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THE MAGNITUDE OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

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Who said, when your middle age, you're over the hill? Very well, sung.

What would you say, brethren, is the most outstanding example of faith in the Bible? I think the general consensus would be that of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, Isaac. It is perhaps the most "famous" example of faith that we have, and certainly it has given to Abraham ever since that time, the term "Father of the Faithful". It was a very strange request for God to make of His servant, because the God who condemns child sacrifice, in the Bible, commanded Abraham to make a sacrifice out of his only son, and of course, Abraham was given three days to think it over because the place where God said he had to take Isaac to sacrifice him was three days journey away. Yet in that story, brethren, is something else even more outstanding, something that occurred as a result of Abraham's action. We think of what he did as the most outstanding example of faith in the Bible, but there's something else even more outstanding, brethren, in that chapter... Let's turn over to Genesis Chapter 22, and begin the story in verse one, as it unfolds for us.

And as we study it brethren, let's notice the connection between Isaac and Jesus Christ, because Isaac was a type of Christ. We'll concentrate on that particular type that is given us here in the chapter. Mr. Orchard of course has been through this with us in the bible studies on Genesis, and particularly the historical aspects that are contained here. Today, for the purpose of this sermon, I want to emphasize what Mr. Orchard mention, the parallel of Jesus Christ in all that took place to Isaac. Came to pass after these things that God did test Abraham or prove him, as the Hebrew would have it. And said to him, Abraham, and he replied, behold, here I am. He said, take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and get you into the land of Moriah. Later on, a thousand years later or however, I've not stopped to measure it out in my mind before I got up here, of course, the temple was to be built on Moriah. Offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of. Abraham rose up, early in the morning, he did not delay to perform God's command, even though it was child sacrifice. But we have to understand, brethren, that Abraham had known God for many decades at this point, and his last concept of the character of this God that He worshiped was that He was a God who demanded the sacrifice of children... That was only for pagan gods, not the true God of the universe. This command did not square with what he knew of God's character, but he did know it was God's command, and therefore, he was going to obey.

He rose up early in the morning, saddled his ass, took two of his young men with him, and Isaac, his son. So it was a group of four. Claimed the wood for a burnt offering, rose up and went to the place

which God had told him. Then on the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. Now as Mr. Orchard pointed out to you brethren in the Bible study on Genesis, what was in Abraham's mind during that three days and how he was able to reconcile God's character and the fact that he was commanded to do this. It's revealed to us in Hebrews 11, verse 17 through 19. You don't need to turn there, but it does say in verse 19, speaking of this story in the Chapter of faith, it says of Abraham, accounting that God was able to raise Isaac up even from the dead, from whence also, he received him in a figure. Isaac did not die, but when he got up off that altar, Abraham was receiving him in a figure of the resurrection, it was a type of the resurrection.

So perhaps we can begin to understand then why a three-day journey was involved, because of the parallels between Isaac and Jesus. Jesus would be dead three days and three nights in the grave, and then He would be resurrected. Verse 5, Abraham said to his young men, abide you here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. The Hebrew is plural, we will come again to you. Abraham was not lying, he believed that God would resurrect his son, because he knew the promises that God had given that had to be fulfilled through Isaac. So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son. The very wood that was to be the sacrifice, the funeral pyre of Isaac was laid upon Isaac's shoulders. This is a type of Jesus Christ before He was crucified brethren, he was called upon to carry the wood of His own sacrifice, the cross upon His shoulders. And he took the fire in his hand and a knife, and they went both of them together. Now of course, Isaac asked the obvious question, he said to his father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? And Abraham said, and this of course is a prophecy of Jesus Christ, as we understand it, perhaps to Abraham it was more the physical fulfillment that did take place in the next few verses but for us we understood, we do understand, that it was prophetic of Jesus Christ sacrifice. Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering. So they went both of them together.

Now of course, as you understand, Abraham was prepared to do the act, he was ready to go ahead and to kill his son - that was in his mind, because remember it says in Hebrews 11, he was expecting God to resurrect his son, so he did intend to kill him, but he was stopped before he actually did so. Verse 12, the angel said, Lay not your hand up on the lad, neither do you anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing that you have not withheld your son, your only son from me. Abraham did have other sons, we have secular records that show that, and of course, there was Ishmael who was recorded in the Bible, but this was his only true son by his one wife, Sarah, the others being from concubines, and this was the only son that God recognized as His legitimate heir. Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns.

Now, what does this symbolize brethren with regards to Jesus Christ. We know He is the Lamb of God, and we know, of course, that He was an adult, a male, as the ram would symbolize when He was to be crucified; but God could have brought the ram meekly to Abraham. After all He did that with Noah, when the animals came to the Ark, now weren't caught by their horns and thickets, they just came because God worked out that miracle and brought them meekly to the Ark for Noah, which preceded this event. Why should it be that the Ram was caught in the thicket by his horns? Again, another symbolism of Jesus Christ, because a crown of thorns was to be placed upon Jesus

Christ head, and so it was caught by its horns in the thicket. Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering, in the stead of his son. Jesus Christ dies *in our stead* to make our life possible. Even at baptism, brethren, we going into a watery grave, but we come out out of it alive. As Isaac was laid there to be killed, but the death did not actually take place for him, because the substitute was made on his behalf, just as we go into only a symbolic death at baptism, because a true substitute has been made for us, Jesus Christ. So this is perhaps the greatest outstanding example of faith in the Bible. But as I said, brethren, something even more outstanding is contained in this chapter.

