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Genesis Chapter 22 The Sacrifice of Isaac

As we venture into the 22nd chapter of the book of Genesis, we'll find that it only consists of 24 verses. But I don't want that to fool you, because there's a lot of information that is concealed within these 24 verses. And so, as we always do, let's go ahead and read through the 22nd chapter of the book of Genesis so that we can know exactly what it says, and... just as importantly... what it does not say. Genesis chapter 22:

Gen 22:1 After these things **God tested Abraham** and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

Gen 22:2 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."

Gen 22:3 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.

Gen 22:4 **On the third day** Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar.

Gen 22:5 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."

Gen 22:6 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.

Gen 22:7 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?"

Gen 22:8 **Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son."** So they went both of them together.

Gen 22:9 **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.**

Gen 22:10 Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son.

Gen 22:11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham,

Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

Gen 22:12 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.”

Gen 22:13 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.

Gen 22:14 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.”

Gen 22:15 And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven

Gen 22:16 and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,

Gen 22:17 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,

Gen 22:18 and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

Gen 22:19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham lived at Beersheba.

Gen 22:20 Now after these things it was told to Abraham, “Behold, Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor:

Gen 22:21 Uz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram,

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

Gen 22:23 (Bethuel fathered Rebekah.) These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

Gen 22:24 Moreover, his concubine, whose name was Reumah, bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

Why the Shortage of Narration?

This particular chapter is so short, it seems kind of uncanny. This particular test that Abraham passed, is monumental to mankind. And yet... it's only mentioned briefly within this particular chapter of the book of Genesis, and I want to address that for just a moment.

We've been with Abraham now for many years over the last few chapters. We've seen Abraham being called out, and separated from his family and friends. We've seen Abraham go to war in order to save his nephew Lot and his family. We've watched Abraham father a child from his wife's handmaiden, only to have to turn them away and send them out into the desert. We've watched Abraham become very rich at the hand of Kings and royalty.

We've watched Abraham pay his tithes to Melchizedek, and we've watched him make an oath with the creator of the heavens and the earth. And so, here Abraham, who is now well over 100 years old, finds himself being tested by God in order to see what Abraham is really made out of.

I believe that these few Scriptures are as short and precise as they are for reason. Often times, the shorter story is, the less importance we think it has. Only those who are truly seeking to know and to understand the nature of God, are going to take the time to slow down and take notice of what's happening here in these very few lines of scripture.

Although the Scriptures are few, the significance of what we find within these Scriptures is Titanic. Certainly, one of the most powerful events of mankind occurred within Genesis chapter 22. But how many Christians do you think that there are, that will breeze over these Scriptures and not give them more than a couple of minutes thought?

We have to remember that it is those who ask, and seek, and knock that he opens the door for. If you walk right past the door and you don't stop to ask, or seek, or even bother knocking on the door... don't expect the door to be open to you. And this is exactly why we're going to slow down and take our time here today. We want to ask some questions here. We want to seek out the answers to those questions. And we want him to know that we are knocking at his door anxiously awaiting for him to answer it.

What Was the Test Truly About?

One of the first things that I'd like to make mention of, is the fact that in the very first verse of Genesis chapter 22, we're told that God was about to test Abraham.

So, before we ever even get started into Genesis chapter 22, we're already given the information that we need to know and to understand... God was testing Abraham. Does God ever test people do you think? You better believe that he does. Yahovah had a lot invested in Abraham. Yahovah had promised him that he would be the father of all nations. He promised Abraham all the land from the great River of Egypt, to the great River Euphrates, and as far south as the eye could see. He promised Abraham that it would be from his seed, that his people would come.

God knew how long Abraham had waited for Isaac to come, and we know what a miracle it was for Abraham and Sarah to have Isaac in their old age. And yet... God came to Abraham and commanded him to give his son back to God. Now I want us to stop right here for just a moment and think about what must've been going through Abraham's mind.

We're told that Abraham rose early in the morning in verse three, so God most likely came to Abraham in a vision while he was asleep. We're really not told how God came to Abraham to deliver this commandment. But... however he came to Abraham, Abraham surely had no doubt that it was indeed God that was speaking to him.

This particular test, (that Abraham passed by the way), was a true test of the biblical definition of the love of God. Most modern-day Christians have no idea what the biblical definition of the love of God even is, but just so that we can keep all of our brothers and sisters up to speed, I'd like us to turn to first John chapter 5 versus two and three:

1Jn 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.

