

Gen. 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*.

Gen. 22:2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Now comes the story of Abraham's biggest test of faith. (tempt = test, prove) God speaks to Abraham again; Abraham is quick to reply, "Here I am."

Then God tells him to take his son, his only son—Even though Ishmael was his son, he is no longer a part of Abraham's life. Isaac is the only son of God's promise of blessing through Abraham. He is to take Isaac to the land of Moriah and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on the mountain to which God directs him.

Gen. 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.

Again, without hesitation, Abraham gets up early the next morning and saddles his donkey. He takes two of his servants and Isaac. He cuts up enough wood for the burnt offering and sets out for the land to which God directed him.

Gen. 22:4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

Gen. 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.

On the third day Abraham looked up and saw their destination in the distance. (How did he recognize it? Had he been there before?) So he tells the servants to stay with the donkey while he takes the boy with him to worship. He confidently tells them that he *and the lad* will return to them.

Abraham and his obedience at work again. He never doubts God's promise to bless the nations of the world through Isaac. He probably didn't understand this directive at all, but he knew he was not going to lose Isaac forever. He knew that God could and would raise him from the dead to keep His promise.

Gen. 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; and they went both of them together.

Gen. 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?

Gen. 22:8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

Abraham has Isaac carry the wood, and he carries the fire and the knife. Now Isaac realizes they are prepared to make a sacrifice, but they have no lamb. He asks his father about it, and Abraham tells him that God will provide the lamb. So they walked on together.

(6/06) We aren't told how old Isaac is, but he is old enough to carry a bundle of wood and reason that they needed a lamb to make a sacrifice. In the next verse we know that Abraham is the stronger of the two or that Isaac is a very submissive young man—or both.

Gen. 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.

When they reached the designated place, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then Abraham binds his son Isaac and places him on the wood on the altar. We are not told that Isaac struggled. I think he had been told about God's promise to his father and how his own birth was a special miracle gift from God to his parents. Abraham was probably very careful in teaching Isaac about how to honor God in his life as part of his obedience to God when He made His covenant with Abraham. So, even though he must have been scared at the thought of being stabbed and burned, he had learned well from his father's teaching and example.

Gen. 22:10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

Gen. 22:11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I.

Gen. 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.

Gen. 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.

As Abraham reached and took the knife, the Lord calls out to him from heaven—Abraham! Abraham! Abraham recognized the Lord's voice, and he **immediately** acknowledged that he was listening. God tells him not to harm Isaac.

"Now I know that thou fearest God..."—We know that nothing about us is hidden from God. He knows the end from the beginning—of everything. So we know that God knew what Abraham was going to do all along. But maybe Abraham needed to know that he could and would sacrifice his most precious possession in obedience to God. By example, Abraham was showing Isaac that obedience to "the everlasting God" (vs 21:33) was the most important thing in one's life. It was probably THE life-changing event of Isaac's whole life.

When Abraham looked up, he saw a ram stuck in the thicket. He took the ram and offered it as a sacrifice instead of his son. God had indeed provided Himself a lamb.

Gen. 22:14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said *to this day*, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

Abraham called this place of sacrifice Jehovahjireh, "the Lord will provide" or "Yhwh will see to it." (6/07) I've heard it postulated that Abraham offered Isaac

on the mount where the temple was located. I personally believe the location was Golgotha, Mt. Calvary, where God again “provided Himself a lamb”—His only Son, Jesus Christ. The type is just too clear. I also believe that the place we saw in Jerusalem called Gordon’s Calvary was authentic and is the place referenced. It still can easily be identified as the “place of the skull.”

Mark 15:22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

Gen. 22:15 And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

Gen. 22:16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

Gen. 22:17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

Gen. 22:18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Then the Lord called out from heaven again. He affirms to Abraham that because of his obedience, He would surely bless him and make his descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore (you wouldn’t be able to count them). ALL the nations on earth would be blessed through him—because of his obedience. God swore this to Abraham by His own name. There is nothing any stronger by which to swear.

It gets confusing when God makes the same commitment to Abraham so many times. The first time God blessed Abraham (ch 12) there were no conditions on the blessing—just a statement of what God planned to do through him. The second time (ch 15) God makes a covenant with him He gets more specific about the future of Abraham and his descendants, but there are no strings attached. The third time God “confirms” His covenant with Abraham (ch 17) He requires circumcision as a sign of their agreement with God’s covenant. This is the fourth time that God promises blessing on Abraham and tells him that it is because of his obedience. We know that God’s word never fails and that the first time He said it, it was as good as done!

Because of our human shortcomings, I think God is so full of love for us that He continually gives us encouragement and affirmation—for our benefit, not His. One of the privileges we are allowed as people of faith is to be used as encouragement or affirmation in the lives of those we love. It’s a special blessing to be that tool as well as to be the recipient of that gift from those we love. Extra special for a mom is to receive that encouragement from her children. I think that is why God the father was so impressed with Abraham’s willingness to obey Him without question. His child, Abraham, demonstrated his love for God above, by being willing to sacrifice his most precious earthly gift—his son! (The perfect type of God’s willingness to sacrifice His only Son, Jesus, for our sin.)

Gen. 22:19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

Finally, Abraham (and Isaac) returned to the servants, and they returned to Beersheba.

Gen. 22:20 And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor;

Gen. 22:21 Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram,

Gen. 22:22 And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

Gen. 22:23 And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

Gen. 22:24 And his concubine, whose name *was* Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

Next, we are told of the sons of Abraham's brother, Nahor. I think this is mainly to set the stage re Rebekah's family connection to Isaac.