

GENESIS 22: ABRAHAM'S FAITH IS PROVEN

I. OVERVIEW

- A. God tests Abraham
 - i. He tells him to take Isaac to Moriah and offer him as a burnt offering
 - ii. So Abraham got up and went to Moriah
 - a. Took his donkey, two young men, Isaac, wood for the offering
 - iii. He arrived on the third day
 - a. He left the donkey and the two young men
 - b. Brought the wood, Isaac, the fire and the knife
 - c. Isaac asked where the lamb for the offering is
 - i. Abraham responded that God will provide the lamb
- B. Abraham built the altar and laid Isaac on it
 - i. He was about to kill him when the angel of the Lord called out and stopped him
 - a. Now God knew that Abraham wouldn't withhold his only son
 - ii. Abraham lifted his eyes and saw a ram caught in a thicket
 - a. He took the ram and offered it on the altar
- C. God blesses Abraham because he obeyed God's voice
 - i. I will bless you
 - ii. I will multiply your offspring
 - iii. Your offspring shall conquer his enemies
 - iv. In your offspring all nations of the earth will be blessed
- D. Abraham returned to the two young men and Beersheba
- E. Abraham finds out his brother Nahor has had children by wife Milcah
 - i. Uz, Buz, Kemuel, Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, Bethuel
 - a. Bethuel is the father of Rebekah
 - ii. His concubine Reumah also had children
 - a. Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, Maacah

II. GOD TESTED ABRAHAM – V. 1

- A. To reveal Abraham's faith rather than to produce a result¹

¹ Guzik, D. (2018d). Study Guide for Genesis 22. Blue Letter Bible. https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/genesis/genesis-22.cfm

B. God's tests are not a pass/fail system

- i. More like a chemical test to determine the percentage of certain substances
 - a. 1 Peter 1:6-7 ***In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith – more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire – may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.***

III. HERE I AM – V. 1

- A. Immediate response
- B. More like, "At your service, at once"²

IV. YOUR ONLY SON – V. 2

- A. Proof that Abraham has completely disowned Ishmael

V. WHOM YOU LOVE – V. 2

- A. First time love is mentioned in the Bible
- B. Connected to a father's love for his son
 - i. And the sacrifice of that son³

VI. MORIAH – V. 2

- A. Mount Moriah was where Solomon built his temple
 - i. 2 Chronicles 3:1 ***Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.***
- B. The text doesn't specify a mountain
 - i. Could possibly refer to the land of the Amorites⁴
 - a. Abraham was coming from the land of the Philistines (Genesis 21:34)

VII. OFFER HIM THERE – V. 2

- A. Contradicts God's previous promise that Isaac will be Abraham's heir

VIII. BURNT OFFERING – V. 2

- A. Just like Noah offered a burnt offering on Mount Ararat
 - i. His was an offering of intercession
 - ii. Most costly sacrifice possible

² Speiser, E. A. (1964b). The Ordeal of Isaac. In *The Anchor Bible: Genesis* (p. 162). essay, Doubleday & Company, Inc.

³ Guzik

⁴ Ewing, W. (2004). Moriah, Land Of. In *Bibleatlas.org*. Bible Hub. Retrieved June 19, 2023, from https://bibleatlas.org/mount_moriah.htm.

B. Child sacrifice was normal for surrounding nations

IX. THE THIRD DAY – V. 4

A. The number 3 represents a time of testing

i. God gave Abraham a three day journey to test him

X. COME AGAIN TO YOU – V. 5

A. Abraham believed God would raise Isaac from the dead

i. Hebrews 11:17-19 *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.*

XI. BOUNDED ISAAC HIS SON – V. 9

A. Abraham was well over 100 years old

B. Some say Isaac may have been in his 30's

i. Certainly old enough to carry the wood for the sacrifice

C. Isaac could have easily overpowered his father

i. This speaks of Isaac's faith as well

XII. ANGEL OF THE LORD – V. 11

A. Angel also means messenger

i. Evidence of second person of the Trinity

a. Speaks as distinct from God in verse 12

b. Speaks as God in verses 16-18

XIII. FEAR GOD – V. 12

A. Often we think of reverence or awe

B. But also means genuine fear

i. Luke 12:4-5 *“I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell.*

ii. Jesus was speaking to His disciples here

XIV. YOU HAVE NOT WITHHELD YOUR SON – V. 12

A. Just as God has not withheld his only Son from us

XV. ABRAHAM OFFERED UP THE RAM – V. 13

A. God still required a sacrifice

i. But He provided the substitute⁵

XVI. BY MYSELF I HAVE SWORN– V. 16

A. God takes an oath that He will bless Abraham

i. Oath was sworn to a higher power

ii. If the person did not keep the oath, they are at the mercy of the higher power⁶

iii. There is no higher power than God Himself

a. Hebrews 6:13-18 ***For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.***

XVII. GOD’S THREEFOLD BLESSING FOR ABRAHAM

A. God calls Isaac “your son, your only son” for the third time

B. Then pronounces threefold blessing

i. I will multiply your offspring

a. Just like the stars and the sand

b. Reaffirms promise from Genesis 13:16

i. Genesis 13:16 ***“I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted.”***

c. The stars gave light upon the earth

i. Genesis 1:15 ***“... and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.”***

ii. Your offspring will possess the gate of his enemies

a. Victorious in battle

⁵ Guzik

⁶ Armstrong, S. (2012f, February 20). Genesis 2011 - Lesson 22B. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_22b

