

Abraham rejoiced to see my day (Quality: Very Good)

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Date: 13 April 1986

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- [0 : 00] As the Lord would be pleased to help this morning, we would direct your prayerful attention to the 8th chapter of John's Gospel, end at verse 56.
- The 8th chapter in John's Gospel, chapter 8, verse 56. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.
- What a wonderful thing, friends, that a man who lived so long before had this faith in Christ and saw the day of Christ.
- Whereas these people who were listening to the words of Christ were in unbelief. When you were singing that first verse of the hymn just now, I thought of these Pharisees and these that were around the Lord Jesus.
- The wise and righteous men go near. His wonders see, his sermons hear, and think him nothing worth. And so it was with many of those who heard him in the days of his flesh.
- [1 : 22] They never saw who he was. They only saw him as a man. And we just want to look at the context here to the words of our text.
- And just briefly, the first part of the chapter we read. You see, I noticed as I began to read that at the close of the 7th chapter, we have that significant word, and every man went to his own house.
- They all had their comfortable homes to live in. They went to their own houses. But where did Jesus go? This blessed person. He went to the Mount of Olives.
- He spent nights in the open air. He had not where to lay his head. He came into this world, friends. He became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.
- And how many prayers he must have put up on those nights on the Mount of Olives. But you know, friends, he knew what was before him.
- [2 : 31] We often say he knew what was before him when he went to the cross. He knew everything that was to come to him. And he knew everything here, friends. When he was on the Mount of Olives this night, he knew what was going to come in the morning, this attack upon him.
- This subtle attack by these Pharisees. He comes down from that Mount of Olives in the early morning, and he comes into the temple. And he begins to teach the people.
- And then the scribes, these scribes and Pharisees, and friends, these were some of his worst enemies. Professors of religion. But they were the worst foes he had.
- And these were among the righteous men, so-called, trusting in their own righteousness. But they didn't think him any worse. They didn't see any beauty in him.
- No. All they were out to do, friends, was to try and trip him up, as it were, in various things. And so they bring this woman into the midst where he is.

[3 : 47] And they say to him, this woman was taken in adultery in the very act. And they put the Lord Jesus in a very awkward situation, because they said, Moses in the law commanded that such should be stoned.

But what sayest thou? And I'm given to understand, friends, that in that day, the Jews were not allowed to put anyone to death.

The Romans wouldn't have it. And so you can see the position the Lord Jesus was in. What sayest thou? And John, I like these little verses where John puts in, he shows us what is going on.

He says in verse 6, This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, Oh, what a mercy, friends.

The Lord Jesus often was silent when they accused him. And here we see a little of that silence right on the ground.

[5 : 02] But they kept asking him, and when he lifts up himself, he says something very striking. He says to these accusers, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone.

I feel, friends, we ought to remember that whenever we feel anything rising up in our minds against another person. We should always think of this sentence.

He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone. And again, the Lord Jesus stoops down and writes on the ground. And the effect this word had upon them, they were absolutely silenced.

Because when they heard this, that the Lord Jesus spoke, they were convicted, not in a saving way, but convicted in their conscience. And every person, friends, in this world has a conscience.

And what a mercy when that conscience is in working order. And when we have a tender conscience. But even these people had a conscience, and being convicted by their own conscience, they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last.

[6 : 22] And Jesus was left alone. And there was that woman, friends, who had committed this sin, left alone with the Lord Jesus, the only one that could condemn her.

Because he was sinless. He was without sin. So he was the only one that really could condemn the woman. And so the Lord Jesus speaks to the woman now.

He says, Where are those unaccusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She says, No man, Lord. Now the next sentence, friends, must have been wonderful to her when she heard it.

Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more. And this last part of what Jesus says here shows us, friends, what true repentance is.

It entails this, that we are to cease from those sins. Sin no more. Repentance is to leave the sins we loved before and show that we in earnest agree by doing so no more.