Abraham called the name of that place Yahwehjireh, as it is said to this day, in this mountain the eternal shall be seen. A reference to the temple that would be built on Mt. Moriah, and of course, Golgotha where Jesus Christ was crucified, was in close proximity. The angel of the Eternal called to Abraham out of Heaven the second time and said, by myself have I sworn says the eternal... For because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son. But in blessing, I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you. Verse 18, and in your seed, singular, not plural seed this time, singular, Jesus Christ, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice. So throughout there is the prophetic signification, brethren, of Jesus Christ and his future sacrifices to be made. But Jesus, speaking as the God of the Old Testament to Abraham at this point, could have said simply, to Abraham, because you have done this in blessing, I will bless you and in your seed, etcetera, etcetera.

He didn't... He made a most important statement, brethren. Verse 16, five simple words, yet they represent the greatest gamble in all of eternity, "*By Myself have I sworn*". Those five simple words teach us something more outstanding yet than Abraham's great example of faith. What does it mean, brethren, to swear by yourself? In the New Testament, Jesus Christ said that we were not to swear, in fact, he said, don't swear by your head, for instance, because you can't make one hair black or white. Now, 2000 years ago, today, you can use Grecian Formula and you can turn it like again, but we understand what Jesus is saying. He said, not to swear by your head, but why, there's more to it than just the fact that you can't turn one to have black or white brethren. In Middle Eastern law if you made a bet with someone or made a promise, and you said, for instance, I swear by my best milking cow, if you lost the bet, you lost the cow, the cow went to the individual, whatever you swore by became the possession of the other person, if you lost, if you do not fulfill your promise or if you lost the bet. In fact one of our ministers knew of an example in the Middle East where a man swore by his head, this actually happened, and he didn't come through and guess what? He lost his head.

If you swore by yourself, you were laying your life on the line. But when Jesus Christ swore this to Abraham, he was not physical. Yes, he would have to die for us physically, but it's more than laying his physical life on the line. *By myself have I sworn*, by my own life, my own eternal existence, I will bring this to pass, because if I don't bring in the pass, I will lose out forever. You see, Jesus Christ here brethren, as the God of the Old Testament, was not just swearing to lose his physical existence for us, that had to be... There was more here to this, then we see on the surface. He was God, and He was willing to risk His Godhead to bring this all to pass. If He failed, Abraham's promises would not occur, Abraham would lie dead in his grave and remain in the dust forever, but

God also would be dead... forever.

What we have in this chapter, brethren, is the greatest gamble of all time. Now in the last sermon, where we were talking about the fact that we were called to do God's work, I pointed out to you that we were not called primarily for personal salvation, because if we had been brethren, if that's what God wanted, primarily, he would have waited until the world tomorrow, when it will be easier to make it into God's Kingdom. He is putting us to risk by calling us now, because it's easier to fall away in Satan's world. People in the world tomorrow will not have Satan tempting them the way we are being tempted today. Yes, they'll have free moral agency, some of them will still make the mistake and lose out, but a far greater percentage will make it into the Kingdom of God in the world tomorrow than the percentage of those that will have made it in the Church of God over the last 2000 years, and those who were called before that time. There is a greater rate of attrition now, simply by the logistics of the time in which we live, because we live in Satan's time on this earth. God has put you to a certain risk and taken a gamble on you in calling you now, because He has to do a work and He has to have a people prepared to serve humanity, with Jesus Christ in the world tomorrow. But this gamble here is far, far greater, and its consequences, brethren, would have been forever, if Jesus Christ had failed. God was actually saying to Abraham, I'm going to do this for you, Abraham, for you personally. And if I can't accomplish it, I will die trying. Not just die physically, but I'll give up what I have now, "by myself have I sworn", while He was still a God being. I am willing to forfeit my own existence, as God...

What does that gamble, that God took long ago, brethren, mean to you today...? Without a consideration of this, we fail to discern the Lord's body and we take a Passover unworthy in consequence, as Mr. Orchard was pointing out a couple of weeks ago. He quoted to you, 1 Corinthians 11 and verse 29, For he that eats and drinks on orderly eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. We must discern Christ body, and all that that sacrifice entailed on our behalf, because it wasn't just what He went through physically for us brethren, it's what He could have lost out on forever, for all eternity.

Now, when we talk in terms, brethren, of true repentance, we find that the Bible teaches us three basic stages. The first stage of true repentance is seeing what you have done. And we'll go into that in a moment. The second stage is seeing what you are... People can usually manage the first stage without too much difficulty, they see certain things that they have done wrong, but it takes um a greater depth of perception, through God's spirit working with them, to begin to see what they actually are. And the third stage brethren, is when you see what you have *really* done. Stage one, you see what you've done, stage two, you see what you are, stage three, you see what you have really done... Now, there is a fourth stage in a sense, and it runs through all three of them, and that of course involves physical action, involves change. And mental change as well. And last year, about this time, as Mr. Orchard gave us a Bible study, 2 Corinthians 7 verses 9-11, on the importance of change and what your repentance is, that it does involve change in our lives. And the seven aspects of that contained in 2 Corinthians 7. It's not my purpose, brethren, to go into that today, but to deal with this great gamble that Almighty God took on our behalf.