- iii. In your offspring all the nations of the earth will be blessed
 - a. Messianic promise

XVIII. 12 SONS OF NAHOR

- A. Number 12 represents governmental authority
 - i. 12 Israelite tribes, 12 disciples
- B. Ishmael had twelve sons
- C. Nahor had twelve sons
- D. All before Jacob had twelve sons
 - i. Man's attempt to establish God's kingdom without God's blessing
- E. Nahor's firstborn is called Uz
 - i. Job is from the land of Uz
 - a. His righteousness was tested by God just like Abraham
 - i. He lost all his children and his wealth
 - ii. But gained even more blessing when his righteousness was proven
 - ii. Uz is symbolic of the difficult, unredeemed world⁷

XIX. PURPOSE OF THE STORY

- A. This story is troubling, disturbing, problematic
- B. Abraham's life was up and down in terms of obeying God⁸
 - i. This is what proves that he has faith in God
 - a. James 2:21 **Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar?**
- C. This is a prophetic reenactment⁹
 - i. God asked prophets to do this to make a point
 - a. He asked Hosea to marry a prostitute
 - i. Hosea 1:2 **When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, “Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the Lord.”**

⁷ Riskin, S. (2011, November 8). *The Begats of Abraham's Brother*. Jewish Telegraphic Agency.
<https://www.jta.org/2011/11/08/ny/the-begats-of-abrahams-brother>

⁸ Armstrong, S. (2012e, February 12). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 22A*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyversem ministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_22a

⁹ Patton, A. (2020). *Why Did God Ask Abraham to Sacrifice Isaac?*. BibleProject. <https://bibleproject.com/articles/why-did-god-ask-abraham-to-sacrifice-isaac/>

ii. Ezekiel 4:4-5 “*Then lie on your left side, and place the punishment of the house of Israel upon it* (a brick with “Jerusalem” engraved on it). **For the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their punishment. For I assign to you a number of days, 390 days, equal to the number of the years of their punishment. So long shall you bear the punishment of the house of Israel.**”

XX. POINTS TO JESUS

A. Parallels between Isaac’s sacrifice and Jesus

- i. Isaac was Abraham’s only son – v. 2
 - a. Jesus is God’s only begotten son
 - i. John 3:16 NKJV “**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**”
- ii. Isaac was loved by his father – v. 2
 - a. Jesus is loved by His Father
 - i. John 5:20 “**For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel.**”
- iii. Isaac was offered by his father – v. 2
 - a. Jesus was offered by His Father
 - i. Isaiah 53:10 **Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.**
- iv. Isaac was a burnt offering – v. 2
 - a. Jesus was a burnt offering
 - i. Ephesians 5:2 **And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.**
- v. Isaac was offered on a mountain – v. 2
 - a. Jesus was crucified on a hill
 - i. Mark 15:22 **And they brought him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull).**
- vi. Isaac went to the land of Moriah on a donkey – v. 2-3
 - a. Jesus rode a donkey to the temple mount at Moriah

- i. Matthew 21:6-12 ***The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?” And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.” And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons.***
- vii. Isaac was accompanied by two young men – v. 3
 - a. Jesus was crucified with two men
 - i. Luke 23:32-33 ***Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.***
- viii. Abraham and Isaac arrived on the third day – v. 4
 - a. Abraham considered Isaac dead the day God spoke and raised to life on the third day
 - i. Hebrews 11:19 ***He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.***
 - b. Jesus was resurrected on the third day
 - i. Luke 24:7 ***“...that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.”***
- ix. Isaac carried the wood that would be used for his sacrifice – v. 6
 - a. Jesus carried the wooden cross for his crucifixion
 - i. John 19:16-17 ***So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.***
- x. Abraham gave his only son – v. 12
 - a. God gave his only son

- i. John 3:16 “**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.**”
- xi. God provided Abraham and Isaac a ram for the offering – v. 13
 - a. God provided a lamb for the whole world
 - i. John 1:29 **The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”**

XXI. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

A. Has God asked you to do anything that seems to contradict earlier promises or promises found in Scripture? How have you responded to God? -

B. What was God testing in you during those times?

C. How quickly do you respond to God when He speaks to you?

D. Is your trust placed in God’s promises or in the God who makes the promises?

E. If you have children, do you model your faith and obedience to God for your children? Are they learning submission to God by watching you?

F. Reflect on the fact that Jesus took your place as the sacrificial Lamb. How does that make you feel? What is something you can do to show your gratitude for His sacrifice?

XXII. FURTHER STUDY

A. What is the reward for staying faithful through a time of testing? See James 1:12. What does this mean?

B. What is the purpose of the burnt offering in Leviticus 1? Why do you think God required Abraham to make a burnt offering?

C. What makes the God of Abraham different from other ancient pagan gods? See Micah 6:7-8. How is this different from what the world would require of us even today?

D. How does our obedience to God affect our children? See Genesis 26:4-5.

E. When we experience new birth, what are we asked to do with our new life (Romans 12:1-2)? What are some practical ways you can do this?

F. What is the proof that we have faith in God? See James 2:20-24.