1Jn 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

You see, Abraham was well aware of the biblical definition of the love of God. There was no doubt in Abraham's mind concerning what the definition of the love of God was even in his time. Abraham had been walking with Yahovah for many years by that time. Abraham had watched God destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. He had tested God by inquiring how many righteous people it would take to save the city. Abraham questioned God every step of the way about the promises that God had made to him, and God allowed Abraham to ask all of these questions, and he allowed Abraham to watch him do what only God could do. And so there shouldn't be any doubt in our minds concerning how well Abraham knew Yahovah (and we'll come back to this as we move forward).

I want us to notice in Genesis chapter 22 verse two, that God wanted Abraham to offer Isaac up as a burnt offering. Now I want to stop right here for just a moment because there are five... very specific offerings mentioned in our Fathers Torah.

The first one is the burnt offering. The second one is the grain offering. The third one was the peace offering. The fourth one was the sin offering. And the fifth one was the guilt offering.

These five offerings were made for a very specific reasons. The burnt offering was known as the "Olah" offering. The purpose of the burnt offering was for the general atonement of sin and an expression of devotion to God. The instructions for the burnt offering are given in Leviticus chapter 1 versus three through 17.

The Burnt Offering, (or the "Olah" offering)... could be a bull, or a sheep or goat, or a dove or a pigeon. The animal was to be burned whole overnight and its skin was to be given to the High priest. The burnt offering was most likely the earliest type of atonement offering in the Old Testament, and we can find traces of it in Job chapter 1 verse five, and again in Genesis chapter 8 verse 20.

The difference between the Old Testament burnt offering and the Canaanites burnt offerings, were that the Canaanites would offer children as their burnt sacrifices for their atonement to other gods. The one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob made it very clear that he would not accept children as burnt offerings, and the instructions given in Leviticus explicitly limit the type of animals to be offered as burnt sacrifices to include only Bulls Rams and birds.

The second type of offering in the Torah is the “Minchah”, or the grain offering. The purpose of the grain offering was a voluntary expression of devotion to God that recognized his goodness and his providence. The instructions for the grain offerings are given in Leviticus chapter 2, but we won’t get into that in detail here today for time’s sake, but... we will get into it as we move through the book of Leviticus later on in our walk through our Fathers Torah.

The third offering of course, was the peace offering which was known as the “Shelem” offering. This category of offering can be found in Leviticus chapter 3, and it included the “Thanksgiving offering” the “Free Will” offering and the “Wave Offering.” This particular offering could be cattle or sheep or a goat. The animal could be male or female, but it did have to be without defect, or blemish. And once again, we’ll get into all of that more in detail later on when we get into the book of Leviticus.

The fourth offering of course was the sin offering, and this is the offering that most of us are more acquainted with. This offering was called the “Chattath” offering. This offering was an offering for atonement because an unintentional sin was committed.

The fifth offering was the “Guilt Offering” also known as the “Asham” offering. The English word “guilt” is somewhat misleading. This particular offering didn’t really have anything to do with the conscience of a person... but rather something one does on account of sin. Another suggestion for the name of this particular offering is the “Trespass Offering” or the “Reparation offering”, and the purpose of this offering was to make reparations for one’s sin. This offering had a specific monetary value and if someone owed someone else because of the debt due to sin... they could repay it in silver, rather than by sacrificing a ram. In addition to that... a 20% fee was assessed and given to the priest who mitigated the debt.

And those were the five different kinds of offerings that we can find in our Torah that we will get into later on when we journey into the book of Leviticus.

But I want us to understand that God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac as a burnt offering or an “Olah” offering, which expressed devotion to God. And so that just gives us a little bit of insight as to what God was looking for. He was looking for the devotion of Abraham, and devotion is exactly what Abraham displayed at the top of Mount Moriah.

We must remember that Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born. In fact, according to rabbinical teachings, as well as Josephus, who was a historian that was alive during the days of our Messiah... Abraham would have been somewhere between 125-230 years old at this point in time (and will get to how we know that in just a moment).

But I can’t help but think... that as Abraham was chopping this wood and packing it on his donkey to take with him on this three-day journey... that Abraham must have at least suspected, that this was a test from God. And I want us to think about this three-day journey that they had

to make in order to get to the land of Moriah were Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac.

Three days is a long time to think about what you've been called to do. Three days, would have given Abraham ample time to question almost every aspect of this very peculiar commandment that God had given Abraham. These three days must have been the three longest days of Abraham's life.

Why Is There No Resistance from Isaac?

