

Introduction

As we open the Word of God today, we arrive at what many consider the "Mount Everest" of the Old Testament—a passage that pulls at our heartstrings, but more importantly, pulls back the curtain to reveal the very heart of God.

In our journey through Genesis, we have watched Abraham walk through seasons of deep faith, as well as moments of stumbles and mistakes. We watched him wait decades for the promise, and in our last study, we celebrated the long-awaited birth of Isaac. But now, in Genesis chapter twenty-two, Abraham faces the supreme test of his life. God calls him to take that beloved son—the child of promise—and go to the land of Moriah to offer him up.

As we look at this passage together, three glorious truths shine forth directly from the text:

First, we see The Call to Moriah and the Faith of the Father, where Abraham demonstrates radical, unwavering obedience—trusting that even if he offered his son, God was able to raise him from the dead, giving us a powerful picture of what it means to love the Giver more than the gift.

Second, we behold The Substitute Provided and Jehovah-Jireh, as the Lord stops the knife and provides a ram caught in the thicket, revealing Himself as the God who provides and giving us a breathtaking prophetic picture of the cross of Jesus Christ.

Finally, we examine The Promise Confirmed and the Faithful Seed, looking at how God confirms His covenant with an oath, pointing forward to the ultimate blessing that would come to all nations through the Seed of Abraham.

Bible Study

As we read this chapter, we are simply looking at a Father and a Son, a mountain, and a sacrifice. We're looking at the simple, radical obedience of a man who took God at His Word.

The Call to Moriah (Genesis 22:1-10)

There is no scene in all of Scripture, save for the cross of Jesus Christ itself, more poignant than this. Here, we see a "type"—a prophetic picture—of the death of God's only, well-beloved Son.

The text tells us that God tested Abraham. Now, we know from the rest of the Bible that God is holy and has always been opposed to human sacrifice. He never intended for Abraham to go through with this. But He did intend for Abraham to see that he loved the Giver more than the gift.

Notice the geography: God sends him to the land of Moriah. This is the very mountain range where Jerusalem would eventually sit, and where, centuries later, another Father would lead His Son up a hill called Calvary.

When God says in Genesis 22:2, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love," every word must have pierced Abraham's heart. Isaac was the son of promise, the one born of a miracle. This is also the first time the word "love" appears in the Bible. It's no coincidence that the first mention of love is between a father and a son regarding a sacrifice. It sets the pattern for the ultimate love: God's love for the Lord Jesus, and His love for us.

The Faith of the Father (Genesis 22:11-15)

Abraham's response is a masterpiece of faith. In Genesis 22:5, he tells his servants, "the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." Wait a minute. Abraham knew he was going up there to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. How could he say "we" will come back? Hebrews 11:19 tells us the secret: Abraham believed that even if he slew his son, God was able to raise him from the dead. Think about that! There was no recorded case of a resurrection in history at this point, yet Abraham's faith in God's promise was so absolute that he knew death couldn't stop what God had started.

As they walk, Isaac asks the heartbreaking question: "Where is the lamb?" Abraham's prophetic answer in Genesis 22:8 rings through the ages: "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb." The Justification of Faith: We know from Genesis 15:6 that Abraham was justified by faith. But here, as James 2:21 explains, his faith was "shown to be right" by his works. His obedience was the outward proof of his inward trust.

The Substitute Provided

Just as the knife is raised, the Angel of the LORD—whom we believe is the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ—stops him. God provides a ram caught in the thicket.

We see two beautiful symbols of Christ here:

1. Isaac: The only son, loved by his father, carrying the wood for his own sacrifice, willing to lay down his life.
2. The Ram: The innocent substitute who died so another could live. Its blood was shed, and it was wholly consumed.

Someone once said that in providing the ram, "God spared Abraham's heart a pang He would not spare His own." Abraham names the place Jehovah-Jireh, meaning "The LORD Will Provide" (Genesis 22:14).

This is one of the seven great compound names of God found in the Old Testament:

- Jehovah-Rophekha: The LORD who heals you (Exodus 15:26)
- Jehovah-Nissi: The LORD my banner (Exodus 17:8-15)
- Jehovah-Shalom: The LORD our peace (Judges 6:24)
- Jehovah-Roi: The LORD my Shepherd (Psalm 23:1)
- Jehovah-Tsidkenu: The LORD our righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6)
- Jehovah-Shammah: The LORD is present (Ezekiel 48:35)

The Promise Confirmed (Genesis 22:16-24)

Because Abraham didn't withhold his son, God confirms His covenant with an oath. Since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself (Hebrews 6:13). This promise reaches all the way to us today, ensuring that through Abraham's "Seed"—Jesus Christ—all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Galatians 3:16).

The chapter ends with a brief genealogy. It mentions Rebekah (Genesis 22:23). Even in the "boring" parts of the Bible, God is working! He's already preparing a bride for the son who was figuratively "raised from the dead."

Practical Application

Abraham didn't argue with God; he rose early in the morning to obey. What is the "Isaac" in your life? What is the thing you love most that God might be asking you to surrender to Him?

Real faith isn't just a feeling; it's taking God at His Word and acting on it, even when the math doesn't seem to add up. When we surrender our "Isaacs" to God, we find that He is more than enough.

A Challenge for Believers

I want to challenge you this week: Stop trying to figure out the "how" and start focusing on the "Who." Abraham didn't know how God would bring Isaac back, he just knew Who God was. If you are facing a "mountain" today, trust that the Lord will provide. Your job is to walk up the hill; His job is to provide the sacrifice.

An Invitation to the Unbeliever

If you are here today and you don't know the Lord, I want you to look at this story one more time. You see, we are all like Isaac—under a sentence of death because of our sin. But God, in His incredible love, did what Abraham didn't have to do.

He took His only Son, Jesus, to that same mountain. Jesus saved us when He shed His precious blood on that cross. He took your place. He was the substitute. And the resurrection declares that He is God, Savior, and Lord! The "Lamb" has been provided. All you have to do is receive Him. Will you give your life to Jesus today? He's waiting with open arms.