

Here I Am

By Edward Rangel

The message of the Bible is contained in the three words: "Here I Am." From God, from man to God, and from man to man - all have to do with service and love.

Isaiah 58:9; Genesis 22:1; 7

Introduction

The Nano Bible is the size of the grain of sugar and sits on the tip of a finger. The inventors of the technology said of the Bible: “More than any other book, the Bible symbolizes the transmission of human civilization from one generation to another.” Yet, the message of the Bible can be summed up in three words, “Here I Am.”

- Isaiah 58:9 – “Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; You will cry, and He will say, ‘**Here I am.**’ If you remove the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger and speaking wickedness,”
- Genesis 22:1; “Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, ‘Abraham!’ And he said, ‘**Here I am.**’”
- Genesis 22:7; “Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, ‘My father!’ And he said, ‘**Here I am, my son.**’ And he said, ‘Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?’”
 - That which comes from God to man
 - That which goes to God, from man to God
 - That which is done for God (service of man to man)

1

From God to Man (Isaiah 58:9)

Explanation

Since the Garden of Eden God has been present with and available to His children. Isaiah 58 talks about hypocrisy in worship. In vs. 2 the people were going to the temple as if they really were pious and had kept several fasts, although they only were required to keep one, and faked their religion. This made God angry. He says, "We have fasted. Why are You not impressed? Why don't You see our sacrifices, why don't you answer our prayers?" (NLB) Vs. 6 God says if you want Me to hear your prayers, accept your sacrifices then I will answer your prayers.

Stop oppressing the poor who work for you: Treat people fairly, Pay your employees, Share your food with the poor, Clothe the naked, and, quit hiding from your relatives who need you! Then, (vs. 8) God will give you light (bless you), heal you, protect you, and when you call Him He will say, Here I Am!"

• Pardon

- God's presence is **salvation**
- **Psalm 42:5; "Why are you in despair, my soul? And why are you restless within me? I will again praise Him For the help of His presence, my God."**
- **Romans 10:8; "But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart. The word is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart one believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."**

- Power

- Guidance

- **Exodus 13:21-22** – Cloud by day to protect from sun, fire by night to light their path, 2 protect them from the Egyptians. Interesting that while the pillar of fire provided them v their enemies with darkness.

- God's Word is our light, power and guidance:

- **John 8:12**; "Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the v

- follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

- **Psalm 119:105**; "Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path."

- **Ephesians 1:18-19**; "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, s

- what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inherit

- saints,19 and what is the boundless greatness of His power toward us who l

- **John 16:13**; " But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into

- will not speak on His own, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will

- what is to come.

- Grace – Courage (Joshua), success (Gideon). God demonstrated with both great men of fa not, "Here I will be." There is a difference. "Go ahead and I will be there when you get in tr go together, I will walk before you and behind you, I have your front and your back because

- Peace

- Companionship:

- **John 16:33**; "These things I have spoken to you so that in Me you may have pea

- you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

- **Matthew 28:20**; "...and I with you always..."

- Hope

- **Colossians 1:27**; "to whom God willed to make known what the wealth of the glo

- among the Gentiles is, the mystery that is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Illustration

- World religions do not offer salvation (pardon)
 - Man had fallen in a well. Confucius offered him a moral story with an application to life, Buddha explained the Three Universal truths: Nothing is lost in the universe, Everything changes, and the Law of cause and effect
 - Jesus on the other hand, threw him a rope and saved him.

Application

God has always been present to pardon mankind, give His children the power to overcome man's greatest enemy, sin, and offer peace through Christ thus allowing us to have the hope of everlasting life in Christ Jesus through obedience. God has always said proven His willingness to be: "Here I Am!"

2

To God (Man to God) Genesis 22:1

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What we see here is a test, something that the reader is told God was not intending to follow through because it was a test of Abraham's faith. But note in that what we see in Abraham's life a School of Faith. In every School of faith one should expect tests, and it was no exception in the life of Abraham:

1. "**Family test**" when he had to leave his loved ones in Ur of the Chaldeans and step out by faith and go to a new land (**Gen. 11:27–12:5**).
2. "**Famine test**" which Abraham failed because he doubted God and went down to Egypt for help (**Gen. 12:10–13:4**).
3. Once back in the land, Abraham passed the "**fellowship test**" when he gave Lot first choice in using the pastureland (**Gen. 13:5–18**).
4. He also passed the "**fight test**" when he defeated the kings (**Gen. 14:1–16**).
5. He also passed the "**fortune test**" when he said no to Sodom's wealth (**Gen. 14:17–24**).
6. But he failed the "**fatherhood test**" when Sarah got impatient with God and suggested that Abraham have a child by Hagar (**Gen. 16**).
7. When the time came to send Ishmael away, Abraham passed the "**farewell test**" even though it broke his heart (**21:14–21**).
8. He passed the ultimate test, the "**First-born test**," when the Father called him to offer his only son as a sacrifice. His response was, "Here I Am." Just as God had always been present in his life to protect, save and deliver him, now Abraham was present to obey God. (**Genesis 21:1**)

This attitude demonstrates and demands **surrender**, **service** and **satisfaction** on man's part.

