

Abraham Taking Isaac to Be Sacrificed

Genesis 21:1–8; 22

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took . . . Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Genesis 22:3

When Abraham was 100 years old, he and his wife Sarah were blessed with a baby son. They named him Isaac, and they were happy and loved him. (See Genesis 21:1–8.)

One day the Lord said to Abraham, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Genesis 22:2). As difficult as this would be, Abraham prepared to obey the Lord. He began his journey to the mountain early in the morning, taking Isaac, two young servants, a donkey, and wood for the burnt offering (see Genesis 22:3). On the third day of the journey, Abraham left the two servants and the donkey, saying that he and Isaac would go farther to worship (see Genesis 22:4–5). Isaac carried the wood, and Abraham took a knife (see Genesis 22:6).

Isaac was puzzled and he asked his father, “Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” (Genesis 22:7).

Abraham answered, “My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering” (Genesis 22:8).

When they reached the place that God had revealed, Abraham built an altar. Then he put the wood across the altar, tied Isaac up, and laid him on the wood. (See Genesis 22:9.) Abraham sadly “stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son” (Genesis 22:10).

But at that moment an angel of the Lord called, “Abraham, Abraham: . . . lay not thine hand upon the lad” (Genesis 22:11–12). Abraham did not have to kill his son, but his willingness to obey this difficult command proved that he was obedient and that he loved God.

After the angel had spoken, Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket (bush). He then took the ram and offered it for a burnt offering in place of Isaac. (See Genesis 22:13.)

The angel spoke again to Abraham, telling him that the Lord would “multiply [his] seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore” (Genesis 22:17). The angel also said that Abraham’s family would be a blessing to all the nations of the earth because Abraham had obeyed the Lord (see Genesis 22:15–18).

Summary

Abraham was 100 years old when he and his wife Sarah were blessed with a son, Isaac. The Lord one day told Abraham to take Isaac to a mountain and offer him as a sacrifice. Although this was a difficult commandment, Abraham trusted the Lord and obediently took Isaac to the mountain. As Abraham took the knife to slay

his son, he was stopped by an angel of the Lord. Abraham did not have to kill Isaac after all. He looked up and saw a ram, which he offered as a sacrifice instead. Because Abraham was willing to obey, the Lord promised that he would have many descendants and that his family would bless all nations.

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