

The Defining Test and the Foreshadowed Lamb

Genesis 22:1-2 (ESV)

¹ After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ² He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

"After these things" = ?

1. God appears to Abram when he was 99 years old and changes his name to Abraham (Gen. 17:1-5).
2. He again is promised both seed and soil (Gen. 17:6-8).
3. God now institutes the ceremony of circumcision (Gen. 17:9-14).
4. Sarai's name is now changed to Sarah (Gen. 17:15-16).
5. God promises to bless Ishmael and reassures Abraham that Sarah would give birth to a baby boy who would be called Isaac (Gen. 17:17-22).
6. Abraham circumcises himself and all the males in his camp (Gen. 17:23-27).
7. Abraham is visited by the Lord and two angels, who again reassure him of Isaac's birth, now to occur in less than a year (Gen. 18:1-15).
8. God tells him Sodom would soon be destroyed (Gen. 18:16-22).
9. God grants Abraham's request to spare the city if but ten righteous people could be found living in it (Gen. 18:23-33).
10. Abraham later views the smoke of this burning city, destroyed by God for its immorality (Gen. 19:27-29).
11. He moves to Philistia and, as he had once done in Egypt, lies about his wife (Gen. 20:1-2).
12. Later he prays for and accepts gifts from the Philistine king (Gen. 20:3-18).
13. Isaac is born when Abraham was 100 years old (Gen. 21:1-8).
14. At God's command Abraham separates from both Hagar and Ishmael (Gen. 21:9-21).
15. He enters into a special agreement with a Philistine king at Beer-sheba (Gen. 21:22-34).

Several presuppositions:

- 1) God loved Abraham.
- 2) God knew how far Abraham had come.
- 3) God knew what Abraham would do.
- 4) God's promise to Abraham was specific to Isaac.

Galatians 3:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.

Hebrews 11:17-18 (ESV)

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."

Genesis 21:12 (ESV)

¹² But God said to Abraham, "Be not displeased because of the boy and because of your slave woman. Whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your offspring be named.

See also Romans 9:6-9

Abraham's Response:

He did as God _____:

Genesis 22:3 (ESV)

³ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

He was fully prepared to _____:

Genesis 22:3, 6 (ESV)

³ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together.

He had _____ that enabled him to _____ what he could not possibly _____, trusting that someone God will still keep his _____ with him.

Genesis 22:5, 7-8 (ESV)

⁵ Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you."

⁷ And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

⁸ Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

God's intervention/rescue:

Genesis 22:9-14 (ESV)

⁹ When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ¹² He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me."

¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

An everlasting lesson ...

A sacrifice provided by the Lord ...

Why was Abraham tested thusly?

nāsāh: A verb meaning to test, to try, to prove

1. We _____ (See: Job)

Our speculations and interpretations sometimes prove to be either unhelpful, misleading, or both.

2. To test or “prove” Abraham’s ultimate _____.

Abraham’s past had been marked by selfish acts of self-preservation and shortsightedness. And although Abraham was now advanced in years and finally had the miracle son that God had promised, God’s desire was that Abraham love Him *more*.

Genesis 22:5 (ESV)

⁵ Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you.”

Genesis 22:15-18 (ESV)

¹⁵ And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶ and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

3. To turn Abraham’s faith from _____ to _____.

There is a huge difference from what we *think* we will do or *say* we will do in a situation vs. *doing* it and realizing God’s faithfulness.

James 2:21-22 (ESV)

²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works ...

4. So that God could demonstrate His _____ to Isaac.

Isaac was no infant in this scenario. He fully and knowingly participated. What happened here not only changed Abraham, it changed Isaac. And remember, Isaac had had none of the experiences with God that Abraham had – all experiences that shaped his life and faith. To continue to walk in the covenant would require that Isaac also learn to fully trust in God.

Genesis 22:7-8 (ESV)

⁷ And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” ⁸ Abraham said, “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So they went both of them together.

Genesis 22:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

5. To foreshadow the future activity of _____ in Hebrew worship.

Tradition holds that this location was the future place of Solomon’s Temple. Today: El Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock ... Muslims also believe that this is the site where God created Adam

2 Chronicles 3:1 (ESV)

¹ Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

6. To foreshadow the greatest (and ultimate) sacrifice of _____.

Apart from Christ's obedient sacrifice, probably the greatest act of faith in fear and trembling recorded in all of Scripture is the obedient response of Abraham when God commanded him to sacrifice his son Isaac.

Hebrews 11:17-20 (ESV)

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." ¹⁹ He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. ²⁰ By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.

How Abraham's faith was formed:

1) He'd learned from experience that _____

Abraham learned from his successes AND failures ...

2) He had a living reminder of his previous _____

3) He had become adequately convinced of the _____

One final application:

When I obey God (by faith), the outcome becomes _____, not mine!

That is true faith lived out: