The stories surrounding Abraham in these chapters are difficult - perhaps impossible - to understand unless we are able to identify with the culture of this time. In this Bible study we focused on 2 main stories. First, why did God ask Abraham to cut animals in half when they entered into a covenant? We easily pass over stories like this when in fact if we are able to understand what this meant to Abraham the meaning is quite spectacular!

Most of the Bible study focused on the story of God's command to sacrifice Isaac. Typically we make direct applications to the Cross in this story, but what did this mean to Abraham and the people of his time?

Appeasement is the mark of paganism all through the Bible. The "gods" are always angry and demand much flowing blood. Child sacrifice was the ultimate act of devotion to these "gods". Sadly, the concept of appeasement persists today, even in Christianity. For example, about the atonement, John Piper would say, God appeased his holy wrath against us. Was the Father appeased by the death of His Son? Does this belief not reflect remnants of pagan beliefs about the gods?

If we understand the context, the story of Abraham and Isaac should help to shatter this believe, rather than to reinforce it.

In the video below, Dr. Brad Cole narrates his powerpoint slide presentation.

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