Let's examine first of all, stage one of repentance, when you come to see what you have done. As

God begins to work with us, with his Holy Spirit, as He begins to call us out of this world, we come to see that we've been keeping pagan holidays, we've been eating unclean food and we've been attending a false church. Before we had no concept of clean and unclean foods, and to us Christmas, pagan, in no way, that celebrating surely the birth of Jesus Christ, truly that's Christian. And of course, attending a false church, well aren't all the churches going in the same direction, aren't we all headed toward heaven? But you came to see that you were keeping pagan holidays, and that you had been attending a false church. You came to see that something you took so for granted as taking God name in vain was a sin. You didn't worry about it being a sin, before God called you, everybody's doing it, everybody's using the name of God and Jesus Christ. It's a part of our culture, it's so deeply ingrained within us people use God's name without even realizing they've used it, half the time.

So we came to see that, we came to see sexual sin or many other things. We came to find out that smoking is a sin. You gotta be kidding, smoking a sin? Look at all the people that are doing it. Can't be a sin. Wearing of make-up is a sin. Things that we took for granted before God called us; we began to see that these things were wrong, that we had done wrong things. In general, we came to see that we've been breaking God's laws in many areas, Romans chapter 3, beginning in verse 9. In Romans chapter 3, beginning in verse 9, Paul says then regarding people in this world, what then?, are we better than they? No in no wise. We are before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one. We thought we were righteous in this world, we maybe thought we were born again Christians, and some of you did. Then you came into the church of God and found out that far from being a good person. There is none righteous, no not one. There is none that understands there is none that seeks after God.

God found us, brethren, the Church came to us, we didn't find the Church, and we couldn't find it, without God opening up our minds to the truth. They are all gone out of the way, they all are together become unprofitable. There is none that does good, no, not one. In verse 18, There is no fear of God before their eyes. How many times do people take God's name in vain? There's no fear of God before their eyes, there's no lightning that suddenly strikes out of heaven, everybody does his own thing, and nobody fears God, because to their minds, God keeps hands off, you can do what you want. But we begin in this first stage, brethren, to see sin in our lives, we examined our actions and realized that we've been living contrary to God, and we began to make certain changes, that forth stage that I mentioned, that runs through the three. We began keeping the Sabbath instead of Sunday, we began keeping the Feast of Unleavened bread instead of Easter, things of that nature.

We repented of these things that we had *done* wrong, and we began to change, but that wasn't sufficient for baptism, we had to come to stage two. Stage two is when you come to see what you are. Now a person could say, well, I've seen, I've done certain things wrong, but I meant well, you know, I was well-intentioned, for the most part. Even the world has a proverb of course, the road hell is paved with good intentions. But thou I did certain things wrong, you know, if I had known then that the Sabbath were true, I would have kept it. It just that I didn't know. You knew it was wrong to lie, and you lied... But human mind being what it is, we will tend to reason and think, well I did certain things wrong, but basically, you know, I'm an okay person.

Romans 8 and Verse 7, We were not lovers of God in the churches that we attended, and certainly we thought we were doing God a favor by attending church on Sunday on His behalf. In reality, we were the enemies of God. We hated God... Now, we're no longer talking about actions brethren and doing that which is wrong, we're talking about a frame of mine, because the carnal mind, Romans 8 verses 7, is enmity against God. God says that despite all the good things we thought we were doing and the good intentions we had in our own mind, because human might is self-righteous, nevertheless we were the enemies of God, and that carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. We pursued a god made in our image, when we went to church. God made man in His image, and man has returned the compliment, he has made God over in his image. He has brought God down to his level, and he worships God his way, that's why it's attend the church of your choice every Sunday morning. Do your own thing, not Gods.

And so we see here the downward pull of human nature, and we're not just talking about what we do, but what we are and the way we think, the carnal mind... that's the word there in verse 7, the carnal mind, is enmity against God. And that carnal mind of course, Jeremiah 17 and verse 9, is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. And we didn't think of ourselves that way, brethren, in this world; it took God's Spirit to begin to open up to us what we are really like on the inside. Not just that we did wrong, but that we are wrong. The *carnal* mind is against God. Our way of living, our way of thinking, before we were called was anti-God... but it's so hard for us sometimes to see that, yet as it says in Jeremiah 17 and verse 9, that's the reason it's hard for us to see it is because the carnal mind is deceitful above all things. We are deceived by our own mentality... and of all the creations, brethren, that God has made on this earth, the most staggering is the human mind... and the reason that it is, is because the human mind is so evil, it thinks it's good... To this day, the demons and Satan believe they are right, and God is wrong. Lucifer is self-righteous. Jesus said in Luke 11 and verse 13, If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children...

You see, we know how to do good, brethren, but He says, you're evil, now how does that jive? If you being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children. Those works are good, were not to be mean to our children, we are to be kind, we ought to be good to them, we ought to show them love. So how can Jesus Christ say when you're doing that, you're evil? And as we read in Romans 3, there is none that does good, no, not one. Now, when Jesus Christ just mentioned doing something good, giving good gifts to your children, yet here in Romans 3, it says, no one does good. The answer is brethren that when we do good, we do it out of an evil motive, which makes it evil in one sense, because the motive behind the motive is that of self-exaltation. The do gooders as of this world want to be recognized for their righteousness, in quotes. It's not to the glory of God, it's to the glory of self.

