

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

Kindergarten

## Sunday Morning

Study 7

*The Sacrifice of Isaac*

# The Sacrifice of Isaac

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

**Objective** To continue the story of the Old Testament by demonstrating God's promise to provide a sacrifice for all of us through the analogy of the ram provided for Isaac.

## Key Verses

Genesis 22—Main Teaching Passage

Revelation 13:8

2 Corinthians 5:21

**Memory Verse** - Galatians 3:6 (October Memory Verse)

"Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him as righteousness."

## Hook

Ask the class: "What is your favorite thing in the whole world?"

Then ask, "What if I asked you to take that thing and throw it in the trash can? Would you do it?"

Finally, "What if God asked you to throw that thing away instead?"

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

## BOOK

In Genesis 22 the Lord again appeared to Abraham. This time, He commanded Abraham to take the son that he has been waiting for all this time and to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham obeyed without question or complaint, remembering that God had promised that He would make Abraham's descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky, and trusted that this promise would come through Isaac. He stated quite emphatically, "The boy and I will return." Abraham's faith was powerfully on display here. He also responded to Isaac's question about why they weren't bringing a lamb to sacrifice, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." Abraham's trust in God was self-evident. He believed that God would do what He has promised.

Abraham prepared Isaac, and just as he was about to sacrifice him, an angel appeared and commanded Abraham to stop. Abraham lifted up his eyes and, right in front of him, caught in a thicket, was a ram that God has provided for a sacrifice. The Lord then reaffirmed the covenant that He made with Abraham, promising again that the world would be blessed through his descendants.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

## LOOK

What an incredible thing for God to ask Abraham to do! The son that Abraham waited for all those years was finally right there with him, and God told Abraham to take him up on the mountain and sacrifice him. What is even more astonishing is that Abraham actually went and did it! The key thing to remember here is that Abraham knew God. He knew God's faithfulness, and he knew God's love. Abraham knew that God had promised to make a great nation out of his descendants, and he knew that God would not give him his beloved son only to have him snatched away. When Abraham was being tested, the thing that kept him strong was remembering exactly who God is.

Abraham believed that God would provide a replacement sacrifice, something that would take the place of Isaac on the altar. God proved His faithfulness to Abraham again by giving him a ram, a substitute lamb, to become the sacrifice. This is a very early picture of the promise that God gives to us. In the same way that God spared Isaac's life and gave a substitute sacrifice for him, God has done the very same thing for us.

# LOOK (Continued)

All of us are guilty of sin, and as we saw with Adam and Eve, the consequences of sin is death. God gave us a substitute sacrifice to save us. He gave us a Lamb. It wasn't an actual lamb; He gave us Jesus, who is called, "The lamb who was slain before the foundations of the earth." Jesus came to take our place. He took the penalty that should have been given to us. In the same way that God proved His faithfulness to Abraham, He proved it to us. He took our place, so that we could go to His place.

Abraham was willing to give up everything, even the thing he loved the most in the world, to follow God. Is there anything that God is asking you to give up? Is there anything that God is asking you to give back to Him? Is there anything that God is asking you to stop doing? Are you willing to follow God no matter the cost?

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

# TOOK

Review the lesson by asking the class what God asked of Abraham. Was he willing to do it? Is there anything you would not do if God asked you to do it?

**Pray:** Praise the Lord that He gave His Son to be a substitute sacrifice for our sins. Thank Him for His faithfulness and great love toward us. Ask Him for the ability to lay everything in our lives before Him, and for the strength to walk with Him every day.

**Parent Question:** God provided a ram as a sacrifice for Abraham. What sacrifice did He provide for us?

# FURTHER STUDY

## Commentary on Genesis 22 by David Guzik

### Genesis 22 - Abraham Willing to Offer Isaac

A. God's command to Abraham and his response.

1. (1-2) God tests the faith of Abraham.

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

a. **God tested Abraham:** This was not so much a test to *produce* faith, as it was a test to *reveal* faith. God built Abraham slowly, piece by piece, year by year, into a man of faith.

b. **Take now your son, your only son Isaac:** Significantly, God called Isaac **your only son Isaac**, when in fact Abraham had another son, Ishmael. Since Ishmael was put away from Abraham's family, as far as God was concerned, Abraham had only one son.

c. **Offer him there as a burnt offering:** God told Abraham to offer him as a **burnt offering**. This was not an offering that was burned alive, but one first sacrificed and then completely burnt before the LORD.

i. Abraham might have wondered if Yahweh, the God of the covenant and creator of heaven and earth, was like the pagan gods the Canaanites and others worshipped. For many of the pagan gods, there was nothing unusual about human sacrifice, but this must have seemed a strange request from Yahweh. By the end of the story Abraham knew that God was *not* like the pagan gods that demanded human sacrifice – just the opposite.

