

Genesis Chapter 22 Commentary

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. 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.

Tempt is the Hebrew word (naw-saw') which means; *to test, assay, prove, try*. Tempt (in today's dictionary) means to entice, or allure, to do something often regarded as unwise, wrong, or immoral. We see in these definitions; the difference in how God tempts people; and satan tempts people. When satan tempts mankind; he is trying to get them to do something sinful, which will cause them to be in disfavor with God, and in favor with the devil. The devil still uses this same principle that he started in the Garden of Eden when, disguised as a serpent, he tempted Eve and Adam to disobey the command of God. Satan is always tempting mankind to lead them into sin.

God tempts, or tests, mankind to verify and demonstrate their faithfulness and trust in God. God tested Job by allowing satan to tempt him to do sin. What you have to understand, about God tempting, is that God has a promise to his people, that he will not put more on them than he will make them able to bear, as seen in: **1Co 10:13** *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."* God's tempting is never to lead to sin, but rather, to strengthen the faith and trust of his people.

God knew the heart of Abraham, and knew that Abraham would do what God required. It is a prophetic picture to show us that; God would follow through with giving his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to die upon the cross for remission of our sins. Here, God is testing Abraham's faith and trust in God.

Note to yourself: God tempts each Christian today; to cause them grow in faith, and in their trust, in the ability of God to fulfill his promise to be a Saviour to them.

We notice here the phrase **"thine only son Isaac."** You can say that Abraham had other children and that is a truth, but Isaac is the only son born to Abraham by his one true wife, and Isaac is the one promised seed to Abraham and Sarah. This is why God says that Isaac is **"thine only son Isaac."** This son, Isaac, is the only son of his wife Sarah, born by miracle in their old age. Isaac was the son of promise from God, and was a type of Christ, the Son of God. How was he a type of Christ? Isaac is the only son of Abraham; and was born by a miraculous birth. Christ is the only begotten son of God the Father, and he was born incarnate through a miraculous virgin birth.

"whom thou lovest," God has told Abraham, that his only son Isaac will be the one that he blesses, to procreate, and carry forward the lineage that leads us to Christ. God has promised to make a great nation out of Isaac. God has already had Abraham to send away the other son born to the Egyptian handmaid Hagar. Isaac is the only son that Abraham has at his home now. Therefore, we understand that Abraham has a very great love for Isaac, his miraculously born son. We see a parallel here with God and the love he has for his only begotten Son. How do we know that God loved his Son?

- **Mt 17:5** "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."
- **Mr 1:11** "And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
- **Lu 3:22** "And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

"**and get thee into the land of Moriah**" The land of Moriah is, as we understand, the same land area where Christ was to be crucified. We can establish this from scripture in: **2Ch 3:1** "**Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.**" Thus, we have another parallel between Isaac and Christ being offered as a sacrifice in the same land.

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.

Immediate obedience is Abraham's response to God's command. Do we demonstrate the same kind of faithfulness, in our response when the Spirit of God speaks to us? Lord help us to be faithful.

4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

Abraham saw the appointed "**place afar off.**" and knew that this was it. Comparably, we know when God has directed us to our church home in this world. To this I can testify from personal experience, as well as by the experiences proclaimed by others.

From this phrase "**place afar off;**" we get the prophetic picture of Abraham seeing the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, by faith. **Heb 11:17-19; 17** "**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.**" Also, God the Father saw the appointed place of his only begotten Son's sacrifice for sin, before the foundations of the earth were laid.

Isaac was bound to the altar as a sacrifice on the third day, after Abraham received the command to sacrifice his only son. Isaac was delivered from death, from the altar of sacrifice, on this 3rd day. Christ's incarnate body lay in the tomb three days; and early on the morning of the 3rd day he arose from the tomb, bringing salvation by the grace of God to fruition. Great was the reward of faithfulness to Abraham, and Isaac, in obeying God in faithfulness.

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.

Notice, Abraham didn't take anything extra to the sacrifice. This tells us; when we approach God to make the sacrifice of our praise, in prayer and thanksgiving, as seen in: **Heb 13:15** "**By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.**" we are only to take the necessities, not our list of personal wants.

We see here; the depth of Abraham's faith: "***and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you***" Abraham believed that he, and Isaac, would return from the sacrifice. How could he? He had the promise of God in: ***Ge 17:19 "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."*** and he believed that God would resurrect his son from death, as we spoke of earlier.

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.

Isaac bore the load of the wood for the sacrifice, and Christ bore his own cross as seen in: ***Joh 19:17 "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:"*** Rest assured, that as Abraham accompanied Isaac to the place of sacrifice; so God the Father accompanied God the Son to the cross. God the Father only forsook his son Christ long enough for the incarnate body of Jesus to die under the burden of our sins.

7 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.

Again, we see the depth of Abraham's faith "***My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering:***" How much faith do you think Isaac has right now?

Some will say; Abraham didn't believe his son would be resurrected from the dead, but believed God would provide a lamb for the burnt offering. To which I reply; remember the reference in ***Heb 11:17-19.***

We do not know how much God revealed to Abraham, of the need for there to come the Lamb of God to be the substitute for sins, but let's not forget; the point of this chapter is that Abraham believed God to the point of offering Isaac, his only son, upon the altar. It is the demonstration of total faith and trust in God.

