



GENESIS 22:1-14

LESSON: A TEST OF FAITH — July 28, 2019

INTRODUCTION:

21:22-34 The end of the **Chapter 21** (verses 22-34) recounts a covenant between Abraham and Abimelech, the king of the region where Abraham is living. The king has seen that God is with Abraham in everything that he does, so he wants to sign a treaty with Abraham stating that Abraham “will not deal falsely with [the king] or [his] children or [his] descendants” (verse 23). And Abraham swears to this. Now, Abram brings up the matter about a “well” that he has dug, but Abimelech’s men have seized it. But, Abimelech says he does not know anything about it. This is his first time hearing of it. So Abraham brings to Abimelech sheep and oxen (cattle) making a covenant, as he separated seven ewe lambs from the flock. If Abimelech accepted these seven ewe lambs from Abraham’s hand, this transaction becomes a testimony or witness that Abraham dug the “**well**”, and that the well belongs to him. He called the place “**Beersheba**” (which means “**well of the oath**”), because that was where they had sworn the oath. After the treaty has been ratified, Abimelech and his army commander Phichol went back to the land of the Philistines. Abraham planted a “**tamarisk tree**” or “**a grove**” (*provided shady resting places for travelers*) at Beersheba, and there he worshiped the LORD, the Everlasting God. He also stayed in the land of the Philistines for a long time.

LESSON: I. AN EXTREMELY HARD THING TO DO GENESIS 22:1-6

22:1 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. The words “*after these things*” mean all the things that had occurred earlier in Abraham’s life. Then it says that God did tempt. The word “**tempt**” here means “**proved or tested**” because God does not tempt anyone with evil (Jam.1:13). Abraham’s trust and faith in God was tested. God gave many tests:

1. First, was the **family test**, when he had to leave his loved ones and step out on faith to go to a new land (11:27—12:5).
2. This was followed by the **famine test**, which Abraham failed because he doubted God and went down to Egypt for help (12:10—13:4).
3. Once back in the land, Abraham passed the **fellowship test** when he gave Lot first choice in the selection of the pastureland (13:5-18).
4. He also passed the **fight test** when he defeated the kings (14:1-16).
5. He passed the **fortune test** when he said no to Sodom’s wealth after a victory (14:21-24).
6. But he failed the **fatherhood test** when Sarah got impatient with God and suggested that Abraham have a child with Hagar (Chp.16).
7. When the time came to send Ishmael away, Abraham passed the **farewell test** even though it broke his heart (21:14-21).

Learn to distinguish between trials and temptations.

- **Temptations** come from our desires within us (Jam.1:12-16) while **trials** come from the Lord who has a special purpose to fulfill.
- **Temptations** are used by the devil to bring out the worst in us, but **trials** are used by the Holy Spirit to bring out the best in us (22:1-6).
- **Temptations** seem logical while **trials** seem very unreasonable. Why would God give Abraham

a son and then ask Abraham to kill him? (22:2).

God calls Abraham's name and Abraham answers, "**Behold, here I am.**"

22:2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest — In this new **command**, God called him to a new test, and this was concerning his son.

8. This was the **sacrifice test** of faith and obedience.

He had had many tests, but not like this one. In this one, three commands were before him.

1. Take your son, your only son, your beloved Isaac,

Abraham had a son by a slave woman, so obviously, Isaac was not Abraham's only son, but he was the only promised son. So, in that day there is a difference in the offspring of the slave and free woman.

A man's offspring by a slave woman was not ordinarily given the rights that belonged to the son born of the free woman. Only if in the course of his lifetime the father had said to the male offspring of his slave woman (in public and in an official manner), "**Thou art my son,**" that the slave woman's offspring would be treated as a real son of the father. If so, then he was counted as an heir; if not, he was given gifts and separated from the household before the inheritance was divided.

But, Isaac remained Abraham's only son in the legal sense; though he had several other offspring (25:1-4). He had only one son in the unique sense of conception in their old age from God's promise, and his entire inheritance was given to him (25:5-6). When the New Testament refers to Isaac (Heb.11:17), he's called his only begotten (*monogenēs*). It is clear that the expression "**only begotten**" refers to status. Thus, when Christ is referred to as the only begotten it is a reference to his status as the unique son of the Father. It does not signify that he had a beginning. This also clarifies ...**whom thou lovest**, —This is Abraham's promised child from God and he loved him very much. For twenty years of blessing and happiness, Isaac has been the delight of his parent's hearts.