ii. How would we react if God told us to do such a thing? Some years ago, Jack Smith, a columnist for the L.A. Times, wrote about this Biblical incident. He said he would have told God to mind his own business. That's what the world always says to God.

iii. It can't be denied that either out of madness or demonic deception, some have done terrible things and justified it along these lines. In 1993, a man named Andrew Cate was sentenced to 60 years in prison after being convicted of fatally shooting his 2-year-old daughter, then walking naked through his neighborhood carrying her body. Cate claimed he was acting out the biblical story of Abraham and Isaac, and God would do a miracle to win his brother to Christianity. Cate believed God would miraculously stop him at the last moment before killing his daughter. The man was obviously deranged. What Abraham did was something completely unique in God's redemptive history, given for a specific purpose once for all fulfilled. There is no way God would ever direct someone to do this same thing today.

d. **Offer him there as a burnt offering:** This test was especially hard because it seemed to contradict the previous promise of God. God had already promised *in Isaac your seed shall be called* (Genesis 21:12). It seemed strange and contradictory to kill the son who was promised to carry on the covenant when it had not yet been fulfilled in him. It seemed as if God commanded Abraham to kill the very promise God made to him.

i. Abraham had to learn the difference between trusting the promise and trusting the Promiser. We can put God's promise before God Himself and feel it is our responsibility to bring the promise to pass, even if we have to disobey God to do it. Trust the Promiser no matter what, and the promise will be taken care of.

e. **On one of the mountains of which I shall tell you:** There was a specific *place* God commanded Abraham to go, a particular spot where this would happen. God carefully directed each detail of this drama.

f. **Your only son Isaac, whom you love:** This is the first mention of **love** in the Bible, and it was the love between father and son, connected with the idea of the sacrificial offering of the son.

2. (3) Abraham's immediate response of faith.

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.

a. **So Abraham rose early:** There was not the slightest hint of hesitation on Abraham's part. Abraham **rose early in the morning** to do this. It must have been a sleepless night for Abraham.

i. Abraham trusted God, even *when he did not understand*. Sometimes we say, "I'm not going to obey or believe until I understand it all," but that is making myself equal with God.

ii. Abraham didn't debate or seek counsel from others. He knew what to do and employed no stalling tactics.

iii. Abraham trusted God, *even when he did not feel like it*. There is not a line in this text about how Abraham felt, not because he didn't feel, but because he walked by faith, not feelings.

iv. God had trained Abraham, bringing him to this place of great trust. In just the last chapter, God asked Abraham to give up Ishmael in a less severe way. God used that, and everything else, to train up Abraham and build great faith in him.

b. **Saddled his donkey:** The phrasing suggests that Abraham did this work personally; he **saddled his donkey** and **split the wood**. Though he had plenty of servants to do this for him, Abraham did it himself because even in his old age, he was a bundle of nervous energy.

c. **Went to the place of which God had told him:** In wonderful, trusting obedience, Abraham went right to the spot. He did this even though it would have been easier in Abraham's eyes if God had asked Abraham to offer himself instead of Isaac.

B. Abraham's offering of Isaac.

1. (4-8) Abraham journeys to the place of sacrifice with Isaac.

Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. 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." 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. 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?" And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

a. **On the third day:** Abraham came to the place on **the third day**. The region of Moriah is associated with Mount Moriah, which is modern-day Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 3:1).

b. **I will go yonder and worship:** This is the first use of the word **worship** in reference to God in the Bible. The Hebrew word *shachah* simply means, *to bow down*. While Abraham and Isaac did not go to the mount to have a time of joyful praise, they did go to bow down to the LORD.

c. **And we will come back to you:** Abraham was full of faith when he spoke to the young men who are with him. He believed that **we will come back**.

i. This does not mean that Abraham somehow knew this was only a test and God would not really require this of him. Instead, Abraham's faith was in the knowledge that should he kill Isaac, God would raise him from the dead, because God had promised Isaac would carry on the line of blessing and the covenant.

ii. He knew *in Isaac your seed shall be called* (Genesis 21:12), and Isaac had yet to have any children. God had to let him live *at least* long enough to have children.

iii. *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.* (Hebrews 11:17-19)

iv. He knew anything was possible, but it was *impossible* that God would break His promise. He knew God was not a liar. He had no precedent (no one in the Bible had yet been raised from the dead), but Abraham knew God was able. God could do it!

d. **Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son:** Isaac carried the wood for his own sacrifice up the hill.