The highest form of physical love in this world is considered to be mother love, for her child, but does she love her neighbors kids as much as she loves her own, those mean little brats nest door, that throw stones at her kids? Does she loved them as much as she loves her own child. No, why not? Because that child is an extension of herself. Now that doesn't mean to say we started hating our children brethren and doing wrong, on the contrary, we still do the good, but we change the motive. My child belongs to God, and I love my child to glorify God and to turn my child toward

God, because initially, and firstly, God is their parent. Mark chapter 7, verses 20 through 23. Notice Jesus goes right to the source of the problem. It's not just what we do. It's what we are. It's the way we think. Mark 7, verse 20, Jesus said, that which comes out of a man that defies him for from within, your mind... Out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulterous, fornication, murders, theft, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride and foolishness. It's quite a mouthful isn't that brethren, and that's all on the inside. We know how to smile and appear nice on the outside, but inwardly, as it says in one scripture, where dead men's bones. Now true it's talking about the Pharisees, but it applies to us as well brethren because we have the same human nature, we've got it within us just as much as they had it. All these evil things come from within. It's not just what we do on the outside is what we are like on the inside, and a person before baptism must see more than just what they've done, that is wrong in this world, they must see what they are, and hate it.

Job, chapter 40, and verse 4, and Mr. Orchard has mentioned to you, brethren, concerning these two steps in Job's repentance, and it's important that we fully understand them and see them again, because he was able to make an admission that he was wrong, in one sense wrong, as we're going to see, but it wasn't sufficient for repentance, because God still had to work with him. Job 40 and verse 4, Behold, I am vile, what shall I say to You? So God had worked with him and Job came to the point where he said, Behold, I am vile, actually in the Hebrew it says, Behold, I am nothing. What Job was saying, Okay, God, I understand you've told me about all the great things that you're able to do and accomplish. I thought I was something, but in comparison to You, I'm nothing... but he should have known that from the beginning.

That's a part of repentance, but it's not getting there yet, it wasn't sufficient. It's not true repentance, and God still had to work with him. Until finally, chapter 42, verses five and six, I've heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you. Wherefore, I abhor myself. Now, the myself was in italics, it's not there in the original. But in this case the King James translators did a good thing and the right thing. I abhor myself, not just what I've done, but what I am on the inside, because of all the righteous people that live, Job was among the top ones, if anybody did it right, on human strength, Job was a man who did more good than any, but he finally came to see the way he was on the inside, his motivation was all wrong, it was all self-exaltation and ended up being a problem with self-righteousness, Satan's problem. Wherefore I abhor myself and this time, seeing what I am, I repent in dust in ashes.

So Job illustrates for us brethren, stage two. When you come to see what you are... And we'll use David now, to illustrate stage three. When you come to see what you really did. First Samuel chapter 12, and beginning in verse 1, first Samuel chapter 12, beginning in verse 1. Now, this story here, brethren, is just as famous as the story of Abraham and Isaac, but this one is more notorious as opposed to famous. It relates, of course, to David's sin with Bathsheba. God waited nearly a year for David to repent... God is very patient. But when David didn't repent, God sent a prophet after him. God sent Nathan to David and he came to him and said to him, There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. Now the rich man here brethren, of course, represents David, King of the nation. He was the richest man in the Middle East, perhaps throughout the Mediterranean at this time, Dave was probably the famous of kings in the Mediterranean area. The rich man had

exceeding many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing. Uriah, say one little ewe lamb, representing Bathsheba, which he bought and nourish, they grew up together with him with his children at did eat of his own meat, drank of his own cup... You're still shuffling, I guess I must have said 1 Samuel. Well, nobody's perfect brethren and this sermon is on that subject. (laughter)...

Second Samuel 12, I'm sorry. Next time somebody throw a bible at me and then I'll wake up. 2 Samuel 12 verse 4, There came a traveler to the rich man, he spared to take of his own flock and his own herd to dress for the wavering man that was come to him. But took the poor man's lamb and dressed it for the man that was come to him. Verse 5, Now, this was the parable, it was given to David as a true story, in type. David believed it and didn't realize it was for him. David's anger, verse five, was greatly kindled against the man. And he said to Nathan, as God lives, the man that has done this thing shall surely die. In one breath, David pronounced the death penalty upon himself, because he was the man, as Nathan immediately pointed out, verse 7. Now, Nathan had a message for David from God. And certainly, Nathan may have come with certain of the amount of trepidation because he didn't know what David's reaction would be, and David, like some kings would have just set off with his head, but fortunately, David had been troubles to a certain extent by his sin, though he had not repented to God of it, but now that it was exposed, he was brought to repentance, but in stages, as we're going to see.

Verse 13, David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. Now, immediately he recognized and understood that sin is not primarily against people in the truest sense of sin, your sin only against God because it's God's laws that you break. People didn't write the law. You harm people, you sin against God, in the truest sense. Now, we do use the term sin loosely, and that we sin against other people, but in the truest sense, it is against God. I have sinned against God. Now we're going to see brethren, this was only an initial understanding for David - that he had sinned against God's laws, there was far more to his sin against God, than he fully realized at this point. When he came to the depth of the understanding of what sin against God meant, then he wrote Psalm 51.

