

The Mountain of Faith

Genesis 22: 1-18

Our text today is likely one of the most familiar passages in the Old Testament. This passage has been preached and taught by many. While it deals with Abraham being willing to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice unto the Lord, it points toward the coming sacrifice Jesus Christ would make upon the cross for our sin. There is no greater illustration of the cross than this account in Abraham's life.

There can be no doubt that Abraham was a man of faith. He followed the Lord faithfully for twenty-five years, waiting for Isaac, the promised son to be born. God was faithful to His promise, sending Isaac in His time. However, there came a day when God asked Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice unto the Lord. While the majority would have rejected such a request, Abraham followed in obedience. He viewed this journey as an act of obedient worship.

There is much in this passage, and we will not have time to deal with all that could be shared; but I trust it will serve as a challenge regarding our obedience to the Lord, and encourage our faith in Him, knowing He is more than able to provide for our needs. As we examine the [phases](#) of Abraham's journey, I want to consider: [The Mountain of Faith](#).

I. The Examination of Faith (1-3) – The opening verses reveal the great test Abraham would endure, serving to examine his faith before the Lord. Consider:

A. The Call (1) – [And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.](#) Isaac had been born, and Abraham and Sarah are dwelling in Beer-sheba, happily raising their son. There came a day when God called unto Abraham. Regardless of how long it had been since God had spoken, Abraham was familiar with the voice of God and immediately responded to Him. He was not yet aware of what the Lord desired, but Abraham was ready to hear. This would be a conversation unlike any they had had before. God was about to test Abraham's faith in a way it had never been tested. (God does not tempt us with evil, but He can, and will test our faith from time to time. We may never face such a severe test of faith, but if you walk with the Lord, prepare to have your faith tested.)

B. The Command (2) – [And he said, 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.](#) Can you imagine how Abraham must have felt as he heard these words from the Lord? God knew Abraham loved Isaac greatly, having gone through so much prior to his birth.

Now God had asked Abraham to offer his son as a burnt offering unto the Lord. What would he tell Sarah? How could he bare to tell her such news? This was clearly an enormous test of faith! There would be much time to ponder and dread the coming sacrifice. Mount Moriah lay about fifty miles to the north, a journey that would take three days.

C. The Commitment (3) – *And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and 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.* Abraham didn't hesitate; he rose early the next morning and began the journey in obedience to God. We find no record of further questioning or doubt. Abraham was fully committed to God and determined to honor Him through faithful obedience. (That is quite convicting when we consider the enormity of God's command. We tend to hesitate and argue with God over meager requests, issues that require us to move out of our comfort zone. God wants us to show obedience like Abraham's, fully surrendered to Him.)

II. The Demonstration by Faith (4-10) – Abraham did not merely pay lip service to the Lord. He demonstrated his faith by following the Lord's command. Notice:

A. The Perspective (4-5) – *Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.* ^[5] *And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.* Do you see the significance of Abraham's perspective? He did not view this journey to Moriah as a burden or any sort of injustice. He instructed the servants to wait there while he and Isaac went up on the mountain to **worship!** For me that is very profound. It reveals the confidence Abraham had in the Lord and his commitment to serve and worship Him. (That certainly challenges the perspective many have today and their commitment to worship.)

B. The Preparation (6) – *And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.* No doubt loving Isaac more than life itself, Abraham prepared to offer him as the Lord had commanded. He took wood for the offering, fire to light the wood, and a knife to sacrifice his son. Abraham was fully surrendered to the Lord, committed to total obedience, whatever the cost! (This should make us pause to consider our faith and commitment to the Lord. I know of no one the Lord has required such a thing, and yet we tend to moan and complain about what the Lord desires and lack genuine commitment in serving Him.)

C. The Petition (7-8) – And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering? ^[8] And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. As they made their way up the mountain, Isaac asked a legitimate question, knowing preparations had been made to offer a sacrifice – Father we have the fire and wood, but where is the lamb? Abraham answered with calm assurance – My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for the offering. While it hard for us to comprehend, I am certain that Abraham fully trusted God at this moment. He knew God was able to provide a sacrifice, and if He didn't, Abraham knew God was able to raise Isaac from the dead. Abraham was at peace with the task ahead, although it would be difficult knowing how frightened Isaac would be. Heb.11:17-19 – By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, ^[18] Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: ^[19] Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

D. The Persuasion (9-10) – And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. ^[10] And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. Here we find the moment of complete surrender. Abraham had pondered this moment for three days, and now he was willing to follow through with God's request. No doubt Abraham hated to put Isaac through such horror; yet he was confident God would provide one way or another. We also need to consider the courage and submission of Isaac. There is no mention of any struggle or resistance to his father's will. It appears that he was willing to do whatever his father asked. (This reminds us of the surrendered obedience of Jesus as He prepared to drink the cup of sin, suffering, and wrath in our place. "Not my will, but thine be done!")

III. The Provision through Faith (11-18) – Here we find the gracious provision of God for Abraham which was secured through Abraham's faith. Consider:

A. The Sincerity (11-12) – And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I. ^[12] And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son* from me. By refusing to withhold his son from the Lord, Abraham passed the test, proving his heart was totally surrendered to God. This was never about Isaac. God did not want Isaac as an offering. He wanted to prove the sincerity of Abraham, affirming his commitment to God. Before Abraham could offer Isaac, God stopped him.

B. The Substitute (13) – *And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.* Just as Abraham had predicted earlier, God provided Himself an offering. Abraham looked and saw a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. He took the offering God had provided and offered it unto Him, sparing his son. (This is such a beautiful picture of the sacrifice Christ made for us. On Calvary, God provided Himself a sacrifice for sin. We like Isaac were bound, and even worthy of death. Rather than requiring our death, God provided a sinless substitute to die in our place – His only begotten Son!)

C. The Sufficiency (14) – *And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.* After offering the substitutionary sacrifice that spared Isaac's life, Abraham called the place Jehovah-jireh. This is one of the many names of God, and it means "*the LORD will provide.*" Abraham had suffered a great need, and God had faithfully provided. (We too can trust the Lord to provide in our times of need. He is sufficient for any and every need we face. *Rom.8:32 – He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*)

D. The Surety (15-18) – In these final verses we discover the affirmation of God's promise to Abraham. He had not withheld his son, being fully surrendered to the Lord. Because of his commitment and obedience to God, Abraham would be blessed through Isaac. A nation would arise through Isaac that would outnumber the sands on the sea shore. Through Abraham and Isaac, all the nations of the earth would be blessed. That serves to remind us of the blessing we too received through Abraham's faithfulness. Through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the nation of Israel would be born. According to God's sovereign plan, Christ would come in the fulness of time. He would bear the sin of the world, providing for our salvation and reconciliation to God. Every nation and people of the earth have reaped the benefit of Abraham's obedience!

Conclusion: There is so much more that could be said about this glorious passage, but I hope you have been encouraged in the Lord. I pray we have been challenged to examine our faith and rejoice for all the Lord has provided. He is more than enough for every need we face.

Are there needs in your life? Are you struggling to follow the Lord by faith? Do you know Christ as your personal Savior? He died in our place so we might be saved and forgiven of sin. Come to the Lord today for whatever need you have. We serve Jehovah-jireh; He will provide!