

January 17, 2021 - Sacrifice

Read this, from Genesis 22:

God said, "Abraham!"

"Yes?" answered Abraham. "I'm listening."

² He said, "Take your dear son Isaac whom you love and go to the land of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I'll point out to you."

³⁻⁵ Abraham got up early in the morning and saddled his donkey. He took two of his young servants and his son Isaac. He had split wood for the burnt offering. He set out for the place God had directed him. On the third day he looked up and saw the place in the distance. Abraham told his two young servants, "Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I are going over there to worship; then we'll come back to you."

⁶ Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and gave it to Isaac his son to carry. He carried the flint and the knife. The two of them went off together.

⁷ Isaac said to Abraham his father, "Father?"

"Yes, my son."

"We have flint and wood, but where's the sheep for the burnt offering?"

⁸ Abraham said, "Son, God will see to it that there's a sheep for the burnt offering." And they kept on walking together.

⁹⁻¹⁰ They arrived at the place to which God had directed him. Abraham built an altar. He laid out the wood. Then he tied up Isaac and laid him on the wood. Abraham reached out and took the knife to kill his son.

¹¹ Just then an angel of GOD called to him out of Heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Yes, I'm listening."

¹² "Don't lay a hand on that boy! Don't touch him! Now I know how fearlessly you fear God; you didn't hesitate to place your son, your dear son, on the altar for me."

¹³ Abraham looked up. He saw a ram caught by its horns in the thicket. Abraham took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.

Think about it:

1. What's your reaction to this story? How do you feel about Abraham, being willing to sacrifice Isaac? How do you feel about God, asking Abraham to do so?
2. Many Biblical scholars think that Abraham probably didn't really believe that God would let him sacrifice Isaac. What do you think?
3. Genesis says that this scenario is God's way of testing Abraham's faith. How do you feel about the idea of a test of faith?
4. What similarities do you see between this story and the story of Jesus' life and death on earth?
5. If you look at the story of Abraham and Isaac through a symbolic lens, with Isaac standing in for Jesus and Abraham standing in for God, does that make Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac more understandable?

Journal: use the space below to journal your thoughts and questions about Genesis 22 or to offer a prayer about what's on your mind:

Extras:

Read [The Bible Project article](#) I used when writing this lesson. What do you think?