Nathan said to David, God also has put away your sin, you shall not die. You pronounce the death penalty on yourself, God is taking it away from you. However, there will have to be a substitute. Someone is going to have to die. Verse 14, because by this deed you've given great occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme the child also that is born to you shall die, shall die in your stead; because if David was taken care of and killed then the problem was resolved, the child could have lived, but David had His salvation at stake, the child didn't... Therefore the child died in David's stead because David pronounced the death penalty, and not just this child brethren, a thousand years from now, another child would be born to David, of the lineage of David, who would also have to die. This child was only a type.

David fasted for seven days and besought God to spare the life of the child, and he could not be... Nobody could stop what was absolutely necessary, the death of Jesus Christ. No amount be beseeching and pleading of God, in that time, to prevent the crucifixion of Jesus Christ could have stopped it happening, his death had to be. Even Jesus, the night of his death, pleaded that He would not have to die that way, and no amount of pleading, even on the part of Jesus Christ, could stop what had to be... this child had to die, and a future child of David would have to die, to make

David's salvation possible...

Now, going up to verse 10, there was another part of trouble and curse that would come upon David, for what had happened. Now therefore, verse 10, the sword shall never part from your house. Look David, God is saying, I could have given you peace, I could have given you a respite from war on all your borders; because of what you've done, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me... Now David had never thought in terms of despising God, when he committed the adultery with Bathsheba, when he murdered her husband. But God says, this is what it amounts to. That is why, another reason, sin is against God. We are despising God and despising His laws. So now David saw that for the rest of his rein he would be troubled by warfare on his borders. Not only that, verse 11, behold, I would raise our people against you out of your own house, civil war. He would suffer foreign war, he would suffer civil war, domestic strife. Absalom his own son would rebel against him, and 23,000 people in Israel would die, who would not have died otherwise...

When David heard these two verses, he was left with one very obvious thought brethren, that as a result of his sin, a lot of people were going to get hurt. That 23,000 is just those that died in the civil war, we have no record of how many died unnecessarily in foreign wars, defending the borders. When David came to the point, brethren, that he understood the full measure of what he had done, or was beginning to understand the full measure of what you done, let me put it that way. He made a public proclamation, as a result of his sin with Bathsheba. Now, Nebuchadnezzar made a public proclamation too after his experience of punishment from God, when He was mad for seven years, and then his sanity was restored to him. He made a proclamation to the known world at that time, and that letter was sent out by dispatched to all the territories that he ruled in the Babylonian empire, he gave his message to all peoples of the known at that time. It's recorded for us in Daniel 4, where he spoke of how God dealt with him. David also brethren, made a public population to the world.

Let's turn to Psalm 49, and I do want to caution you before I read these three psalms, that psalm 51, though it's recognized as being written by David at the time of Bathsheba and what happened. Psalm 49 and 50 are not recognized that way. In fact, if you go to the commentaries, you'll find other interpretations of these two psalms, none of them relating to David and the time of Bathsheba. It has been speculated thou that these two psalms could fit into that time, and they preface psalm 51, and they indicate the three stages that we've been talking about today, brethren, the three stages of repentance. Seeing what you've done, seeing what you are, and finally seeing what you've really done... Now, what I'm giving to you today is what is thought as one possible interpretation of these two psalms, psalm 49 and 50. Some of the verses may not seem to fit, but we'll go through them. I'm not saying as I said, that this is definitely something that was put together by David at the time of Bathsheba, because other commentaries, if you read them, will not take it in that light. But there is a distinct possibility as you'll see as we go through them; that these two prefaced Psalm 51, a public proclamation.

Psalm 49, here this all you people, give ear all you inhabitants of the world. So this wasn't just for Israel, this was for all nations, both low and high, rich and poor together. Remember the parable of

Nathan about the rich man and the poor man. My mouth shall speak of wisdom and the meditation of my heart, shall be of understanding, David meditated long and hard on what had happened, I will incline my ear to a parable, the parable of Nathan, and I will open my dark saying upon a harp. Now once again, commentaries will give a different explanation of dark saying, but let's take it as David's dark saying, I'm going to expose to you what is deep inside me, what I really feel I have done. Here is my dark say, verse five, wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heel shall compass me about. After all I'm king, I'm untouchable. So what if people begin to find out that I committed adultery with Bathsheba and I killed her husband. I'm untouchable because I'm king. Why should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heel shall compass me about when people begin to find out what happened. In other countries Kings do what they want and get away with it, why shouldn't I? This was my dark saying, my inward thought, before God took me in hand. They that trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches. Who had more riches than David at that time? A multitude of them, the rich man of the parable. None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.

I can't bring Uriah back to life. If I could give up on my wealth to make it possible, I would do so, but my brother is dead and he's going to stay dead - for the redemption of their soul is precious and it ceaseth forever. I cannot buy him back that he should still live forever and not see corruption, but he sees that wise men die, likewise the fool and brutish person perish. I thought I was wise, but David says, I find out that I'm a fool, and I am brutish. And leave the wealth to others, as I will. Their inward thought is, and this was mine, that their houses shall continue forever and their dwelling places to all generations. For God had said to me, before the time of Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 7, I will make a perpetual covenant with you. Whereby as He says in 2 Samuel 7 and verse 16, your house and your kingdom shall be established forever. This was my inward thought then that my house would continue forever, my dwelling place to all generations; and they call their lands after their own names. Even in 2 Samuel 12, brethren, which we were just really reading at the end of that same chapter, you find that Joab was fighting against Rabbah and before the city fell, he said to David, come, finish the job less the city be named after my name.

