

The Book of Genesis

Chapter Twenty Two

The Test of Abraham's Love

Lesson Verse: Luke 14:26

I. Lesson Introduction

- A. In this chapter we study one of the most well known tests God ever put before anyone. This is the test of Abraham's faith by God in the matter of offering Isaac as a burnt offering. The episode stands as an eternal picture of the mercies of God. It is also one of the most beautiful pictures of God offering His son Jesus as an atonement for sin.
- B. This offering is in stark contrast to one made by Jephthah, *Judges 11*. Jephthah spoke before he thought, and in so doing, made a rash vow. This offering made my Abraham was instigated by God and was acceptable unto Him. Jephthah lived with the foolishness of his vow the remainder of his life. Abraham live the remainder of his life knowing he was obedient unto the will of God, and was simply believing the promises of God.

II. Lesson

A. **Test of _____**, *Gen. 22:1-14*.

1. After the events in chapter 21 God again calls on Abraham. In the latter portions of the past chapter, Abraham dug a well and planted a grove in Beer-sheba. It was there that he called on the name of the LORD, "*the everlasting God.*"
2. By planting a vineyard, *Gen. 21:33*, a beautiful picture is presented. Abraham is putting down roots. He is no longer a traveller and wanderer. The everlasting God made an everlasting covenant with him. This land belongs to the Jews forever, *Jer 24:6-7, Isa. 64:22*.
3. God Calls on Abraham again.
 - a. It seems it is just one thing after the other.
 - b. No sooner has Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael out of his life that he has problems with Abimelech. Just as he got that misunderstanding lined out, God calls on him to make a journey that will test his faith every step of the way.
4. The trying of Abraham's Faith, *James 1:12*.
 - a. God called to Abraham and notice how obediently Abraham answered: "Here I am." Abraham has learned many hard lessons and is by now humble and possess a willing spirit.
 - b. The past difficulties he survived prepared him for this great test. He did not know what God was going to say to him, but he knew it would be all right.
 - c. Times when God tested people and their faith
 - 1) Job
 - 2) Peter's faith would be tested at the crucifixion
 - 3) Every Christian's faith is tested by the world – through persecution (Heb 11)
 - d. This is not cruel – it is the only way for our faith to be proven, and for it to become strong!
5. No _____ .
 - a. When God told Abraham in chapter 18 what He intended to do in Sodom, Abraham immediately interceded for the cities. When Sarah told Abraham to cast out Ishmael Abraham was grieved, *Gen. 21:11*. I believe Abraham and Sarah probably had a few words about this. It was not until God told him to not be grieved that he sent the two on their way.
 - b. However, in this particular situation Abraham made no intercessions. He did not tell anyone where they were going. He did not immediately tell anyone what they would do once they arrived.
 - c. Abraham kept all these things, v. 2, in his heart. He knew that as the head of the household he would be the one to slay his only son. Knowing all of this Abraham continued on the way doing what God told him to do.
 - d. Because Abraham kept these things unto himself and did not ask anyone what they thought about it is a classic example of how he typifies God the Father. Across the endless ages of eternity past,

- God knew exactly what He would do. However, knowing what He would do and how it would be done did not deter him from His plan, *Isa 46:11 Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.* God said that about a mortal man. He purposed it. He brought it to pass.
- e. God was willing to bargain with Abraham over a multitude of useless Sodomites. He was willing to bargain with Rahab the harlot. Not even the pleading of His only beloved Son would change His heart and mind about Calvary, *Mat 26:39*.
6. God's Direction.
- a. Once again Abraham is on a journey of blind faith. God told him once before that He had some land He wanted to give to Abram. Abram probably asked where is this land, and God replied you will know when you get there.
 - b. Here God told Abraham I will show you where you are to go and how to get there. All you need to do is make an early start. Notice there was no hesitation in Abraham and again please note he conferred with no one.
 - c. Once God calls us to action we do not need to confer with any one. Paul said the same thing: *Gal 1:15-16 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.* Why should Paul ask someone else what they thought about what God wanted Paul to do? Whom was Paul going to obey? Man or God? Who are we obeying?
7. The Journey.
- a. The journey is significant. Each night as Abraham lay down to sleep he probably looked over at that innocent son and tried to understand just what it was God had in mind for them. Abraham bore this burden alone.
 - b. God the Father bore the burden alone, knowing that even before He created anything, what would take place with the angels and men. Knowing the ending from the beginning did not deter Him. He knew that He could make a way for all that wanted to be His.
 - c. Knowing what he had to do did not deter Abraham. This was his only son, his beloved son, and even with loving him as much as he did, it did not stop him from doing what God commanded.
 - d. On the third day Abraham saw the place where he was to offer Isaac. His heart probably felled into his stomach when he saw the mount. He did not hesitate when he arrived, but was again immediately obedient and told the servants to wait while he and Isaac go worship. It is extremely important to note what the aged father told the servants in verse six of chapter 22: *...and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.*