When we read about Abraham sacrificing Isaac, and when we used to open up our picture Bibles back in Sunday school, we often times would see Abraham Binding up this little boy and placing him on the altar of wood. But the truth is, that nothing could be farther from the truth. Ancient Jewish texts tell us that Isaac was about 37 years old at that point in time. The historian Josephus tells us that Isaac was about 25 years old. So, we know that Isaac was between 25 and 30 years old at least. So, in other words... Isaac was no small boy. Isaac was a full-grown man at this point in time, according to what we know historically.

And what I want us to make note of, is that Isaac never resists his father Abraham. In verse seven Isaac very quickly begins to notice that Abraham has the fire ready to go, and the wood is there and ready to go, but there doesn't seem to be anything to sacrifice. And so, Isaac asks his father Abraham where the sacrifice is? In verse eight Abraham tells Isaac that God will provide for himself the Lamb for a burnt offering.

Now... did Abraham know that God was going to provide a lamb? We know that somewhere along the way over the past three days that it took to get to this place where Abraham is supposed to sacrifice Isaac, that Abraham must have suspected that this was a test. And so, it wouldn't be far-fetched for us to think that Abraham probably suspected that God was indeed going to provide a lamb for this sacrifice rather than his son.

Notice what Abraham said to the two young men that journeyed with them in verse five. Abraham told these two young men to stay with the donkey, and that he and the boy would go worship, and then come back to them again. Was Abraham lying to the two young men?

I have to believe that it is very possible, that because Abraham knew God so well, and had questioned God at every turn, that he must have suspected that God was not going to actually have him sacrifice his son. We have to remember that God promised Abraham that it was going to be through his son Isaac that his offspring would become more numerous than the stars. Would Abraham have believed, that God was going to break his promise? Abraham must've known better than that. But nevertheless... Abraham did indeed have to prepare himself for what he very well may have to do. Like us turn to the book of Hebrews chapter 11 verses 17 through 19:

Heb 11:17 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,

Heb 11:18 of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."

Heb 11:19 He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

I would imagine that after God allowed Abraham to tie Isaac up, and to place him on that altar, and to place him on top of that pile of wood... that Abraham's hopes for an exit strategy must have been waning to say the least. No matter what Abraham may have suspected... God was not going to allow Abraham off the hook until he knew full well, that Abraham was indeed going to follow through with what he had commanded him.

God was not only watching Abraham, but you can also be guaranteed that God was monitoring Abraham's heart and his mind every step of the way. And it wasn't until Abraham took that knife in his hand... and raised it up over his head to slay his son... that the Angel of God finally did stop him. Once God knew that Abraham was going to follow through with what God commanded him to do... It was then, and only then, that God stopped Abraham.

Just the idea of what God asked Abraham to do makes most of us shudder. Some of the trials and some of the tribulations that we're forced to go through here in this Babylonian world at times, can seem more than we can bear. But what we need to remember is that there is no temptation that has overtaken us that is not common to man. I want us to turn to first Corinthians chapter 10 verse 13:

1Co 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

No matter what we are tempted with, we need to remember, that someone before us has already been tempted with the same thing and overcome it. God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. And when that temptation does come upon us, we need to remember that he will always provide a way of escape so that will be able to endure it. If we would only remember these things... many of the temptations that we have today would have no holdover us.

But moving forward... have you ever wondered why there was no resistance from Isaac who at that time would have been a full-grown man? Isaac was in the prime of his life. Abraham was at least 130 years old. How hard would it have been, for Isaac to overpower his father Abraham and simply decide that he didn't want to be a sacrifice? Think about that for a moment.

You see Isaac didn't object to what his father was doing, because Isaac knew that his father was doing what God had told him to do. The fact that Isaac did not try to run away, or to object, or to try to talk his father out of it, is a testament to the fact that Isaac was indeed Abraham's son. Isaac was part of who Abraham was. Abraham's faith in God had been instilled in his son Isaac.

The very nature of Abraham... was in his son. And I want us to stop and think about that for just a moment.

Who else is there that we know, that was led like a sheep to slaughter and never said a word? I'd like us to turn to Isaiah chapter 53 verses five through 12:

Isa 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

Isa 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isa 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

Isa 53:8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?

Isa 53:9 And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Isa 53:10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Isa 53:11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Isa 53:12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

Who was this that the prophet Isaiah speaks of, who was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities? Who is this that did not open his mouth, like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, like a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth?

This of course was our Messiah. Sounds a lot like Isaac doesn't it? And by the way, for all of you modern-day professing Christians out there who may be listening to this... Isaiah happens to be in the Old Testament, not the New. I know the idea that our Messiah is found in the Old Testament is a shockingly novel idea to today's modern-day professing Christian who have never really read the first half of the book... but there it is my friends... read it... and weep.

What Are the Similarities Between Isaac, and Yeshua?