e. **He took the fire in his hand, and a knife:** Abraham took the knife up the hill. He didn't leave it behind or claim to forget it. "That knife was cutting into his own heart all the while, yet he took it. Unbelief would have left the knife at home, but genuine faith takes it." (Spurgeon)

f. **The two of them went together:** This literally means *the two of them went in agreement*. Isaac did this knowingly and willingly. The phrase is repeated twice for emphasis.

i. At this time, Abraham didn't know *how* God would provide. He still trusted in the ability of God to raise Isaac from the dead, but he would stop trusting just because he didn't know *how* God would fulfill His promise.

g. **My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering:** Abraham knew God would provide a sacrifice, but where? Where was the lamb? That question had been asked by all the faithful, from Isaac to Moses to David to Isaiah, all the way to the time of John the Baptist when he declares: *Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!* (John 1:29)

2. (9) Isaac willingly lies down on the altar.

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.

a. **Then they came to the place:** Apparently, even on Mount Moriah, there was a specific place God told Abraham to stop, because this was the **place** to do this.

b. **Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac:** At this time, Abraham

was more than 100 years old and Isaac would have been able to escape his coming death had he chosen to. Yet he submitted to his father perfectly. In remembering Abraham's faith, we should never forget *Isaac's* faith.

i. Most Jewish commentators think Isaac was in his thirties at the time of this event.

c. **Upon the wood:** As an obedient son, Isaac laid down on the wood, ready to be sacrificed.

3. (10-14) God's merciful reprieve.

And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." 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." 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. 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."

a. **Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son:** We must believe Abraham was completely willing to plunge the knife into Isaac, because his faith was in God's ability to raise Isaac from the dead, not in God's desire to stop the sacrifice. Abraham didn't think this was a drama or playacting.

i. One may say, "It's not fair or right. God told Abraham to do something and then told him not to. If God really wanted to test Abraham, He should have made him plunge the knife into his son's chest."

ii. Yet God *often* takes the *will* for the *deed* with his people. When He finds them truly *willing* to make the sacrifice He demands, He often does not require it. This is how we can be martyrs without ever dying for Jesus. We live the *life* of a martyr right now.

iii. But, "Often there are believers who wonder how they may know the will of God. We believe that ninety per cent of the knowing of the will of God consists in willingness to do it before it is known." (Barnhouse)

b. **Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him:** With this, God emphatically showed Abraham that He was *not* like the pagan gods worshipped by the Canaanites and others, gods that demanded human sacrifice and were pleased by it. God strongly and clearly demonstrated that He did *not* want human sacrifice.

c. **You have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me:** Abraham displayed his heart towards God in that he was willing to give up his only son. God displays His heart towards us in the same way, by giving His *only begotten Son* (John 3:16).

i. When God asked Abraham for the ultimate demonstration of love and commitment, He asked for Abraham's son. When God the Father wanted to show us the ultimate demonstration of His love and commitment to us, He gave us His Son. We can say to the LORD, "Now I know that You love me, seeing You have not withheld Your Son, Your only Son from me."

d. **Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son:** All the while, God still required a sacrifice. God didn't call off the sacrifice. Instead, He required that there be a substitute provided by God Himself.

e. **Abraham called the name of the place:** The naming of the place was significant. Abraham called it, **The LORD Will Provide** (*Jehovah Jireh*); **In this mount, it shall be provided.**

i. Abraham didn't name the place in reference to what *he* experienced. He didn't name it *Mount Trial* or *Mount*



*Agony or Mount Obedience*. Instead, he named the hill in reference to what *God* did; he named it *Mount Provision*. He named it knowing God would provide the ultimate sacrifice for salvation on that hill someday.

ii. **As it is said to this day:** apparently, Moses meant even in his own day, men looked at that hill and said, **“In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”**

iii. This event is also a prophecy of Jesus’ rising from the dead on the *third day*, as 1 Corinthians 15:4 says *He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures*. But where does it say in the Old Testament specifically the Messiah would rise again on the third day? It says so here, through the picture of Isaac. Isaac was “reckoned dead” by Abraham as soon as God gave the command, and Isaac was “made alive” (“risen”) three days later.

iv. Isaac’s picture of Jesus becomes even clearer:

- Both were loved by their father.
- Both offered themselves willingly.
- Both carried wood up the hill of their sacrifice.
- Both were sacrificed on the same hill.
- Both were delivered from death on the third day.

4. (15-19) God reconfirms His promise to Abraham in light of his faith.

Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, 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; 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. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.” So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

a. **Blessing I will bless you:** Imagine how happy Abraham was after passing this test of trust.

b. **I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore:** By rough calculations, the number of stars in the sky and grains of sand on the seashore are the same: 10 to the 25th power.