

The Offering of Isaac

Genesis 22:1-24

- I. THE COMMAND TO OFFER (Genesis 22:1-2)
 - A. The Temptation in the Command (Genesis 22:1)
 1. God did tempt Abraham (Genesis 22:1)
 2. The disparity of the situation – “*God did tempt Abraham*” (Genesis 22:1; cp. James 1:13-15). If God doesn’t tempt man with evil, then why did He tempt Abraham here in Genesis 22? Is the Bible in error? Do we need a better translation? Could it be that the word tempt/temptation has a broader meaning than how we use it today?
 3. The consistency of the situation –
 - a. Unquestionably, God did tempt Abraham, yet the temptation was NOT intended to bring about sin. Notice James 1:13-15 again (James 1:13-15).
 - b. God never intended for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. This would have contradicted God’s character and plan (Jeremiah 7:31; Jeremiah 19:5; Jeremiah 32:35). The request was merely a matter of the heart.
 - c. Most consider the scripture’s usage of “*temptation*” most often associated with something sinful. Though this most often may be the case, context always determines the meaning and distinguishes between the varying definitions of a word. With that in mind there are occasions in scripture where “*temptation*” may be defined as a testing or trial. Genesis 22 is such one of those cases.
 - d. This temptation served as a test of faith in order to demonstrate and bring out the best in Abraham (Hebrews 11:17; 1 Peter 1:6-7). The Devil, on the other hand, always tempts to demonstrate and bring out the worst in mankind (Matthew 4:1).
 - e. Basically, temptation functions as a means to try one’s faith. James 1:2-3 clearly offers the connection as it incorporates the words *temptations* and *trying* interchangeably.
 - B. The Availability of Abraham (Genesis 22:1)
 1. The calling
 - a. God did tempt Abraham
 - b. God said unto him, “*Abraham*”

2. Abraham answered
 - a. The nature of his answer
 - (1) The call for God's attention—*"Behold"*
 - (2) The willingness of Abraham—*"here I am"*
 - b. The commonality of Abraham's answer
 - (1) Demonstrated by Jacob (Genesis 31:11; Genesis 46:2)
 - (2) Demonstrated by Moses (Exodus 3:4)
 - (3) Demonstrated by Samuel (1 Samuel 3:5-8)
 - (4) Demonstrated by Isaiah (Isaiah 6:8)

- C. Whom to Offer (Genesis 22:2)
 1. Its urgency—*"Take now"*
 2. Its cost
 - a. Take thine only son Isaac
 - (1) Abraham had another son, Ishmael; however, he was a son of the flesh, not the son of promise, Isaac (see Galatians 4:22-31).
 - (2) Ishmael had been rejected by God and cast out (Genesis 21:12-14).
 - (3) Isaac was, therefore, Abraham's only son (Genesis 22:12).
 - b. Whom thou lovest
 - (1) Note: This is the first usage of the word *"love."* It is interesting and fitting that it describes the relationship between a father and his son!
 - (2) The first usage of the word *"love"* in the New Testament involves the love of God the Father for God the Son (Matthew 3:17).
 3. Its journey
 - a. Abraham was to *"go to the land of Moriah."*
 - b. Moriah would later be the location of Solomon's temple (2 Chronicles 3:1)
 - (1) There is an obvious relationship between this place and Calvary where Christ was crucified.
 - (2) It is very likely that the very location of this sacrifice and Christ's crucifixion are one and the same.
 4. Its faith
 - a. The call to offer a son with the expectation that God would raise him from the dead (Hebrews 11:17-19).
 - b. The call to go to a mountain to be determined upon arriving.
 - (1) God did not reveal the exact location. Abraham was only told to go to a general area.
 - (2) The lesson in this is that we learn the will of God as we do the will of God. God seldom discloses to us all the details at the start (2 Corinthians 5:7). We

normally receive just enough information to guide us one step at a time. Thus, to know more about God's will, you must obey what you already know.

II. THE COMPLIANCE IN OFFERING (Genesis 22:3-10)

A. Abraham's Obedience (Genesis 22:3)

1. His immediate obedience
 - a. Abraham immediately arose – the beginning of obedience.
 - b. He rose early in the morning – the timing of his obedience – It appears that the next morning Abraham followed through with what he was told.
2. His preparation for obedience
 - a. He saddled his ass.
 - b. He took two of his young men and Isaac.
 - c. He clave the wood for the offering.
3. He "*went unto the place of which God had told him*"— the trip of obedience.