- Surrender – We see surrender in Jacob's old age when God called him to leave Canaan and move to Egypt. (**Gen. 46:2**; "And God spoke to **Israel** (*indicating he was the nation*) in visions of the night and said, 'Jacob, Jacob.' And he said, 'Here I am.'")
- Service (**Is. 6:8**; "**Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'**")
 - Isaiah was willing to serve the, "Holy, Holy, Holy" (vs 3) God
- Satisfaction: When we say to God, "Here I Am," we are saying that we will be satisfied with whatever God has in store for us. Jesus said, "...your will be done" (**Matthew 26:39**)

Application

We have been called to God's service as His chosen people and His Royal Priesthood to preach the excellencies of Jesus who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. (**1 Peter 2:9**). Our attitude needs to be a resounding and convincing "Here I Am," to the Lord. Just as His attitude and actions are a resounding, "Here I Am," toward us.

3

For God (service of man to man) Genesis 22:7

Explanation

“Isaac spoke to his father Abraham and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” And he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” (Gen.22:7)

Note how the pathos (pain) is increased when Isaac and Abraham call each other “father” and “son” as they engage in a conversation about the sacrifice that is about to take place. No doubt one can see Abraham’s loyalty to God as he has already prepared his heart to sacrifice his only begotten son. But I notice Isaac’s loyalty to his father. It is true the text does not reveal to us his age, and it is purposeful. What we do know is: Isaac was old enough to carry the wood, old enough to logically reason about the “no animal present for the sacrifice” quandary, and therefore, we are left to ponder and reason Isaac’s love, loyalty and trust in his father when he says, “Don’t worry, the Lord will provide.”

- Loyalty

- Saying “Here I Am” to our fellow man demonstrates loyalty to God (“...giving a cup of water to one of these in My name you have done to Me...” **Matthew 25:31ff**)
- Ephesians 6 provides us with a list of how we should treat our family, and how we should treat our employees and employers – in every area with love, respect and honor. Why should we do this **Ephesians 6:7; “With goodwill render service, as to the Lord, and not to people”**

- Love

- With Abraham and Isaac we see: Love of father to son, and son to father, Abraham, yearning, and Isaac trusting, Abraham disposing, and Isaac and his father’s disposal
- **Galatians 5:13; “For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love.”**

- Labor

- Paul was willing to give everything he owned, even his own life for the Corinthians (CORINTHIANS! Imagine that!) because he served them from the heart. (**2 Cor. 2:15; “I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less?”**)
- **Col. 3:23-24; “ Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord and not for people, 24 knowing that it is from the Lord that you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”**

Illustration

What would you pay for used clothes? Maybe it depends on who wore it. Items used by celebrities have sold for sky-high prices by crazed fans, like J. K. Rowling's chair that sold for \$394,000, a lock of Justin Bieber's hair that went for \$40,600, or Britney Spears's chewed gum that sold for \$14,000 (Diana Pearl, "10 Touched-by-a-Celeb Items That Went for Big Bucks at Auction," People Magazine, April 7, 2016, <http://people.com/celebrity/expensive-celebrity-items-at-auction/niall-horans-toast-100000/>). (edited – etr)

The soldiers were focused on themselves and taking what they wanted, but Jesus was concerned with taking care of others. They were concerned with what they could gain. But Jesus was focused on what he could give. Jesus's trust in God's heart compelled him to follow through with God's plan. The specificity of the psalm's prophecy only confirmed that this, indeed, was the Father's will. As the Good Shepherd, Jesus laid down his life for his sheep. As the trusting Son, Jesus served others by selflessly giving his life away. Likewise, the authenticity of our faith is exhibited by our serving others.

Conclusion

We learn from Abraham's attitude when called by the Lord, "Here I Am." We learn from Isaac's attitude when he lovingly served his father and carried the wood that was intended to burn him on the altar. We also learn from the Son of God what it meant to serve others.

Above all, we learn from God that He was and has always been "Here I Am" as our protector from behind and in front, as our Savior.

With His Son hanging on the cross He calls us to obey the Gospel. Jesus Himself knocks on the door. The Messiah of the world calls, will you say, "Here I Am?"