B. The _____.

1. It is in this portion of scripture that we see the beautiful picture of God the Father offering God the Son as a sacrifice for sin. Remember that Isaac was the promised child, and greatly beloved by his father. Even so it was with God the Father and His precious Son Jesus whom He loved.
2. Not only was the offering of Isaac a type of the offering made by the Lord Jesus Christ for sin, but every animal offered by the nation of Israel was also a type of the sacrifice made by God for man.
3. Abraham And Isaac – a picture of ___ and _____.
 - a. Isaac and Jesus as the servants, *Isa 53:4-10. Acts 8:32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: Acts 8:33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.*
 - b. Isaac carried the wood up the hill. He was no mere child. The scripture does not say what his age is. However, he must have been about 18 years of age, for he carried the wood for the sacrifice up the mount. Also the angel referred to him as a lad. He carried enough wood to consume his body in the flames. By subjecting reasoning we easily understand that he could have subdued his aged father. As an obedient servant this was not the case. Isaac did not offer any protest. Obediently he shouldered the wood and followed his father up the hill.
 - c. Isaac could have called out to the servants standing by to help him. There could have been a contest of will at the foot of that hill and Isaac would have never made the walk. Abraham, aged in body, could have been left laying at the foot of the mount.

- d. Jesus Christ said it was a delight and joy for Him to bear the reproach and shame in carrying out the will of His Father, *Psa 40:8, Heb 10:6-7, 12:2*. He was an obedient servant. Jesus said He had the power to call twelve legions of angels, *Mat 26:52-54*, to fight this battle for Him.
 - e. Considering the numbers that supposedly made up a Roman legion, three to six thousand, Jesus very well could have called on 72,000 angels to come and fight this battle for Him. He could have stated flatly, "They are not worth it! Kill them all!" One angel killed an entire army in just a little while: *Isa 37:36 Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.*
 - f. At the foot of Mt. Calvary there could have been a test of wills: God the Son Vs. God the Father. However this test of wills had already taken place the night before in the garden. Jesus subjected His will to that of His Father.
 - g. Just as Isaac carried the wood, Jesus carried the cross. However, Jesus already had a burden to bear that was unseen by man. It was the burden of sin. This burden was much heavier than the cross. Thus Simon forever has the honor of carrying the cross for Jesus. It is as if Jesus told Simon that if he would carry the cross, I'll carry your sin to hell and save you the trouble of eternally bearing your sins in hell, *Luke 23:26 And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.*
4. Abraham and God.
- a. Look at what Abraham carried up the hill. He had the knife and the fire. Fire is a type of the judgment of and from God. God rained down fire on Sodom. Christians that stand at the judgment seat of Christ have their works judged by fire, *1 Cor 3:13-15*. Abraham would use both on his son. In the offering of a burnt offering, Abraham would slay Isaac, and then place him on the wood, set the wood on fire, and his body would be consumed by the flames.
 - b. Imagine if you can the faith exhibited by the man Abraham. He believed God would raise Isaac up with a new body after the body was consumed by fire. Do we have the faith of Abraham and believe that God will raise us up with a new body, even though this body is destroyed in the grave? We profess it. Do we live it?
 - c. Abraham carried the knife; the instrument that would be used to slay the son. I would suppose that the knife is a type of the spear used to pierce the side of the Lord. Any one that refuses the Lamb offered by God for sin must accept the fires of judgment, *Rev 20:15*. Jesus already had the blessings of His Father for the voice from heaven said at His baptism, "this is my beloved son."
5. The Sacrifice
- a. Isaac had seen his father make this sacrifice before for he asked of his father, "We have the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb?" Abraham's reply: "God will provide himself a lamb." Here in this verse we find a play on words, a prophecy, and the unity of the Trinity of Father and Son. God did provide Himself as the Lamb. John the Baptist said of Him, *John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*
 - b. Here is one of the many times where the King James Bible shows itself to be far superior than all other translations. The NIV reads as: Gen 22:8 (NIV) Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together. The Revised Standard Versions reads as: Gen 22:8 (NRSV) Abraham said, "*God himself will provide the lamb* for a burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.
 - c. However the King James reads: (Gen 22:8 KJV) And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. Furthermore the KJB says they went both of them together. That is they were One in this matter. Those other two versions read as if these two men were making the journey as individuals, not as one.
 - d. Two of us may take a walk along the same path. Just because we make the same walk does not mean we walk together as one. Compare this idea to a marriage and the message becomes abundantly clear. The two are one. Which statement signifies oneness: We are both together in this matter. We two are together in this matter.
 - e. What makes this verse so important, as stated in the KJB, is salvation is a provision made by God Himself. God provided Himself a(s) the Lamb. I will do it Myself. The other versions leads one

