

The Offering of Isaac ('The Lord Will Provide')

Genesis 22.1-19

In Genesis 21 we cheered the miracle of Isaac's birth. Now we are shocked: God tells Abraham to sacrifice his son. What is going on here? The more we gaze at this story, the more we see God's plan for His own Son, and ultimately for us...on the journey of faith.

God Tests Abraham's Faith: "Sacrifice your son!"

God asks believers to surrender their best to Him.

Abraham Obeys the Lord: A journey of faith!

Faithful believers surrender their best to the Lord.

Isaac's Life is Spared: God provides a sacrifice.

Faithful believers worship God and receive abundant blessing.



Digging Deeper

1. This chapter opens by telling us that God *tested* Abraham. This is not unlike *tests* we may face in our Christian lives. God gave Abraham a command – admittedly, a stunning one: *Offer your son as a burnt offering!* While God's commands in the Bible to us are not so dramatic, they *test* our faith: *Will we obey God, or will we go our own way?* Interestingly, the words in Hebrew or Greek for *test* can also mean *tempt*. God *tests* us; Satan *tempts* us. How is every *test* of faith also a *temptation* to do evil? How is your faith being *tested*? What commands of God are difficult for you to obey now? Notice how quickly Abraham obeys (v3)!
2. From Beersheba to Mt. Moriah was a three-day journey (about 50 miles). Let's engage in a little sanctified imagination: Twice we read that Abraham and Isaac *walked on together* (6, 8). We know they talked (vv7-8), so...what do you imagine Abraham talked about for those three days? Now let's get real: Have you ever faced a difficult trial, maybe with a child or loved one who was facing a crisis? Perhaps you knew what it was (hard exam, major surgery): What do you say in those times? Where do you turn? How do you help another person face their trials?
3. Have you ever doubted the goodness of God? We often think of biblical heroes as if they were mythical: A *real* Abraham might well have wondered as he walked with Isaac, *God, what are You thinking? Why do You want me to kill Isaac? Is that the kind of thing that gives You pleasure?* What Abraham couldn't see, but what we can, is what God was doing, and how it would point to His final solution to the problem of sin. How does your view of God affect your outlook on life?
4. There are many ideas in this story which 'echo' in the story of God sending His Son to earth as a sacrifice for sin. Reflect on the story of Calvary (not far from Mt. Moriah), and the love which allowed the hands which held the hammers and nails to crucify His Son...yet stayed the hand of Abraham from killing his son.