B. The Time of Offering (Genesis 22:4)

1. On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes. This occurs on the third day of their journey. This time associates the timing of the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day (Matthew 16:21; Matthew 27:62-65; Acts 10:40; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

C. Abraham's Faith (Genesis 22:5)

1. "*I and the lad will go... and come again*"
2. This language declares a couple different things
 - a. One, this was a private event for Abraham. Our relationship with God is something that we have to have. We cannot depend upon others for our relationship between us and God.
 - (1) As children grow, they will need to form their own relationship with God.
 - (2) Salvation is between the sinner and the Saviour. That is, my salvation doesn't work for the next person, it is one on one.
 - b. Two, this statement showed Abraham's faith.
 - (1) Abraham declared to his young men that he and Isaac would go and worship and that they both would return.
 - (2) This means that he believed God would somehow bring Isaac back to life if he indeed did "kill him" as a sacrifice (Hebrews 11:17-19).

- D. The Parts of the Offering (Genesis 22:6)
1. The wood
 2. The sacrifice—Isaac
 3. The fire
 4. The knife
- E. The Perplexity in the Offering (Genesis 22:7-8)
1. The asking in the perplexity (Genesis 22:7)
 - a. *“Isaac spake... and said, My father... Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”* (Genesis 22:7).
 - b. Isaac’s asking about the items required for the offering shows his desire to offer the right sacrifice to the Lord.
 2. The answering of the perplexity (Genesis 22:8)
 - a. *“God will provide himself a lamb”*
 - (1) Note the peculiar wording in this verse—provide HIMSELF.
 - (2) The modern versions change this wording thus destroying the illustration.
 - (a) NIV—“God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering.” (Genesis 22:8 – NIV)
 - (b) CEV—“God will provide the lamb.” (Genesis 22:7,8 – CEV)
 - (c) NAB—“God will provide the sheep for the burnt offering.” (Genesis 22:8 – NAB [Catholic])
 - b. Isaac’s faith in the answer (Genesis 22:8b)
 - c. God’s provision for a lamb (Genesis 22:8; Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29-36; 1 Peter 1:19; Revelation 5:6, 12).
 - (1) Man did not provide himself a Saviour.
 - (2) God provided the Saviour in Christ. The Son of God (God Himself).
- F. The Unwavering Obedience of Abraham (Genesis 22:9-10)
1. The preparation for the offering (Genesis 22:9)
 - a. The arrival at the site.
 - b. The building of the altar.
 - c. The preparation of the sacrifice.
 - (1) *“Abraham... bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood”* (Genesis 22:9).
 - (2) Isaac submitted fully to Abraham. Isaac could have easily overpowered his father and ran away, but he did not.

- (3) This is a beautiful picture of the Son of God's submission to the Father's will. He willingly submitted Himself to the will of the Father and died on the cross (Luke 22:42).
2. The finishing of the offering (Genesis 22:10)
 - a. *"Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son"* (Genesis 22:10).
 - b. Abraham showed his willingness to follow through with God's will.
 - c. Abraham was just seconds from plunging the knife into Isaac when the Angel of the LORD called out to him.
 - d. This was extraordinary proof of Abraham's devotion to and love for the Lord.
 - e. This action also once again gives us a beautiful picture of the love of God for us in the giving of His Son for us (Romans 5:8).

III. THE CHANGE IN THE OFFERING (Genesis 22:11-14)

- A. The Call from Heaven (Genesis 22:11)
 1. The angel calls unto Abraham out of heaven.
 2. Abraham is immediately and continually available (cp. Genesis 22:1).
- B. The Praise of the Lord (Genesis 22:12)—*"I know that thou fearest God"*
 1. *"Lay not thine hand upon the lad"*— more welcomed words could not have been spoken.
 2. *"for now I know that thou fearest God"*
 - a. If we want Divine providence working in our favour, we must be in the place of obedience.
 - b. Being out of the place of obedience will result in many troubles and many missed blessings.
 - c. The double-name call *"Abraham, Abraham"* which indicates importance, is the first five double-name callings in Scripture.
 - (1) *"Abraham, Abraham"* (Genesis 22:12)
 - (2) *"Moses, Moses"* (Exodus 3:4)
 - (3) *"Samuel, Samuel"* (1 Samuel 3:10)
 - (4) *Simon, Simon"* (Luke 22:31)
 - (5) *"Saul, Saul"* (Acts 9:4; Acts 22:7; Acts 26:14)
 3. The cost in the praise (Genesis 22:12)
 - a. We all like the praise of God, but to obtain that praise we must first obey God.
 - b. To obtain that praise you may have to pay a very high price in devotion and sacrifice. However, the praise of God is worth it.