THE SECOND COMMAND:

22:2b...and get thee into the land of Moriah; —

2. Go to the land of Moriah where you are to...

Now, Mt. Moriah later called Judah would become the site of the temple (2Chro.3:1). Today there stands in that very place the Dome of the Rock, a Moslem mosque, built over the great rock that formed the altar upon which Abraham offered Isaac. In the New Testament, Calvary was identified with this site.

THE THIRD COMMAND:

22:2c ...and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

3. Offer him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I shall point out to you.

This identification, along with the three days that Abraham traveled, suggests that this scene is a "**typology**" of God's sacrifice of His own Son. When God said of Jesus, this is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, He still sacrificed Him; offered Him up. Jesus stayed in the grave for 3 days and 3 nights. This was a three day journey for Abraham and Isaac. The promised seed (Ishmael) had to be sacrificed; had to be offered up; he had to be put to the test by the one who loved him. This was the son for whom Abraham had waited a lifetime and whom he loved above all others. And now, he was to be given up to God as a childless burnt offering. This was a startling command to Abraham by God. This was surely a test of faith. This would mean killing the son and ending the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant. So, this would call for Abraham to walk by faith.

- Abraham would make the supreme sacrifice.
- Abraham would surrender his heart, will, soul, and his spirit to God.

22:3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men

with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. When morning comes Abraham and Isaac get up early. He takes Isaac, the wood for the fire, a donkey, and two of his servants which would take three days to get to a mountain God had spoken of, but didn't tell him which mountain yet. Points on trust:

- ¹Abraham is trusting God, even when he does not understand.
- He didn't debate or seek counsel from others.
- Abraham is trusting, even when he does not feel like it.

There are a number of symbolisms in these Scriptures:

2

God sacrificing His only son.	Abraham sacrificing his son.
Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an ass.	The provisions for this sacrifice were carried on an ass.
Jesus died between two men on the cross.	Abraham took two men with them.
Jesus carried a wooden cross.	Isaac carried wood for the sacrifice. (wood means worldliness).
Jesus went to Golgatha on orders from God.	Abraham and Isaac went to Moriah in Jerusalem on orders from God.
Jesus obeyed His Father and said "nevertheless not my will, but thine."	Isaac obeyed Abraham without question.

22:4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. As Abraham laid down his head each of those nights as they traveled, he must have remembered the covenant which God had repeatedly affirmed to him. You have to keep the picture before you. And now, on the third day Abraham sees the place afar off. ³Note the repetition of threes in chapter 22:

- **3 commands** (Gen 22:2)
- **3 day journey** (Gen 22:4)
- **3 people accompanied** Abraham: Isaac and two servants (Gen 22:3)
- Abraham **took 3 items**: the wood, the fire, and the knife (Gen 22:6)
- The repeat of the **3-fold blessing** (Gen 22:17-18)
- "Only son" repeated **three times** (Gen 22:2, 12, 16)

"Will provide" = yireh (Jireh) repeated twice (Gen 22:8, 14)

22:5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. He tells his servants to stay and wait with the donkeys, while he and his son go to worship, and they will come back again. Abraham and Isaac were not going to the mount to have a time of joyful praise, they were going to bow down to the Lord and simply take God at His Word. He said that he and Isaac would go there to worship and return again. Can you imagine his thoughts?— Maybe God would provide a substitute or maybe God would resurrect Isaac. Abraham's trust in God had grown so much.

22:6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife;— Abraham and Isaac had a tender walk together up to the top of the mountain. Abraham was bound to be hurting, his heart suffering a piercing pain as though a knife had been thrust into his soul. Isaac's carrying the "**wood**" was a type of Christ, who carried his own cross. Isaac, the son of promise didn't know all the specifics, but still willingly bore the burden of the wood upon himself, even as Jesus would bear the burden of our sin upon Himself. The wood was laid upon them for God's purpose. Abraham, with a steady and undaunted resolution, carried the fatal knife and fire. The

"fire" here speaks of judgment, and the *"knife"* speaks of the execution of judgment and of sacrifice. The parallel is very similar to the ordeal God the Father must have endured as Jesus headed to Calvary.

