

# JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

## Lesson 8: ISAAC - Part 2 – The Sacrifice

Aim: To show how the sacrifice of Isaac, the son of promise, is a Type of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.

Key Scriptures: Genesis 22:1-13; Hebrews 11:17-19.

We finished our last lesson with a Scripture from the New Testament:

***Romans 4:13** For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*

Abraham's inheritance was to 'be heir of the world', and it was to come through faith. The unconditional covenant God made with him established Israel as God's chosen people and eventual adoption as a firstborn son. The promised land in the Middle East is part of that unconditional covenant promise to Abraham. Whereas the Mosaic covenant made at Sinai was conditional and fulfilled in Christ (Gal.3:17-18).

The promise to Abraham was to be fulfilled through the birth of Isaac, the son of promise (Genesis 18:10, 14). It would be through Isaac that nations and kings in multitude would come, and eventually the King of kings – the Lord Jesus Christ.

***Genesis 21:12** But God said to Abraham.... "for in Isaac your seed shall be called". Literally 'in Isaac the Promised Seed shall be appointed, or come through'.*

Abraham would become ‘the honored father of many nations’, and his descendants, who would be as numerous as ‘the stars in heaven’ (Genesis 15:5), would come through one son, Isaac. Jesus Christ, the Promised Seed of the Woman in Genesis 3:15, is in the lineage of Abraham and Isaac, and this is one way we can see Isaac as a Type of Christ, because he is the promised seed also.

In today’s lesson, we shall see how God tested Abraham’s faith regarding the promise He had made that ‘in Isaac your seed shall be called’.

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*Genesis 22:1 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."*

*2 Then He said, "Take now 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."*

The word translated ‘**tested**’ in v.1, which is also translated ‘tempted’ in some translations, means **to test, to prove, to try, to assay as when testing metals for quality**. What God was testing, or proving for quality, was the genuineness of Abraham’s faith with respect to the promise that would come through Isaac.

**Q:** How does God refer to Isaac in v.2?

**A:**

Abraham actually had another son before Isaac, but not for his wife Sarah. His name was Ishmael and his mother was Hagar, Sarah’s maid. However, God had made it abundantly clear to Abraham that His promise and covenant would only come through Isaac, the son of promise.

**Q:** What does God tell Abraham to do with Isaac in v.2?

**A:**

This is the first mention in the Bible of the word 'love', and we see it is used in the same verse as a sacrificial burnt offering. Therefore, we can begin to understand that **love** is connected with **sacrifice**. [Also interesting that the first mention of "love" is with regards to Isaac, a type of Christ, and Abraham who is a type of God the Father.]

<b>Notes:</b>
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*Genesis 22:3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.*

*4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.*

Notice how quickly Abraham responded to God's command – he 'rose early in the morning'. There was no delay.

**Q:** How many days' journey was it to the land of Moriah?

**A:**

Abraham saw the place afar off on the third day. There is great spiritual significance to what exactly Abraham saw. Your thoughts (based on Scripture of course)?

Let's continue reading Genesis chapter 22:

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**Genesis 22:5** *And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."*

*6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.*

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

*8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.*

*9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.*

*10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.*

Isaac realized that although they had the wood and the fire for a burnt offering, they did not have the lamb to sacrifice to God. Underline what Abraham told his son in v.8.

Do you think Abraham said that because he believed it, or because he wanted to keep Isaac from knowing what was about to happen? And how can we know?

We read in **v.1** that God was testing Abraham's faith, and although it might appear as if Abraham did not want Isaac to know what was about to

happen, we should notice that Abraham had no difficulty in binding Isaac and laying him on the altar. Furthermore, Isaac was compliant as his father bound him and laid him on the altar! Also based on **v.4**, along with suitable cross references, we can conclude that Abraham knew that God would provide.

In the NT it tells us that Christ was also obedient to His Father when it came to His sacrifice on the cross (Phil.2:8).

As we continue reading, we shall see that Abraham's faith in God's word was proven, and God would provide what was needed, just as Abraham said.

However, there is another way we can know for sure that Abraham fully intended to slay Isaac and offer him as a burnt offering. We can turn to commentary on this sacrifice, again in the NT.

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*Hebrews 11:17* By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

*18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called,"*

*19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.*

**Q:** What was it that Abraham believed, and with respect to what?

**A:**

*Genesis 22:11* But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am."

*12* And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

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*13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.*

**Q:** As a result of being willing to slay his son, what did God know about Abraham (v.12)?

**A:**

**Q:** What did God provide instead, and where was it?

**A:**

We know that God stopped Abraham from slaying Isaac, and God did indeed provide the animal for the burnt sacrifice, exactly as Abraham had told Isaac He would. God had provided **a substitute** so that Isaac did not have to die. However, according to what we read in [Hebrews 11:19](#) it was **as if Isaac died that day** because Abraham received him back from the dead “in a figurative sense.”

The starting point for our series “Jesus in the OT” was what Christ said to the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus: [Luke 24:27](#), “*And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*”

That is why we have looked carefully at Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac. Perhaps nowhere in the OT is Jesus seen more clearly than here, where **Isaac is a type of Christ** – specifically, Christ’s crucifixion followed by His resurrection.

### **Type to Antitype**

As we now compare the similarities between Christ and Isaac’s respective sacrifices, find Scriptures to support them from the NT:

- God the Father did not spare His Son, but offered Him up as a sacrifice on the very same mountain where Abraham offered Isaac almost 2,000 years before.
- Before Jesus died, a crown of thorns was placed on His head. The ram that was sacrificed for Isaac was caught in a thicket of thorns by its horns on its head.
- Jesus was made to carry His cross, just as Isaac carried the wood for his sacrifice.
- Jesus Christ was resurrected on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Day following His death on the cross, in the same way that Abraham received Isaac back from the dead after a 3 day journey to the same place.
- Just as Isaac was obedient to his father in the intended sacrifice, so was Jesus.

We can know from Christ's obedience to His Father in the antitype, that in the type, Isaac must have willingly yielded to his father as he bound him on the altar.

*(The last bullet point is a useful tool to understanding scripture. We know that a type points forward to its antitype, however the antitype can sometimes shed more detail backwards onto the type, as in this case.)*

**Q:** Do you remember what it was that the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus had failed to believe?

**A:**

They really should have seen the parallels between Abraham & Isaac, and God the Father & His Son. If they had connected the two, then they would have realized that Christ must **first suffer death**, and **then be raised from the dead on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Day**.

We can see once again why Jesus calls them 'foolish and slow of heart' to believe. Fortunately for them - and for us - Abraham believed straight away what God told him, and Isaac was an obedient, willing sacrifice.

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*Genesis 22:14 And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of The LORD it shall be provided."*

*15 Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,*

*16 and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son -*

*17 "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.*

*18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

We can see in **v.17** that as a result of Abraham's faith, not only will his descendants through Isaac be as numerous 'as the stars of heaven' (Gen.15:5), but also as numerous as 'the sand on the seashore'. Those same descendants will also 'possess the gate of their enemies'.

**Q:** What do you understand 'possessing the gate of their enemies' to mean?

**A:**



**Q:** Where have we seen something similar said to Abraham?

**A:**

**Q:** Who would be the enemy of Abraham's descendants in the heavens and on the earth?

**A:**

Briefly explain how the present system of rulership works.

But before Abraham's descendants can 'possess the gate of their enemies', and before 'the nations of the earth shall be blessed' through them, we have to return to Isaac one more time. Isaac (and Christ) must have **a wife** if all of this is going to come to pass, and that will be the subject of our next lesson.

Let's pray....