[7 : 26] This is true repentance. Have we known it? Have we known that true repentance? Do we know something of that word in Romans 8?

There is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. If we've been brought to believe in him and to look to him for our salvation, there is no condemnation in the case of the believer.

Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more. But I want to leave that. I want to come to this which leads up to the text. Because in the conversation that followed, these Pharisees and these unbelieving Jews, you can tell they didn't receive the truth.

They didn't receive it at all. They were unbelieving. And it's a solemn thing to realize, friends, that the Jews above all who were Abraham's seed should be in such darkness, such unbelief.

It reminds me, you know, what Paul writes in Romans 9, really. Because he's speaking about the Jews and the seed of Abraham, he is saying that not all the seed of Abraham are the Lord's people.

[8 : 55] He says there, he says, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children. But in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. So you see, you have two sorts of people in Abraham's seed.

You have the natural seed and you have the spiritual seed. And these Jews here that were speaking to the Lord Jesus, they were the natural seed of Abraham.

They could rightly say that Abraham is our father. But oh, many of them were not the spiritual seed. they were not believers. They were still in total darkness and unbelief.

You can see that in the conversation here. You see, if we go on to verse 33 for the starting point, the Lord Jesus had just said in verse 31, if ye continue in my word, then I ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

[10 : 07] Now these unbelieving Jews, they said this, we be Abraham's seed. They were making so much of the fact that they were the seed of Abraham, that they were Jews.

And they're saying to the Lord Jesus, we were never in bondage to any man free. They didn't receive that that the Lord Jesus said.

They thought they were free. And there are many today, friends, who think that they're free. And yet they're not. Oh, that we might know this perfect freedom in Jesus Christ.

Now in verse 37, Jesus says this to them, I know that ye are Abraham's seed. That is the natural seed. But ye seek to kill me.

How can they be the spiritual seed of Abraham if they're seeking to kill the Saviour, to kill this glorious person who is speaking to them? He says, My word hath no place in you.

[11 : 11] How solemn this was, friends, that Jews should be so unbelieving that the Lord should say to them, My word hath no place in you. And he says, I speak that which I have seen with my Father, and ye do that which ye have seen with your Father.

The Lord Jesus was very plain, you know, just after this. He was telling these Jews that Satan was their father. They still insisted in verse 39, they said, Abraham is our father.

But Jesus says, if ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. You know, there's another place where the Pharisees made so much of this fact that they were Abraham's children.

you remember when John the Baptist was baptizing by the river Jordan, and the Sadducees and the Pharisees came to his baptism, and John called them vipers.

He says, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the rough to come? Bring forth therefore fruits, meat for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father.

[12 : 30] For I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. These Pharisees made so much of that fact that they were Jews, that they were the seed of Abraham, Abraham's children.

But see what Jesus says to them, friends, in verse 39. He says, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

You see, real faith, friends, comes out in what we do. Faith without works is dead, says James. So Jesus says to them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

But because you're in this darkness of unbelief, you seek to kill me, a man that had told you the truth. This did not Abraham. And he says, You do the deeds of your father.

And he's still really saying to them, friends, their father is the devil. Because he says in verse 44, Ye are of your father the devil. And the lust of your father will ye do.

[13 : 38] He was a murderer from the beginning. How sad a case these people were in, really. They had the Lord Jesus Christ speaking to them. And yet they were in such darkness and in such unbelief.

They went as far as to say this, friends, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan as the devil. They said this of the glorious Son of God, in whom the Spirit was without measure.

And they called him a devil. And so the Lord Jesus had to say to them, I am not a devil, but I honour my Father and ye do dishonour me.

And then when the Lord Jesus said something else very striking in verse 51, he says, As if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death, they can understand that.

You see, the natural mind only thinks of natural things. And they were only thinking of natural death. Jesus really here is speaking of spiritual death.

[14 : 45] A man and a woman that's a believer, friends, will never taste of the second death. He will never die the second time. He will never die eternal death. That's what he's saying.