It was to be named after David, and there were groups of people in different lands that took David's name to themselves at that time, because he was so famous. Nevertheless, man being an honor abides not, he is like the beast that perish. David is saying, look, I've come to realize I'm no better than an animal. This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approves their sayings. Well, like sheep they are laid in the grave, death shall feed on them, and the upright shall have dominion over them in the resurrection, their beauty shall consume away and the grave from their dwelling. Now the next verse may not seem to fit, but we need to remember that David was in a state of repentance, and therefore the sin would be covered, God will redeem myself from the power of the grave, because of my repentance, Psalm 51, and He shall receive me.

This then was David proclamation. He was in covered language, speaking of what he had done as the rich man, but it was what he had done, he wished he could undo it, he would have given all his wealth to pay the price for Uriah to bring him back to life, but he could not redeem the soul of his brother. So David repented of what he had done, but David also had to repent of what he was... so God made a proclamation to the world. I realized the next psalm says a psalm of Asaph, it can be

translated as a psalm for Asaph. If it is for Asaph, then most likely once again, it was written by David, and this time it's God's proclamation. Psalm 49, David's proclamation to the world, now God's, because God had a lesson yet to get across to David. The Mighty God, even the Lord has spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down there of every corner of the globe. Now, God goes on to arraign, the people of Israel, before He narrows it down to the individual. Verse 7, here are all my people, and I will speak, oh Israel, I would testify against you. I am God, even your God. I will not reprove you for your sacrifices of your burnt offerings who have been continually before me, and in David's rein they were. David made sure that the people were continually offering sacrifices, but God is saying, look, I'll take no bullock out of your house, nor he goats, I don't need these things. Verse 13, will I eat the flesh of bulls and drink the blood of goats? Yes, I have commanded them, but none of these sacrifices can make up for a right spirit, in a right attitude and a repentant contrite heart. This is the real sacrifice I want, offer to God, verse 14, thanksgiving and particularly thanksgiving for the wonderful forgiveness He gives us for sin, and pay your vows, your vows of obedience to the Most High. Call upon me in the day of trouble, and David was gonna be faced with many days of trouble for the rest of his rein, and I will deliver you, and God did deliver David, and you shall glorify Me.

And now it narrows down to the individual, but to the wicked God says, what have you to do to declare my statutes, who most declared the laws of God in Israel at that time? David, for as the king went, so went the nation. Look, David, what are you doing, declaring my statutes, or that you should take My covenant in your mouth - because of the special covenant God had made with him in 2 Samuel 7, seeing that you hate instruction and cast My words behind you. You preach one thing out of your mouth, David, but for a whole year, you've lived a totally different way of life than that which you preached, and you did not condemn yourself. Look at your self righteous indignation when you heard the parable of Nathan, and you're gonna put that man to death, because of one little lamb! You killed a human being and you stole his wife - seeing you hate instruction and cast my words behind you. When you saw a thief, then you consented with him. You see David, you murdered a man, so you could steal his wife, you have being partaker with adulterers.

Now David committed the adultery brethren, which was stealing another man's wife, yes, but he went beyond that. He then killed the man, so we could make that man's wife, his wife. Something that should have never have been... Uriah should have lived... So David was a thief, as well as an adulterer. You give your mouth to evil and your tongue frames deceit. For several months there, David, you plotted and you connived and you planned how to work it out that Uriah would think that the child was his, but when you couldn't finally work that out, you finally conspired to kill him! You gave your mouth to evil and your tongue frames deceit, you sit and speak against your brother... Because Uriah was like a brother to David. A loyal, faithful servant. It's like you're slandering your own mother's son because you thought evil of Uriah, you hated the fact that he wouldn't comply with what you wanted done, so he would think the child was his... Finally, you went to the ultimate course of killing him. Verse 21, these things have you done, and I kept silent. For a whole year, David, I said nothing, and in consequence, you thought I was altogether such a one as yourself, you wouldn't repent, but I will reprove you and set them in order before your eyes, I sent Nathan to you.

So now consider this, you that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver. David's salvation was on the line. Who so offers praise glorifies me and to him that orders his conduct aright. He that changes his ways and deeply repents, will I show the salvation of God. David saw what he had done, wished he could undo it. Now God was telling him what he was, what he was like. Remember it says in Romans 2, about judging others, when we do the same things. Romans 1 talks about the Gentiles and what they've done. Romans 2 condemns the Jews because they were condemning the Gentiles for what they'd done... thinking we don't do that. And Paul says, oh yes you do. You may not have done the physical action of committing adultery, and therefore think well I'm so righteous, 'cause I haven't done it, but you have done it, you've done it up here. You've done it with the mind. You see brethren some people when they want to be baptized can say, well, I've seen certain things I've done. But they don't have the concept that every day they ever lived on the face of this earth, they were sinning against God. Not by living, but because of what their mind was thinking every day of their life. Sin is not just what we've done, it's what we are...