22:6b ...and they went both of them together. Abraham and Isaac both went together with a singleness of purpose—obedience. There was no division among Isaac or Abraham. They both walked together as one. At each step, Abraham and Isaac were together, both physically and purposefully in what they were doing. ⁴It is interesting to note that the only ones who would see what would happen upon that mountain would be Abraham and Isaac, father and son - much like what happened on Calvary that day, when darkness for three hours hid the eyes of prying men from the Savior bearing the sins of the world, and God's wrath upon that cross (See Matthew 27:45-46). Now everything was ready!

II. A DECISIVE APPEARANCE OF GOD GENESIS 22:7-14

22:7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?— A very touching scene: Isaac says, *"My father"*; Abraham replies, *"Here am I, my son."* It's a very different scene on the cross when Jesus cried out to His Father. But, as Abraham and Isaac go on their way, Isaac notices that they don't have an animal for the sacrifice. He says, *"Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb?"* He couldn't understand that having taken no sacrifice with them, how would they offer burnt offerings? ⁵*"Where is the lamb?"* is continued to be asked for hundreds of years by various prophets and hopeful people until the day dawned when a Man from Galilee came to the lower end of the Jordan River to be baptized by a prophet who had been turning the countryside upside down. The prophet's name was John The Baptist. Do you remember John the Baptist's words? Do you remember what he said when he saw Jesus? John 1:29 tells us what he said, *"Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"*

22:8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering:— Abraham spoke most assuredly what he believed, and he believed with unshakable faith that God would provide Himself a lamb. God did provide a substitute animal for Abraham's offering, but it was a ram, not a lamb. The lamb that God would ultimately provide as an offering for Himself would be Jesus the Messiah, the pure and spotless lamb who takes away the sins of the world.

22:9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. They traveled from Beersheba to Mt. Moriah up to the mountain God had specified to Abraham.

1. The place was reached, the altar built, and the wood arranged.
2. At last there was nothing left but to bind Isaac and place him upon the wood and plunge the knife into his heart. Isaac willingly let his father bind and offer him. He certainly was not eager to die, but he submitted to Abraham's will and thus to God's will. Much like our Savior came down from Heaven, and willingly laid down His life to save us.

Have you offered up your life as a sacrifice to God, that is, Have you made the absolute surrender of your life to God?

22:10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. As said in verse 8, Abraham and Isaac were together, both physically and purposefully, until now. ⁶It was only at the end

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE



when Abraham bound Isaac to the altar, and drew his knife that Isaac would have felt separated and unsure of what his father was doing. This again is a key pointer to the Father's presence with Jesus as He went to the cross. The Father had been with Jesus His whole life and never had they been separated. Yet we read that while on the cross, as the sins of the world were placed upon Jesus, He cried out **"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"** Like Isaac, Jesus was suddenly unsure of the purpose of His Father (*but nevertheless*). But the victory was won on the cross, and the presence of His Father was restored to Jesus as we see Him cry out a final time before dying, **"Father into your hands I commit my spirit."** Perhaps the Lord asked more of Abraham than He had ever asked of any man. But it all came together when Abraham took the knife, his surrender was complete.

22:11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. God already knew what Abraham would do before he did it; He just wants Abraham, as well as us to know that after hearing God, it takes faith to do His Will! And action follows. The test of all tests was displayed by a mortal man, and from heaven the angel of the Lord called his name twice. Verse 1, God called his name once, but here it's repeated, which denotes the urgency of the intervention. Abraham sounds pretty calm, yet I know his heart was pounding, saying, **"Here am I."** This is his first action—answering God. Somehow, he knew the voice calling him; right in the nick of time. He's heard it before. It always brings relief!