9 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.

We find; this is the only altar that Abraham built. He built several altars as Abram, but this is the only altar that he built as Abraham. This speaks to us of the coming of Christ and His one-time sacrifice upon the altar. Men, by and in their own strength, try to build altars and make an approach to God, but are not able to do this of their own strength. Man must be converted from nature to grace, and have their named changed by God; as Abram was changed Abraham. We must be born again, (our name changed from lost sinner, to saved by grace sinner). This gives us the ability to have an altar of sacrifice to God.

How so? Christ is the only mortal body, that has dwelt upon the earth, that had no sin. Christ was not formed from the dust of the earth as mortal man was; but he was a heavenly creation by the hand of God implanted in the womb of mortality. Therefore, Christ's is the only human body that was an acceptable sacrifice to God. Likewise, we must be born again, made new creatures in the purity of Christ's sin atoning sacrifice, to offer our sacrifice of worship to God in Spirit and Truth.

We realize this, when we understand that just as Abraham was by faith made able to offer his own, and only, son on the altar, this offering was prophetic of God offering Christ on the cross as a wholly acceptable sacrifice for sin.

Notice; Isaac was bound, and placed upon the altar, by his father; likewise, Jesus was bound, and placed upon the cross of crucifixion, by the will of God the Father.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

Some people say that Abraham didn't offer his son on the altar. I ask you this question: We see here that he bound Isaac, put him on the altar, he drew back his hand with the knife to slay his son. How can you believe that he didn't offer up his son Isaac? You can't. God did not allow him to physically go through with the action of taking his son's life, because that would have been murder, a sin, and God does not tempt man to sin. Truly, Abraham did offer his son on the altar (he bound him and placed him there) as seen in: ***Heb 11:17 "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,"*** If scripture testifies that Abraham "***offered up Isaac***" I believe we should believe that he did.

11 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.

Abraham has passed the test of the tempting God placed before him. Now God blesses Abraham's faithfulness. Herein; we see the display of the coming of grace into the world. We have a similar test of faith in the New Testament in: ***Mt 19:29 "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."*** We see here; Abraham was made able to not let the love of his only son Isaac, keep him from being obedient to God. What a great lesson of faith in God for us today.

Think about Isaac and how he must have felt about all this. Can you imagine being bound and laid upon an altar to be sacrificed? Can you imagine looking up and seeing your father's hand with the knife to slay you? Can you imagine the faith this took for Isaac? Can you imagine the relief when Isaac heard the angel's voice telling his father to not kill his own son. Can you imagine how much his faith in God increased after this experience?

Great is the reward to us, from the faithfulness of Christ obeying the commandment of God to die upon the cross for our sins; seen in one scripture in: ***Ro 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?"***

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.

"behold behind him a ram" The ram is behind him; because Abraham, by faith, has already seen his only son sacrificed. *"offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son."* Salvation came to Isaac the same way it comes to us, by the sacrifice of another in our place, it is by the grace of God.

The first mention of the ram is in **Ge 15:9**; in the sacrificial offering, which sealed the covenant promise of God to Abraham and to his seed. The second mention of the ram is here, the sacrificial offering of where the ram was substituted for Isaac. The third mention is in **Ex 29:15-32**; where it is the sacrificial offering of the ram of consecration, and meat for the priests who serve in the service of the Lord. The forth mention of ram is in: **Le 5:15-18**; where the ram is for a trespass and sin offering.

Now can you see why God chose a ram?

- For God's people; the ram is needed to seal the covenant promise.
- The ram is a picture of the substitution in our place as a sacrifice for sin.
- The ram is meat for our lives, as it was for the priests serving God.
- Finally, the ram is the trespass and sin offering. Salvation comes to earth.

We should be thankful, that God is faithful to provide the fulfillment of His promises, in His written testimony left for us in this world.

14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

Jehovahjireh (yeh-ho-vaw' yir-eh') means; *Jehovah will see to it; a symbolical name for Mount Moriah*. Jehovahjireh is the name given by Abraham to this place. *"In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen."* Truly, as we have the NT scriptures to testify to us today, of the revealed work and word of God; we see that in the mount of the Lord, Calvary's cross on Golgotha's hill, the fulfillment the definition of this prophetic name, Jehovahjireh *"Jehovah will see to it"* is prophetically fulfilled with the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

15 And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

Even God acknowledged that Abraham had offered up his son on the altar.

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

In the blessing of Abraham, we see the same blessing in Jesus Christ being fulfilled today. For truly it is in Jesus Christ that God's people, in all the nations of the earth, are blest; and it is of Jesus Christ that salvation has went forth to all people, past, present and future.

19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

Beersheba means; *well of an oath*. Abraham returns to Beersheba to live. This is emblematic of where we all should be living, in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, having received the promise of God of eternal life.

20 And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor; 21 Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram, 22 And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. 23 And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother. 24 And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

We have in these verses some historical lineage that will make us aware of the promise of God in the future.

- Huz is the lineage that will lead to Job.
- Buz is the lineage to one of Job's friends, Elihu.
- Rebekah is Isaac's future wife, **Ge 24:1-50**.

What a wondrous display, of God's foreknowledge, we find in this chapter; as we see, through the New Testament scriptures, the fulfillment of the prophetic promises revealed herein. Hallelujah!