Psalm 51, after God's proclamation, David began to see far more of what his sin entailed. Have mercy upon me, O God. David couldn't say, well God I've been merciful to others, I've been kind, I've let people off, please be merciful to me. David was a man in the parable who reached out and took what wasn't his and had no pity. Blot out my transgressions, plural. Stealing, adultery, lying, murder, the whole gamut. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, because no way could David wash that blood from off his hands. God had already told him in the preceding Psalm that no animal sacrifice would take care of it. Verse 3, for I acknowledge my transgressions. My sin is ever before me. The horror of what he had done... And then verse 4, Against You, You only have I sinned. Now in 2 Samuel, he said, I've sinned against the Lord, but now there's a greater emphasis on it. Against You, and You only have I sinned. David had murdered a man, used his wife, brought about the death of her child, Absalom ultimately died, twenty-three thousand other people died. And how many other thousands suffered we don't know. But David says here in verse 4, compared with what I've done to you, God, all that begins to pale into insignificance

It wasn't that it didn't mean anything to him, what the other people would suffer, he wrote Psalm 49 in that context, if that speculation is correct - but he began to see what he had done to God, and it was more than just transgression Gods laws. What had he done to God, brethren? Well, to whom was he praying here in this psalm? It was not the father. Says in the New Testament, Jesus Christ came to reveal the Father. He was praying to the God of the Old Testament. He was praying to Jesus Christ. The God that David was down on his knees in front of, the God who's mercy he was begging, the God he was crying out to was the God who was going to have to die, and die horribly, in order for David's sins to be blotted out. It may well have been that at this point, David realized that he had condemned his God to death. The God to whom he prayed was the God he was going to have to suffer terribly. Verse 16, for You design not sacrifice, else would I give it. You delight night and burned offering. The only way I can come through this is with a repentant heart. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, Oh God, You will not despise.

No animal sacrifice could have toned for the sin. As it says in Hebrews 10, in verse 4, is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. It would require the sacrifice of

God Himself, the God to whom he had prayed. And only true repentance over that sacrifice, discerning the Lord's body, can bring forgiveness, the forgiveness spoken of in Verse 17. What tore David apart at the end brethren, what totally shouted him to the point that he got down on his knees and deeply and bitterly repented in a way that he had not done before? He repented before, but never to the same depth. What really got to him was when he realized what was going to happen to God. It was a thousand years distant for David, two thousand years behind us, but he began to *understand* the full gravity and magnitude of sin, that it's not just the breaking of God's laws, it's the breaking of God himself...! That God must die, and die a terrible death, to get across to us, how terrible sin is and it's consequences. Do you think David understood what that death was going to be like, brethren...? Well, he was the principal prophet through whom God prophesied that death.

Psalm 22. Now if this psalm had been written earlier by David, and it's very clear from the psalm that is not talking about himself, if it was written earlier, if God inspired it earlier, then David went back and read it now with a whole new understanding. It may however be that God after psalm 51 inspired psalm 22. You might say, well that doesn't follow in sequential order. Well the Psalms aren't written in sequential order brethren, from the standpoint of being consecutive in time. Psalm 32 is recognized by the commentaries as relating to psalm 51, that it was written at the same time. Psalm 32, but you don't find it as psalm 52 you find it as psalm 32, because there are books and divisions in the bible and certain subjects, and psalms were placed according to subject, not according to the time in which they were written. So if psalm 32 was written at the same time, as psalm 51, and the commentaries are generally agreed on that, then Psalm 22 could have been written after psalm 51, when David really began to understand what God was going to have to go through. Maybe it was at that point that the God to whom he was praying in psalm 51 revealed to him what it would take to cover David sins, but if it was written earlier, then he must have gone back and read it with new understanding.

Now we mentioned earlier, brethren, at the beginning of the sermon, that this was the greatest gamble in all of eternity, where God risked His eternal Godhead. It says in Philippians, and I just quoted to you, perhaps they should have read it earlier, but a... we're running a little short on time. Philippians 2, verses 5 and 6, let this mind be in you, which was also in Jesus Christ, who being in the form of God, thought it not a thing to be grasped at, to be God. But made Himself of no reputation. He gave up His Godhead, with the possibility that He would never get it back again. Yes brethren it's true, that Jesus Christ was born of the spirit through Mary. He didn't have a human father, his father was God. Mary was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is true that he had the Holy Spirit given to him as a gift of God from birth. And it is also true, as the Bible says, that He had the Holy Spirit without measure, but despite all those three advantages, Jesus Christ still had a human nature that was imparted to him from his mother, and Jesus Christ was a free moral agent. To manage 33 and one half years without one single sin, *of the mind*, let alone the action, is utterly incredible brethren... And one single sin would have blown it all. When Satan put attempting thought into his mind, if at any one time He had entertained that thought, His sacrifice would not have been perfect. And you and I would not be in this room today... and Jesus Christ would not exist. Period.

We need to understand what would have happened, brethren, if Jesus Christ had failed. You may

think with those three advantages, born of the Holy Spirit, in Mary's womb, or begotten by the Holy Spirit rather, with God's Spirit from birth, and the Spirit without measure, that surely He had it made. If Jesus Christ was so sure he could win out, why did He fast 40 days before he took on that great temptation with Satan in the wilderness? If Jesus Christ were so sure he could make it through the crucifixion without sin, why did He beg God, to do it some other way, and to spare Him crucifixion.