22:12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. The very words Abraham had been wanting to hear for days—**"Lay not your hand upon the lad, neither do any thing to him."** What sweet words that came from heaven. When the God of the universe says **"now I know..."**, that will mean that you will no longer just be talking, but it will be you acting on what you believe. Actions speak louder than words! God will know that you fear Him, and you will know it too. **"Fear Him"** simply means reverencing Him; keeping Him in the utmost priority of love. God knows everything, even the test designed to see if Abraham would be obedient. You might be obedient in some things, but not in another area. You might be obedient only when you feel like it. You might be obedient when it's convenient and conceivable for you. But, the one you have to prove it to is to God. This test was even to the point of giving up his own son; his own flesh and blood, that made God know that Abraham fears and reverences Him. God makes Himself known to Abraham by using the words **"I know"** and **"me."** You remember when Abraham and Sarah acted in disbelief by trying to get the promised seed through another way. God knows now that Abraham has learned his lesson. ⁷Abraham proved to himself and us how great his faith was, and how much he loved the Lord more than all else, including his beloved son of promise! Abraham obeyed God because of the love and fear (i.e. reverential awe and respect) he had for the Lord God Almighty whom he knows will keep His promises. **The point is:** God is after His peoples' heart, and the surrender of their spirit to be unto Him.

22:13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. Abraham's focus was so intense and on point that he hadn't taken his eyes off of the assignment at hand, until the angel of the Lord's announcement from heaven came. Then and only then did he lift up his eyes. At this point he saw a ram, an offering for the sacrifice in which God had provided. You talk about on-time; now that's right on-time! ⁸This ram, a substitute; its blood also had to be shed before it was burnt completely on the altar. All the Old Testament animal sacrifices - from those animals slain

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for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to those Passover lambs being slain in the same day that Christ was crucified - and their shed blood (that provided an atonement - a covering for their souls, see Leviticus 17:11) pointed toward the great Sacrifice of Christ and the blood He shed on the cross of Calvary for the sins of the world. ⁹This is the greatest symbolism of Jesus' sacrifice of all. Jesus is our substitute. We should have suffered and died on that cross, but Jesus, God's Son took our place. He was our substitute. God has always provided a substitute. That's what we see here.

22:14 And Abraham called the name of that place: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. ¹⁰*"Jehovah Jireh"* - the Lord my Provider! The name literally means, *"The Lord Will See or Provide,"* signifying that the Lord has seen my need and will provide it. As they walk with the Provider, they will have all their other needs met as well. Now, all of us who trust in **Jehovah-jireh** have the same promise. The Bible teaches that God saw our greatest need—Salvation. And it's in the Savior—Jesus!

SUMMARY:

God puts Abraham to the test. He called his name once and Abraham answered **"Here I am!"** Abraham is to take his only son to the land of Moriah, and then he is to sacrifice his only son Isaac; the son he loves, his promised son. Have you ever told yourself, this is only a test? Well, when you know that, it will take all within you to stand till it's worked out, it's a test. Will we give up what we can't hold on to, to allow God to give us what we can't get without Him? Abraham is to offer burnt offerings upon one of the mountains in the land of Moriah that God will lead him to. He doesn't even know which mountain. Isn't that just like God, to tell you to go, but still not all the specifics? Well, they get up very early and leave with a donkey and two servants. It takes 3 days to get there. Then Abraham and Isaac traveled up a mountain alone to worship. Abraham's desire was for both of them to return back down the mountain. They went together, Isaac carrying the wood and Abraham carrying the knife and the fire for the burnt offering. **(22:1-6).**

Isaac asks Abraham *"Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"* Abraham simply says *"God will provide himself a lamb for the burnt offering."* After arriving, and then without a word, Abraham built an altar, laid the wood in order, bound Isaac his son, and laid Isaac upon the wood on the altar. This was absolute surrender for the both of them. Abraham was about to plunge the knife into Isaac, when the angel of the Lord called his name twice from heaven and told him not to harm Isaac. God saw in Abraham's heart that he loved and reverence Him (God) more than he loved his son. God provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac; its horns were caught in the thicket and couldn't get away. So Abraham took the **"ram"** and offered him up for the burnt offering instead of his son to worship the Lord. *"Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh"* which means *"The Lord shall be seen"*, that is, *"The Lord will provide."* Yes. God did provide a lamb for Himself for the offering **(22:7-14).**

APPLICATION:

My test may not always be your test, but rest assured, there is a test of our faith and obedience unto God. Our very purpose counts on it to show God and the world that we belong to Him!