So, what are some of the other similarities between Isaac and our Messiah? Have you ever thought about that before? Let's take a moment... and let's just think about the similarities between what we see happening here with Abraham and Isaac, and what happened at the cross with Yahovah, and Yeshua.

Number one: we've already talked about the very nature of Abraham being in his son Isaac. You see Isaac loved God as much as Abraham loved God. Isaac was ready to give his own life just as much as Abraham was willing to give the life of his only son. Abraham and Isaac were of one accord. They were of one spirit. They believed, and had faith in, and trusted the same God. They were truly, both of one spirit. Just like our Father in heaven, and his only begotten Son were of one spirit.

It could even be said, that Isaac was the very word of Abraham made flesh. Whatever Abraham said, Isaac his son did, because both Abraham and Isaac knew what was right in the eyes of God. They knew that God could never be wrong. They knew that whatever God told them to do, was the right and the just thing to do, even if they didn't understand it. Abraham and Isaac were both of the same spirit. Just like our Father in heaven and his only Son were of the same spirit. And you can bet all the gold in California, that if Abraham did have to sacrifice his son Isaac... a part of Abraham would have surely died along with his son on that altar. The same way that a part of our Father in heaven died on that cross with his Son. A parent never loses a child without losing part of themselves.

Number two: three days after Isaac was condemned to death, he rose from that altar alive. Our Messiah rose from the dead three days after he was condemned to death.

Number three: Isaac was made to carry the wood up to the hilltop that would be the very device used for his death. Our Messiah was also made to carry the wood to the hilltop that would be the very device used for his death.

Number four: Isaac wanted to know where the lamb was for the sacrifice, and Abraham told him that God would provide the Lamb. God did provide the Passover Lamb, who was his very own son for the sacrifice for all mankind.

Number five: a ram... a male sheep, was provided to Abraham as the sacrifice. Our Messiah who was a male sacrificial lamb was the sacrifice that replaced our rightful place... on that cross at Galgoth.

As we have seen time and time again, the reality of duality shines through Genesis chapter 22 from the days of Abraham and Isaac, all the way to the days of our Father in heaven and Yeshua. Our Father always works in patterns. Time, after time, after time again, we see these unfolding patterns manifested before our very eyes. There truly is nothing new under the sun.

Many of us have known the emptiness that comes from the loss of a loved one. If you have

never experienced that emptiness in your life... chances are good that you will at some point in time. When we lose a loved one, we lose a part of ourselves. Death... leaves a hole in the heart of the living that never does completely heal all the way. That scar will go with you to your grave.

But what we must remember, is that the day is coming when our Father in heaven is going to destroy death altogether. When a Christian takes their last breath here on this earth, that does not mean that they're gone forever. It simply means that they are awaiting the resurrection like everyone else. It is because of our Messiah, and that shadow picture of who Isaac was, that the sting of death has been removed for those of us who believe. We know where we've been, and we know where we're going. Most of us already have our bags packed.

Where Was the Land of Moriah?

Where was this Mount Moriah where Abraham was tested by God to sacrifice Isaac? Mount Moriah is in Jerusalem. I'd like us to turn to second Chronicles chapter 3 verse one:

2Ch 3:1 *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.*

There's a long-standing tradition in Jerusalem at the top of Mount Moriah where Abraham was tested, and where King Solomon built the Temple of God. Most Christian scholars believe that Abraham was tested right where the Muslim Dome of the Rock is standing in Jerusalem right now. This is one of the reasons that many do not think that a third Temple can ever be built. The Muslims will never allow their Dome of the Rock to be destroyed. But that may not be what the one true God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has in mind. One quick earth quake could solve that problem.

Once Abraham and Isaac returned home, we're given a little bit of genealogy concerning Abraham's brother, whose name was Nahor. Once again, we see the pattern of God in almost everything that he does. Nahor, Abraham's brother was still living in Mesopotamia at the time, but we're told in Genesis chapter 22 verse 20, that Abraham was told that his brother Nahor had 12 sons... imagine that... just like Ishmael was to have 12 sons, and eventually Jacob was to have 12 sons. Unlike the 12 sons of Jacob who eventually became the 12 tribes of Israel... we never really hear anything much more about the sons of Nahor Abraham's brother, other than when we see of them listed here in the 22nd chapter of the book of Genesis.

But... with all of that being said and done... we'll be ready for the 23rd chapter of the book of Genesis next week, Wednesday evening at 7pm Eastern standard time, right here at Holy Impact Ministries, on our next "Wednesday Night Bible Study" and we'd like to invite you back to visit with us for that next week.

