and condemnation, which is yours by virtue of your birth and by virtue of your practice, there is through the gospel of the Lord Jesus, the promise of the forgiveness of sins, of justification of life, of membership in the family of God, of actual membership in the

family of the Lord God in Heaven, and it is conditioned upon one simple thing to receive this as a gift of grace and someone may say, Well, I think that’s a marvelous promise. I just don’t think we are able to do it. Paul says, but to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. The need to accept our ungodliness and his ability to save the sinful, the weak, the alienated, the burdened, the defeated, and the discouraged, all come down ultimately to believing the word of God.

I can imagine that when Noah was building that ark, the children or the men of Noah’s day passed by Noah and they said, Noah what are you doing? I am building a boat. Why are you building a boat? You are building it a long ways from any water. Why are you doing this? There is going to come a flood. A flood! Where did you get that information? God told me. And then I can imagine that laughing and Noah is saying, I know you think it’s foolish. I know you think it’s ridiculous to build a big boat like this on dry land. In fact, some have pointed out that we don’t have any real indication of rain at this point in the Book of Genesis. I don’t know about that, but I can imagine Noah saying, I know you think it’s foolish, but I believe God.

I can imagine Abraham when the word came to him, “Take Isaac, your beloved son, take him to Mount Moriah and offer him up as a sacrifice. I can see Abraham making all of the preparations, gathering the wood, the animals, the little company of people, beginning to leave, and the questions coming both from family, friends, and others. Where are you going Abraham? I am going over to Moriah. What are you going to do? Well, I am going to offer an offering. Who is going to be offered? There is no lamb with you. I am going to offer Isaac. You’re going to offer Isaac, your beloved son? I know you think it is foolish. I know it is strange.

In fact, I puzzle over it. I don’t know how God is going to accomplish this because he said that the promises are going to come from my seed. Now he fulfills his promise that’s up to him, but one thing is plain. He has told me to offer up Isaac and I

believe God and so the great sacrifice is not accomplished, but the will of Abraham is to do it, and God stops him, and said “Abraham, I know that you really do love me. You haven’t spared your only begotten son. That’s how Paul wrote in Romans 8:32. He that spared not his own son. This is derived from Genesis 22 incidentally, “He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

I like a story that Mr. Hudson who had a book on how to teach the word of God to children had. It was a story about a little boy who had a father who loved him and the father bought him a diary when he was five years of age, I think about that age, and he told them what a diary was, explained to him, and he said you will want to use this diary, evidently the little boy could write, so you will want to use this diary to record the things in your life, gave him the diary.

Not long after that, this is an early part of the year, he looked into book, his father gave him three pence a week, and the little boy had taken his pencil, and on the Saturday of whatever the day was it his father gave him his 3 pence, he had gone through the whole book in this little section, it said money by the week, and had put three pence, all through the book. That’s faith.

That’s, I believe father. He already added to his account. He was trusting in it. Of that is the kind of attitude that God would love to see in his saints. I believe God. And we can be sure as saints of God that he will fulfill his word. Our experiences may be difficult, strange, the kinds of experiences we never could dream would happen. Think of Noah, think of Abraham, think of others, but nevertheless we can be sure the hand of a faithful sovereign God will be seen in them.

May God help us not to make the mistake the children of Israel did at Kadesh-Barnea. If we do make mistakes like that, may God give us grace to confess our sins and to begin again trusting him. Let’s bow in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee for Thy word and for these marvelous incidents in Israel's history designed to be lessons and examples, words of exhortation to us in 1985. O, may we profit from them.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.