

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 6



ABRAHAM SACRIFICES ISAAC

Scripture Text: Genesis 22:1-18

Abraham had shown faithfulness to God, but a greater test was coming. He must be proven worthy of the place God had for him to fill. Abraham obeyed God. He gave his best to God. He had complete faith in God. Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice, realizing that God would handle the rest. Isaac is a type of Christ Who was offered by His Father as a sacrifice for our sins.

The ram was a substitute for Isaac. By its death, Isaac received his life back again. Thus the ram became a type of Christ Who was to die as a substitute for sinners? By His substitutionary death, Christ gave life to all who received Him. God blesses those who obey Him.

MEMORY VERSE: *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.*

—Hebrews 11:17

DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—**James 2:14-26** True faith evidenced by works.
- Tue.—**Genesis 23** Death and burial of Sarah.
- Wed.—**Genesis 25:7-18** The death of Abraham.
- Thu.—**Luke 16:22-31** Abraham in Paradise.
- Fri.—**Leviticus 22:17-25** A perfect sacrifice required.

Devotional Reading: Hebrews 11:8-19 Abraham's faith and obedience.

Abraham Rose Up Early and Went

Genesis 22:1-3 God did tempt Abraham—did not tempt him with evil, for God never does that (**James 1:13**). This was a test to prove Abraham. **Take now thy son**—Josephus says Isaac was twenty-five at this time—**thine only son Isaac**—there was Ishmael, another son, but he was son of a bondwoman. Isaac was the only son of Sarah, the freewoman, only son of **promise**, the only one to carry forward the covenant of God. **Get thee into the land of Moriah**. This land was probably the land of Mt. Moriah in the east part of Jerusalem. **Offer him there for a burnt offering**—as they sacrificed animals to God. **Abraham rose up early . . . and went**—no putting it off, arguing, evading, or doubting. He simply obeyed, and promptly—**early**.

This command is hard to understand without knowing the result. It seems against God's purpose in Isaac, seems to overthrow the good of His covenant with man. But we only see here a part of His plan. Abraham also saw but part. He had only the command, no explanation. Why then did he obey so wholeheartedly? Because one thing was above all others to him—the will of God. If God said to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham wanted to do it, even though it was hard. He obeyed. He got up early and went all the way.

Abraham Went All the Way

Genesis 22:4-10 Then on the third day . . . saw the place afar off. He had traveled three days, and here he left his servants behind. He and Isaac, with **the wood for the burnt offering**, would go the rest of the way alone. But notice here the great faith that Abraham shows. Here his faith in God really comes to the front. **Abide**

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ye here . . . **I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.** Talk about faith! He said they would both come back.

Abraham took the wood . . . laid it upon Isaac his son . . . the fire . . . a knife; and they went both of them together—together. See the strong relationship here, father and son bound together in a deep fellowship with God. Isaac had to be willing also. Here is a type of the Cross laid upon Jesus. **Isaac spake . . . where is the lamb?** A hard question. It must have struck deep into Abraham's heart. He could not yet bear to tell Isaac all the instructions, because he did not have all the answers. But this much he did know, **God will provide himself a lamb.** He did not know how. No doubt he thought of Isaac as the one God had provided. His words were truer than he knew.

They came to the place . . . Abraham built an altar there . . . bound Isaac . . . laid him on the altar . . . took the knife—they obeyed to the last move. In Abraham's heart and mind and purpose, Isaac was already dead. In a moment he would be, in fact.

God will provide himself a lamb. God uses Abraham's words to point down through the centuries to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God Whom He provided as an offering for the sins of the world. In this incident, Isaac was a type of Christ. As Abraham gave his son, his dearest possession, so God was to give His greater Son. Isaac and the ram together completed a perfect type of Christ's sacrifice.

Abraham Passes the Test

Genesis 22:11-14 Angel of the Lord called . . . Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I—right there in the path of obedience. **Lay not thine hand upon the lad**—God did not intend the actual death of Isaac. **Now I know that thou fearest God.** The test was over. God found Abraham's heart to be perfect; he had passed the test. **Thou hast not withheld thy son**—Abraham gave his best to God. God requires the same from us—no withholding. **Abraham . . . looked, and behold . . . a ram**—God's provision in plenty of time, but not a minute early. **Abraham . . . took the ram, and offered him up**—a substitute. Imagine the joy of father and son in that worship, yes, of God also. No grief now, no conflict, no question. How bound together in one were these three!

Perhaps nowhere does the faith of Abraham shine more brightly than in this test. His wonderful obedience had a cause. Its roots were in his faith. He believed God's plans were all good, that His ability was perfect, and that His will would be carried out to a perfect end. His belief went beyond the natural. He believed **God was able to raise Isaac up, even from the dead (Hebrews 11:19)**, and give him seed as promised. He did not ask how or why. In his thinking, he already killed Isaac before he had quite carried it out. **He received him** back from the dead, in a figure.

Obedience Brings Blessings

Genesis 22:15-18 The angel of the Lord called . . . because thou hast . . . not withheld thy son . . . I will bless thee . . . I will multiply thy seed . . . thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies . . . in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed—four promises: (1) **bless thee**—give of His life to Abraham, (2) **multiply**—the great nation of Israel, (3) **possess the gate**—rule over their enemies, (4) **in thy seed shall nations . . . blessed**—Jesus Christ is this blessing. **Because thou hast obeyed my voice**—this is the condition. God's blessings are given to those who obey Him. Israel lost possession of the gate of her enemies and was conquered because of disobedience. All this Abraham did **by faith (Hebrews 11:17)**.

Abraham's faith repeated itself in Isaac. Isaac trusted his father, knowing his father trusted God. He obeyed in every move. To his question about the lamb, it was enough to hear that God would provide. He even took without protest the binding and laying on the altar. He, too, had faith in God.

The line of faith has continued on in God's people. **They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham (Galatians 3:7)**. **But without faith it is impossible to please him (Hebrews 11:6)**. Faith is not of ourselves. It comes from God.