

Most Precious Sacrifice

Genesis 22:1 – 14

I. Intro

- A. Today – a test; father of Jewish people, nation of Israel
- B. Call this test of faith, test of willingness to obey; not a small test
- C. God called Abraham to sacrifice something very precious – His only son, Isaac
- D. Remember - Genesis 17:19 (NIV)
¹⁹ Then God said, "... your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. ; now God putting Abraham's belief in His promise to the test
- E. **READ Genesis 22:1 – 14**
- F. Take a look at 3 things from passage – God's Request, Abraham's Trust, Isaac's Willingness

II. God's Request

- A. Many would say this unbelievable, even impossible, request from God
- B. **Question:** Why would God make such a request? **v. 1** – *God tested Abraham*
- C. God certainly knew the scope of what He was asking Abraham to do; **v. 2** – *take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love*
- D. **Question:** Some might say, if God knows our hearts already, why would He need to test us? God proved His love for us by sending His one and only Son to die for us, in our place, why wouldn't God ask us at times to prove our love for Him?
- E. True, genuine, sincere love is not just expressed verbally; true, genuine, sincere love must also be expressed through actions
- F. No surprise that Abraham would be tested like this concerning his son; tests from God many times will involve things we love most; not a test if no sacrifice is involved
- G. Abraham asked by God to offer up his only son, Isaac, as a burnt offering, typically this would involve an animal sacrificed on an altar of wood and the sacrifice burnt to ashes; for Jewish faith this was an act of worship – teach complete and total surrender to the Lord
- H. By nature, we humans don't like to surrender, don't like to have to give up something; always looking for easy way out – doing just enough to get by
- I. Not only do we do this in numerous areas of our lives but we do it in worship as well; worship when it's convenient, worship only in the way we

feel most comfortable, worship in the flesh not in the Spirit, worship just enough to get us through the week

- J. If God would make such a request of Abraham, don't think He wouldn't test us as to our commitment and sacrifice

III. Abraham's Trust

- A. Notice how Abraham responded – **READ v. 3 – 6**; no questions, no hesitation
- B. **Definition:** trust – *assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something; one in which confidence is placed*
- C. Abraham didn't waste any time; know the journey started in Beersheba and ended at Mt. Moriah – 60 miles; Abraham made the trip in 3 days (do the math), walking 20 miles per day
- D. Isaac pretty observant – **READ v. 7**; Abraham's answer and the trust and confidence in God it shows – **READ v. 8**
- E. **Question:** Let's be honest, if God were testing any of us in the same way he was testing Abraham, would any of us come anywhere near responding like Abraham did?
- F. Here's the "clincher" of this whole event – what God was asking Abraham to do is no different than what God did Himself offering His only Son (Himself) on the cross
- G. **1** – Abraham willing to offer his only son, Isaac, as a sacrifice to God; God offered His only Son as a sacrifice for you and me
- H. **2** – Abraham traveled three days to place of sacrifice; Jesus laid in tomb for three days as our sacrifice
- I. **3** – For Abraham, this was a test of trust and surrender, and his love for God; for God, the sacrifice of His Son was a test of His love for sinful mankind
- J. **4** – God stopped Abraham from killing his son and provided a ram as a substitute sacrifice; God did not spare His one and only Son as a sacrifice substitute for us
- K. However, God does call us to offer ourselves as sacrifice for Him -
Romans 12:1 (NIV) ¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.
- L. **The point** – sacrifice is an essential part of worship; there is no worship without no sacrifice

IV. Isaac's Willingness

- A. **Nothing in this passage tells us that Isaac was unwilling to be laid on the altar; READ v. 9, 10 – Abraham bound his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood**
- B. **See no indication of Isaac putting up a fight, refusing, screaming**
- C. **What trust Isaac must have had in his father; what trust Isaac himself must have had in God**
- D. **His response just like Jesus' when He was facing crucifixion**
 - i. **Matthew 26:39 (NIV)** ³⁹... he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."
 - ii. **Matthew 26:42 (NIV)** ⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."
- E. **Question: Are you willing to lay your life down on the altar in order for the will of the Father to be fulfilled – His will to be done in your life, His will to be done in the church, His will to be done in the world?**

V. Close

- A. **The most precious sacrifice made by God was offering His Son, Jesus Christ, for us**
- B. **The most precious sacrifice you could offer to God is yourself**
- C. **Hebrews 13:15-16 (NIV)** ¹⁵ Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name. ¹⁶ And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.