

"This is my beloved Son. LISTEN to him."

Throughout the Old Testament God has been speaking to, AND THRU, many people to have them tell the world how much God loves His creation, and would like His creation to love Him in return. But because God created mankind with a mind of his own, with a FREE will, there are some who didn't listen, and some who listened TOO WELL.

Of those who had an issue with what God wanted them to do I'd point to Jonah who was to go to Ninevah to tell the people there to repent or be destroyed. He was cast overboard from the boat he used to escape from his mission, and was swallowed by a big fish, only to be spit up on the shore of Ninevah, and ultimately agreed to accomplishing his mission from God.

We read in the Bible that Noah and God were actually pretty tight. I also heard a story where Noah didn't know why God would ask him to build an ARC in the middle of the desert, but he quickly complied after God asked him, "Noah, how long can you tread water?" I wouldn't put too much credence in THAT story, other than sometimes we hear God and just don't pay too close attention to what He wants of us.

Today we have Abraham getting the word from God that he is to make a SACRIFICE, the ULTIMATE sacrifice to God; the sacrifice, the DEATH, of his only son, Issac. Abraham LISTENED to God INTENTLY. He loved God, who had given him so much in his life, that if God asked for anything from him, it would not be enough for a repayment. This is part of OUR salvation story. Abraham didn't hesitate, like others, to do God's will. In his readiness to sacrifice his own son, God held him back. There would be time soon enough for one to offer his OWN life for the many.

When you get a chance I'd ask you to read Chapter 22 of Genesis for the whole version of this story. There's a parallel missing from today's reading, specifically noting that Issac had the wood for the sacrificial pyre placed on his back to be carried by him to the place of sacrifice. This helps us to better see how Jesus, in the New Testament, is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

We are a race of beings filled with contrasts. Tell us what or what NOT to do, and we tend to do the opposite, like telling a child NOT to put their hand in the campfire. We learn lessons, sometimes HARD lessons, not only thru the teachings from others, but thru our own experiences. As with fire, those experiences can be painful. We don't always realize that there is a reason behind what we are told to do, or NOT do.

Two weeks ago we had the gospel of Jesus curing the leper. He STEARPLY told him NOT to tell others how he was cured, but to go to the priest and offer sacrifice for his healing. Did the leper LISTEN to him? NO! Jesus wanted to enter the villages and towns QUIETLY to continue His mission of spreading the good news of the salvation of God, but this could no longer be possible as his power to heal was spread quickly throughout the region.

Today we hear Jesus tell Peter, James, and John not so speak a word of what they witnessed on the mount until "the Son of Man had risen from the dead." I've read no accounts of the three Apostles ever discussing their experience with the other disciples or even amongst themselves while Jesus was with them. But how could they be silent!?

I believe they remained silent out of their deep love and respect for Jesus, a love and respect WE TOO should have for our Lord. But Jesus DOESN'T tell US to be silent. He wants us to proclaim the love of God

for His creation boldly and with authority, authority that is greater than Satan himself. As you know, God is NOT the only one trying to get our attention, and in these times we live in today it appears Satan **screams** his lies louder and more obnoxiously than ever before. It is laid upon our shoulders to refute the lies and half-truths of Satan, and to profess the Way and the Truth and the Life of Jesus Christ our Lord. We are creatures made for love, not for hate. We are NOT made for death, but for everlasting life. May our lives this Lenten season be a sacrificial offering to God our Father. Let us walk with Jesus this Lent, and "LISTEN TO HIM." God bless.