But the Jews can't grasp it. We see in so many other places they couldn't grasp these things. In the sixth chapter, when the Lord spoke about eating his flesh and bringing his blood, they couldn't grasp it.

How can this man give us his flesh to eat? They were still in the flesh. They were unbelievers. And so they said to him, Here, Now we know thou hast a devil, Abraham is dead.

And the prophets, they're dead. And thou sayest if a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Are they greater than our father Abraham? Of course he was.

He was the divine creator. He existed far long before Abraham. As we have these wonderful words in verse 58, he said, Before Abraham was I am.

[15 : 50] He was the eternal son of God. God, art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead, and the prophets? Whom makest thou thyself? Now, in the verse previous to our text, verse 55, he says, Yet ye have not known him, that is the Son of God, and God the Father.

But I know him, and if I should say I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you, but I know him, and keep his saying. Now it comes to this verse then that we have for a text this morning, your father, this one you're making so much concerning, your father, so different from what you are, because your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, so long ago, he saw it, and was glad.

Why, and how did he see it, friends? He saw it by faith. Abraham was given great faith to see the day of Christ. Even when the Lord spoke these words of our text, they couldn't understand it, because they said in the next verse, they are not yet fifty years old unless they have seen Abraham.

But he says, before Abraham was, I am. But oh, friends, what a mercy to be like Abraham, what a mercy to have the same faith. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day.

He saw it, and was glad. Now let me try and show you where I believe Abraham saw the day of Christ. He saw it, friends, when he took that son up the Mount Moriah.

[17 : 35] He saw Christ then very clearly when, as we read of it in the twenty second of Genesis, the Lord told him to offer up his own son Isaac.

And when he was going up that Mount Moriah with his son, we know how that Isaac put that question to him.

He wanted to know where the most important thing was. He could see when they were going up that Mount Moriah, he could see the fire and the knife and the wood.

And he says to his father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb? Where is the most important thing, father? Now I believe in the answer that Abraham gave him, friends, he saw Christ.

My son, God will provide himself a lamb. Yes. And this very significant sentence really because it suggests, doesn't it, that he himself was the lamb.

[18 : 43] Christ was the lamb. God will provide himself a lamb. And we know that he was thinking of this provision at this particular time, but his faith was looking down through the ages to Christ.

He saw him as the lamb of God, the one that John the Baptist preached. He saw him as the precious lamb that Peter speaks of in his epistle.

He saw him as as that eunuch saw when he was riding in his chariot and reading Isaiah 53. And reading those very words, he is led as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before a shearer as dumb, so he opened it not his mouth.

He saw Christ's day when he uttered these words, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. Now friends, have we seen Christ just as Abraham saw him?

He looked forward to him. Abel looked forward to him. All these in the Old Testament looked forward to him. Now we look back to him.

[19 : 58] As the hymn writer puts it, my faith looks back to see the burdens that is bare when hanging on the accursed tree and hope was there. what a mercy have we been given that faith to see this lamb provided.

And the Passover lamb in Exodus 12, all representing the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Abraham rejoiced.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day. Yes, he rejoiced to see my day. He looked down through the ages and he saw this rich provision when he uttered these words to Isaac, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.

And when they came to the place where he was to offer up this son Isaac, we know how the Lord intervened. And again I believe Abraham saw the day of Christ.

For he lifted up his eyes and he looked. looked. And we've been dwelling on that word recently in Hebrews 12, looking unto Jesus. This dear man Abraham looked and he looked behind him and he saw a ram caught in a thicket by his horns.

[21 : 19] And I often feel the thicket represents our sins, friends. The Lord Jesus was as it were caught in the thicket of our sins, like this ram. Abraham saw Christ in that ram.

And he went and took the ram and offered him up in the stead of. Christ Jesus was offered up in the stead of his people. Oh, are we like Abraham?

Have we seen Christ by faith? Are we trusting in him? Abraham rejoiced to see my day.