- to think that God will provide the lamb by Himself. The concept of God being the Lamb is missing.
6. The Mount.
 - a. They come to the place which God told Abraham. In the days of Abraham the mount was known as Moriah.
 - b. By the time the Lord Jesus Christ was lead up the mount the name had changed to _____, and _____ (*the place of a skull*).
 7. Abraham Builds an Altar, *Ex. 20:24*.
 - a. Here is another vivid picture of Abraham as a type of the Father. As Abraham built the altar, we see God creating the world and a hill that is to be known as Calvary.
 - b. We see the seeds reproducing themselves for 4,000 years until one grows into a tree that will be made into a cross.
 8. Isaac now learns that ___ is the lamb, *Heb. 11:17*. .
 - a. Isaac probably had a pretty good idea by this time that he was the sacrifice.
 - b. Everything was there except the sacrifice. Everything was in order except that the sacrifice was nowhere to be found.
 9. Intervention.
 - a. As Abraham lifts the knife to slay Isaac, an angel of the Lord stopped him.
 - b. This angel is the Lord. He commanded Abraham to not do the lad any harm. God really wanted obedience from Abraham.
 - c. That is also what He wants from us. He just wants us to be obedient to do His will, *1 Sam 15:22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*
 10. Provision.
 - a. Abraham looked around and for the first time he sees a ___ with his horns caught in a thicket.
 - b. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a sacrifice instead of Isaac.
 - c. He called the place of the sacrifice, _____: _____.
 - d. On Mt. Calvary, God did provide.
- C. **The Covenant Reaffirmed**, *Gen. 22:15-19*.
1. There is no doubt that Abraham would have slain Isaac. This is abundantly clear from the context of 22:15 where God said that Abraham did not withhold his son. That is in the mind of Abraham, Isaac was already dead and raised again.
 2. In the mind of God this was how God the Father thought of Jesus before creation,
 - a. *1 Pet 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*
 - b. *1 Pet 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,*
 - c. *Rev 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*
 3. The Covenant Reaffirmed.
 - a. The angel said that because Abraham was faithful in what God required that the seed of Abraham would be as numerous as the stars in heaven and the sands on the seashore. Abraham gave his beloved son to God in everything that the Lord asked. In return God gave back to Abraham more than Abraham ever thought possible could come from his old body.
 - b. Abraham only wanted one son to pass on his inheritance. However, in that our plans are not God and our thoughts are not His thoughts, God gave more than Abraham ever imagined. Well did Isaiah say: *Isa 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. Isa 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*
 - c. It has been over 2,500 years and Abraham begets more spiritual and physical children every year. Kings and queens came from his and Sarah aged bodies. Nothing is too hard for our God.

- d. *(Heb 11:6 KJV) But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

III. Conclusion