Jesus could have failed. That's why He said, by Myself, have I sworn... He was willing to give up His eternity, that we might share salvation with Him. If Jesus had failed, brethren, Satan would have had the last laugh on God, and this earth would have been incinerated. God said he wouldn't destroy it by a flood, but the incineration of this earth would have come early. If when Jesus Christ was being crucified, He had yielded to one thought of hate, that would have been it. Without that perfect sacrifice, there would be no salvation for us, there would be no fulfillment of the promises to Abraham, because they were dependent on that perfect sacrifice.

Abraham would have lain dead forever, and Jesus Christ would have been dead forever too, because God at that point - what was the reason for carrying on? To let human beings live in Satan's world with no chance of redemption? God would have had to destroy it, to put everybody out of their misery, and probably would have destroyed it by fire, as he will do with the third resurrection. Jesus would have died for His own sins and stayed dead. God could not resurrect Him for two reasons, first of all, because of His vow, by Myself I have sworn, I've laid my eternal existence on the line, and secondly, because if Jesus had begun to go the way of sin earlier on, if when Satan said, bow down and worship me, I'll give you all these things. If Jesus said, Okay, I'll do it. God could have never resurrected him, brethren, because if Jesus had begun to entertain sin and go the way a sin, if God had made Him God again, the two Gods would have waged war on each other, with two foreign minds, as Lucifer when he became perverted began to wage war on God.

God the Father would have been left to Himself as a God being forever, with no chance, no possibility of any other God beings ever existing, because He Himself couldn't come down to this earth and do it after Jesus Christ was dead. There would have been no one to rule the universe and to rule the angels, and who would have resurrected God the Father from the dead, if He had died for us. Satan would have had the last laugh on God. Yes, God could have committed him into the outskirts of the universe, as He will. But Satan would have always had the satisfaction of knowing, I killed God...

Psalm 22. David read this with new and tremendously deep and profound understanding, and understood now what his God would have to go through to make His salvation possible. A child would be born to him a thousand years later, who would also die, in his stead. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Words that we know were uttered by Jesus Christ from the stake. Versus 2, Oh my God, I cry in the daytime, but you hear not, and in the night season, I'm not silent. Because in the six hours that He was on the stake, three of them were day light and three of them were night, as God covered the earth with darkness for three hours. Yet even though God wasn't answering Him it seems, He justify God. You are holy, oh You that inhabit the praises of Israel.

Verse 7, all they that laugh, that see me, laugh me to scorn... You can read of that in Matthew 27 versus 39 and 41. How people laughed at him. They shoot out the lip, they shake their heads, saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him. Almost the exact same words that the Pharisees said, Matthew 27, in verse 43, let Him deliver Him, seeing He delights in Him. But you are He that took me out of the womb, you did make me hope when I was up on my mother's breast, because Jesus Christ was called from day one. I was cast upon you from the womb, it was God by his spirit, that begat Jesus Christ in the womb of Mary.

You are my God from my mother's belly. Verse 12, many bulls have compassed me, strong bulls of Bashan have beset me around. Bulls gore people, and Jesus looked like he'd been gored after the scoring that He received at the hands of the Roman soldiers. Verse 14, I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. If you've seen the crucifixion of Jesus Christ that is portrayed in the movie Ben-Hur, you'll understand why his bones are all out of joint, as they lifted the cross up and it dropped into the ground, shaking the individual and putting their bones out of joint. Verse 16, dogs have comprised me. Dogs referring to Gentiles, the Romans. The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me, they pierced My hands and My feet.

This is so clearly not David. When did he ever have his hands and feet pierced? Jesus Christ inspired this to be written, through David, and if it wasn't at the time of Psalm 51, then certainly David read it with a new meaning. But then the Psalm that speaks to the terrible sufferings goes on to lift to something positive and wonderful. The thing that kept Jesus Christ going through it all, vision. The vision of what lay beyond His sufferings. Just as we must maintain the vision, brethren, because as Paul said, I don't count the sufferings of this present time worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us. Hanging there on the stake, Jesus was able to say the day will come, verse 22, I will declare Your name to my brethren in the midst of the congregation, I will praise You. I'm going to live again, in a whole new life, you that fear the eternal praise Him, all you seed of Jacob, glorify Him. Fear Him all you seed of Israel. He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, God had to put me through it, but he hasn't truly hit His face from me. When he cried to me, when I cried to him, He heard me. My praise shall be or You in the great congregation, and I will pay my vows before then that fear him. The meek shall eat and be satisfied, they shall come to my Passover to partake, through the bread and the wine, of my body and my blood, and they shall be satisfied. They shall have salvation.

Verse 27, all the ends of the world will one day remember and turn to God. Salvation will one day be open to all mankind. Verse 28, For the kingdom is the Lords, and He will be Governor among the nations. Verse 30, speaking of you in this room, brethren... a seed shall serve Him and shall be accounted to the eternal from generation to generation - the eras of God's church from the time of Jesus Christ's death. And they shall come and declare His righteousness to a people that shall be born, as we declare it today to this end time generation, that He has done this. That the God who made man, became man, and died for man. When we partake of the Passover, brethren, we must discern the Lord's body. We must be discern what Jesus Christ was willing to go through for us, and what he put a stake, his own eternity. Because if we are to preach this coming salvation to all mankind, we are all people must know what makes that salvation possible in our own lives...
end.