Oh, it would be rejoicing, friends, if we see Christ as our Saviour, if we see him as the Lamb of God. Yes, we shall rejoice in Christ Jesus.

Your father Abraham rejoiced. It's wonderful when you think of it, this man who lived so long before, rejoiced in Christ, and these people that were listening to his words, didn't know anything of this rejoicing.

[22 : 26] They were hostile towards him. Oh, wonderful, friends, that this man who would live so long before could rejoice in the day of Christ, and that we poor Gentiles that have now lived so long afterwards can still rejoice in the same person.

Oh, how wonderful is the sovereignty of God, friends. These Jews who were the natural seed of Abraham were in unbelief, didn't see Christ when they saw him before them.

They saw him only as a man. They didn't see him as Christ, the Anointed One. They didn't see him as the Son of God. But your father, Abraham, rejoiced to see my day.

Oh, the wonderful faith that this man had as he looked forward to the day of Christ. He saw it and was glad and there is a gladness, friends, when we see Christ.

When we're brought to view the precious Lamb of God, we were brought to view that Lamb on Good Friday in a sevenfold way. We saw him as the provided Lamb in Exodus 22.

[23 : 42] God will provide a Lamb. We saw him as the Passover Lamb in Exodus 12. We saw him as the passive Lamb in Isaiah 53, passive in all his sufferings, led as a Lamb to the slaughter.

We saw him also as the preached Lamb as John the Baptist stood and preached and said, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

We saw him also as the precious Lamb in Peter's epistle. He were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.

Oh, what a rejoicing there is when we see this Lamb, when we see this glorious person as the substitute of his people, the saviour of sinners.

We saw him also as the one who is praised and is mentioned, friend, in the book of the Revelation, the Lamb of God. So we look back to him, we look back to the Lord Jesus Christ by living faith as Abraham looked toward him.

[25 : 01] Your faith, Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and was glad. Do we know something of this gladness? Have we been brought to feel our need of this glorious person, this Lamb of God?

Have we been convinced of our sins? Have we been brought to repentance? Have we been brought to look unto Jesus as the only saviour? What a mercy, friends, then to be like Abraham this morning and to see in Christ all our salvation and all our hope, to be able to say with one, my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on his DNA. Your father, you see the first two words of the text bring it home to these people.

You've been making so much of your father because you think, because you're a Jew, you're a saved person. But it's not in that, is it?

It's not whether you're one of the Jews. who's, no, the fact is, friends, we must have faith in this glorious person. And he says, you haven't that faith, but your father Abraham had it.

[26 : 23] Your father Abraham, who you are boasting so much about, who you're looking to instead of looking to me, instead of looking to Jesus Christ. They were looking at this Abraham as one, you see, who was the father of them all.

And they thought it a privilege to be one of his sons. But you know, friends, that wasn't enough. They must have the same faith as Abraham.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and was glad. Oh, the Lord, grant us more of this gladness as we view the Lamb of God, as we see this glorious person who Abraham saw so long ago.

And Abraham surely is the father of all the faithful, father of all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. His spiritual seed, as we have felt it many times, is like the stars in the heavens.

They have the light of grace within them. They let their light shine before others in this world. They are the spiritual seed of Abraham.

[27 : 43] Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and was glad. But you see, even this word didn't affect these people.

Because when he said that, which he said in verse 58, they were still at enmity towards him. In fact, it stirred them up to more enmity because they took up stones to cast at him.

Oh, how solemn is unbelief, friends. How solemn is that state that so many are in today who have not been brought to see this glorious person of the saviour of sinners, but all to be like this dear man of God.

Abraham, who is mentioned in the eleventh of Hebrews, who had faith to go out not knowing whither he went, and faith to take his son up the mount and to offer him up, even accounting that God was able to raise him from the dead.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and was glad. May the Lord bless the words to us.

[28 : 50] For his name's sake, Amen.