

# Genesis

**Memorize the TRUTH!**

## Lesson 11 The Testing of Abraham Genesis 22:1-19

Abraham answered, “God himself  
will provide the lamb for the  
burnt offering, my son.”  
Genesis 22:8a

### Asking the Unthinkable – Genesis 22:1-2

### Day 1

1. a. What did God command Abraham to do?  
  
b. What was His purpose?
  
2. a. Without knowing God's purpose at this time, what options did Abraham face when God gave him this command?  
  
b. How did this command seem to go against what God had already promised Abraham? Genesis 17:4-7, 19

### Learn the TRUTH!



Abraham faced his most difficult test. God asked him to sacrifice the son for whom he had waited so many years. In his reply and the reply of his son we see illustrated the future willingness of God to sacrifice His Son for us. Let this story sink in this week — there is no limit to God's love for you!

### Abraham's Response – Genesis 22:3-8

### Day 2

3. What details in this passage reveal Abraham's complete faith in God?
  
4. Read Hebrews 11:17-19. Was Abraham lying when he spoke to his servants in verse 5? Why or why not?
  
5. How does his answer to Isaac's question in verses 7-8 also reveal his unwavering faith in God?
  
6. a. How does the Bible define faith in Hebrews 11:1?  
  
b. How does Abraham's obedience in this passage illustrate this concept?

**Holding Nothing Back**  
**Genesis 22:9-14**

**Day 3**

7. What final steps of obedience did Abraham take in verses 9-10?
  
8. What does this passage lead us to assume about Isaac's attitude toward his father and toward God?
  
9. When and how did God intervene?
  
10. a. Read James 2:21-24. How did Abraham show genuine faith?  
  
b. In what ways do you demonstrate your faith?

**God the Provider**  
**Genesis 22:15-19**

**Day 4**

11. Why do you think God reconfirmed His promises to Abraham at this time?
  
12. By whose name did God take this oath? Why do you think He did this?
  
13. a. List the promises confirmed by God in verses 15-18.  
  
b. What promises has God made to those who believe in Jesus?  
Romans 8:38-39

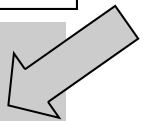
Ephesians 1:13-14

**Reconfirming the Promise**  
**Genesis 22:1-19 Review**

**Day 5**

14. How are Abraham's actions an illustration of God's love for us?  
  
John 3:16
  
15. How is Isaac's attitude an illustration of Christ's obedience to his Father?  
  
Philippians 2:5-8

**Live the TRUTH!**



**Imagine Isaac's thoughts as he climbed on the altar and allowed his father to tie him up. Even when Abraham "took the knife to slay his son" (22:10), the Scriptures don't indicate that he resisted. What a perfect picture of Jesus' attitude as He prayed, "not My will, but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42b). When the Father calls you as His child "to offer [your body] as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God" (Romans 12:1), will you resist? Or will you please Him with an attitude of obedience?**

# Commentary Genesis Lesson 11

“Some time” after the interchanges with Abimelech, Abraham experiences his severest test as a follower of God. How much later is uncertain, but Isaac is probably in his mid-to-late teens, although Jewish tradition puts his age in the 30s. Genesis 22:1 reveals a fact that Abraham does not know at this time: The Patriarch is being tested. Will Abraham demonstrate the reality of his faith in God by the radical obedience God calls for? For the test to be a real one, of course, Abraham could not have the advantage of knowing its design.

The emphasis in 22:2 lies on the closeness between Abraham and Isaac: “your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love.” The word son appears 11 times in Genesis 22:2-16. God is asking Abraham to demonstrate whether his love for his son exceeds his love for God. For this supreme test of his life, Abraham is told to go to the area known as *Moriah*. This word only appears in one other biblical passage (2 Chronicles 3:1) where it is identified as “Mount Moriah,” the part of Jerusalem upon which Solomon would later build the temple. It is a northward extension of the ridge upon which the city of David was built. The place where Abraham offers Isaac would later serve as the location of Israel’s sacrifices. It is also close to the place where God would one day sacrifice His Son.