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- C. The Substitution of the Ram (Genesis 22:13)—*in the stead of his son*”
1. The place of the substitution
 - a. “*Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns*” (Genesis 22:13).
 - (1) The substitution was near.
 - (2) Abraham could easily see and obtain the ram.
 - b. Our substitution
 - (1) In like manner, Christ is near; for He came into the world where sinners were.
 - (2) He is as near as calling on Him.
 - (3) A sinner may call upon Him to be saved anytime, anywhere (Isaiah 55:6; Romans 10:9).
 2. The possessing of the substitution
 - a. “*Abraham went and took the ram*” (Genesis 22:13).
 - (1) Abraham had to take the ram if the ram was going to replace Isaac.
 - (2) Until Abraham did that it was no use to him.
 - b. Our substitution
 - (1) In like manner, Christ must be received as Saviour if He is going to provide an escape from judgment.
 - (2) The Saviour is ready to be received by the sinner (Hebrews 9:28).
 3. The purpose of the substitution
 - a. “*Offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son*” (Genesis 22:13).
 - (1) The purpose of the ram was to provide a substitute for Isaac.
 - (2) Abraham would place this ram on the altar in the stead of his son.
 - b. Our substitute (2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:22-24; 1 Peter 3:18)
 - (1) In like manner, the purpose of Christ coming to earth was to provide a substitute for man.
 - (2) Christ died in our stead and took the punishment of sin for us, so that we might be saved through His substitutionary work.
- D. The Naming of the Place (Genesis 22:14)
1. Jehovah-jireh—meaning “*the LORD who sees*”
 2. God saw the need and provided the necessary solution for Abraham’s offering.
 3. Prophetically, this points to the sacrifice of the Messiah.

IV. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE OFFERING (Genesis 22:15-19)

- A. The Second Call from Heaven (Genesis 22:15)
 - 1. The angel of the LORD called unto Abraham
 - 2. The second time out of heaven

- B. The Oath of the LORD (Genesis 22:16)—He Swore by Himself (Isaiah 45:23; Hebrews 6:13-14)
 - 1. The cause of the oath—*“because thou hast done this thing”* (What thing?
A: His obedience in following God’s request to offer Isaac).
 - 2. The nature of the oath— (see Genesis 22:17-18)

- C. The Promise Made to Abraham (Genesis 22:17-18)
 - 1. The multiplying of his seed (Genesis 22:17a)
 - a. As the stars of heaven
 - b. As the sand of the sea shore
 - 2. The possession of the gate of his enemies (Genesis 22:17b)
 - 3. The blessing of all nations in his seed (Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:14-18)

- D. The Return of Abraham (Genesis 22:19)
 - 1. The perfection in the return
 - a. *“So Abraham returned unto his young men* (Genesis 22:19).
 - b. Earlier, in faith, Abraham had told the two young servants, *“I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you”* (Genesis 22:5). What a blessing it must have been to come again with Isaac.
 - 2. The pleasure in the return
 - a. *“Went together to Beersheba”* (Genesis 22:19).
 - b. One can read between the lines here and know there was much pleasure in Abraham in being able to return to Sarah with Isaac.
 - c. Certainly, the trip home was a pleasant one, full of joy. Note: Obedience produces joy for the believer.
 - 3. The pedigree (family) in the return
 - a. *“Abraham dwelt at Beersheba”* (Genesis 22:19).
 - b. Abraham dwelt in Beersheba with Isaac.
 - (1) He had given up Isaac for God, but God had given Isaac back to him.
 - (2) Never had Abraham so valued his son as he did after Mt. Moriah.
 - (3) Abraham’s obedience would enhance his family life in magnificent ways.

V. THE COMMUNICATION AFTER THE OFFERING (Genesis 22:20-24)