Abraham arises “early the next morning.” Knowing that the region of Moriah has little in the way of usable firewood, he cuts wood in advance and brings it on the trip, which requires a three-day walk.

When the location is finally visible, Abraham leaves his servants behind, telling them, “Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.” He knows that Isaac will return with him. The writer of Hebrews states that Abraham fully expected that, once Isaac was dead, God would raise him up: “By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, ‘It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.’ Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death” (Hebrews 11:17-19).

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that Abraham endures this test because of his faith in God’s revealed truth. God speaks to him in words that are unmistakable, even providing specific travel directions. Once it is clear what God has ordered, Abraham acts promptly. He does so although the thought of bringing harm to his beloved son must be dreadful. Isaac notes that the main ingredient of a whole burnt offering is missing: the sacrificial animal. Abraham’s response (which must be among the most difficult sentences he has ever uttered) is both accurate and evasive: God will supply His own sacrifice.

Little is made of Isaac’s emotions during the ordeal; he seems to trust his father completely. Just at the moment of execution, the angel of the Lord, always presumed to be the pre-incarnate Christ, urgently calls “Abraham, Abraham.”

## Check It Out:

God does not test us for the purpose of making us fail but rather to see us succeed. Because faith is like a muscle and must be used to grow strong, God tests us so that we have the opportunity to exercise our faith. Moreover, He tests us so we can know the strength of our own faith. If you are going through a test right now, consider what God might want to do in your life by allowing this. And consider the heart attitude God desires for us to have during the test: “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:2-4). It may be hard to rejoice while in the time of testing, but thinking of the potential results should help.

It is now obvious that Abraham fears God. He reverences God as Sovereign Lord from whom he will withhold nothing. The most horrible thought imaginable to Abraham is the possibility of offending the God whom he loves and serves. If God asks for sacrifice, he would give it without regard to his personal pain or loss. No higher calling exists in Scripture than the command to love the Lord with "all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5).

True to his own predictions, Abraham gladly observes a ram caught by its horns in a thicket nearby. This animal is offered "instead of" Isaac. What God does not in the end require of Abraham, He would one day demand of Himself. Near the same spot, His own Son would die as a substitute for humanity. Abraham commemorates the occasion by giving a name to the place. He calls it *Yahweh-Jireh*, meaning "the LORD will provide." As the story is passed down from Abraham and Isaac, it becomes a proverb in Israel: "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

In recognition of this great turning point, the angel of the Lord calls to Abraham again from heaven. Because of Abraham's devotion, God has decided to swear an oath. Because He has no one greater than Himself to swear by, He swears by Himself, confirming His previous promises of blessing. As before, God emphasizes to Abraham that he and his offspring have been chosen not only to receive divine blessings, but to dispense them to "all nations on earth." The repeated use of this theme of universal blessing makes Genesis one of the most missions-minded books in the Bible.

This is the only place in the Old Testament which distinctly illustrates that God will require the sacrifice of a beloved Son — a human sacrifice — for divine justice to be satisfied. God the Father, recognizing the terrible pain Abraham would feel, betrays His own heartbreak over having to sacrifice His only Son in order to offer forgiveness to us (Matthew 3:17). No animal sacrifice would suffice. It is humanity who sinned and a human, the God-Man, who must pay the wages of sin (Romans 6:23). God the Father and God the Son both suffered terribly, but they were determined to open the way for us into their presence.



**In the Hebrew, Abraham speaks only one word in response to God's call to him to sacrifice his son: *Hineni!* Translated, the word means *Here I am* or *I am ready*, but it is rich with meaning in the Hebrew. The word implies a close, father-child relationship. The Father calls the child who is "fully present" when replying — no distractions of any sort: physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually. The child is fully open to the Father's commands, fully trusting that whatever the Father calls His child to do will bring glory to Him and spiritual satisfaction to the child. Saying *Hineni!* is saying "Yes" to God's call on our lives — to His call for faithful obedience. When He calls, be ready with the answer He wants to hear: *Hineni!***



**If God already knew how Abraham would respond, why would He ask Abraham to do such a thing?**

**Isaiah 48:10**