

3/6/05

Genesis 22-23

We come to the greatest test in Abraham's life, when God asks him to sacrifice his only son Isaac.

He has had many test up to this point, he has failed some and passed other, but this one would surpass them all.

22:1-14 **The testing of Abraham by God.**

22:1-4 The testing of Abraham's faith.

22:1 The test of Abraham was from God.

- 1) The time of the testing is not exactly clear, it is simply stated "after these things". Vs. 1a
* The things of chapter twenty-one.
- 2) Abraham was 100 years old at Isaac's birth and Abraham was 105 years old in the previous chapter. Gen. 21:5, 8
 - a) Abraham is 137 in the following chapter.
 - b) If we take half the difference of 32 years, it would be 16 years, Abraham was 116 and Isaac 16 years of age.
 - c) Certainly a conservative guess is between late teens to 20 years of age.
- 2) The test was Divine, "God tested Abraham". Vs. 1a

- a) The word tested "nacah" means to prove or try.
 - b) The idea is not of tempting one to fail but rather to affirm one to be genuine and true.
- 3) The test of his ear came as God called out his name, "Abraham". Vs. 1b-c
- a) The instant God called he answered.
 - b) The ear of Abraham was sensitive and tuned to God.
 - 1)) Let no man say when he is tempted... Ja. 1:13-14
 - 2)) Beloved think it not strange...._ 1Pet. 4:12-13
 - 3)) Trials are for a season, needful, of various kinds and more precious than gold. 1Pet. 1:6-7
 - 4)) James says we are to count it all joy.... Ja. 1:2-4
- 4) The response of Abraham was, "Here am I." Vs. 1d-e
- a) The answer revealed the attitude of a servant.
 - b) The posture was one of humility.

22:2 The test of Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac.

- 1) The promised son. Vs. 1a-d
 - a) The intimate relationship is declared, "Then He said, "Take now your son." Vs. 1a-b

- b) The preciousness is related, “Your only son Isaac.” Vs. 1c
 - 1)) God did not acknowledge Ishmael for he was a work of the flesh.
 - 2)) God was also pointing out the uniqueness of Isaac, the promised son.
- c) The passion is affirmed. Whom you love.” Vs. 1d
 - 1)) The LXX translates it “beloved son”.
 - 2)) This is the first time the phrase “only son” appears in the Old Testament and it is in relation to love between Father and Son
 - 3)) The first time it appears in the New Testament is in the gospel of John and again it is in relation between the love of God the Father and the Son Jesus. Jn. 3:16
- 2) The place he was to be taken was given. Vs. 1e
 - a) The proclamation was an imperative, “go”.
 - b) The location was a familiar place, “to the land of Moriah.”
 - 1)) The area of Jerusalem, where Abraham was met by Chadolaomer and Melchizedek.
 - 2)) Moriah is where Solomon built temple. 2Chron. 3:1

- 3)) Calvary is at the very top of Moriah.
- 4)) It is about 45 miles from Beersheba.
- 3) The particular detail was shocking. Vs. 1f
 - a) The mission pronounced was, “And offer him there as a burnt offering.”
 - 1)) The practice of human sacrifices existed among the inhabitants, particular their first-born. 2Kings 3:27
 - 2)) Though the Law was not yet given, Burnt offerings were symbolic of dedication and consecration to God, completely consumed on the alter. Lev. 1
 - b) The mission revelation was not complete, “On one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”
- 22:3 The test of Abraham was submitted to.
 - 1) The preparation for the trip. Vs. 3a-d
 - a) The promptness, “So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey.” Vs. 3a
 - b) The people involved, “And took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son.” Vs. 3b-c

- c) The provisions taken, “And he split the wood for the burnt offering.” Vs. 3d
- 2) The promptness in departure for the trip.
 - a) The lack of hesitation, “And arose and went.”
 - * Complete and immediate obedience
 - b) The lack of alteration, “To the place of which God had told him.”
 - * “Though you slay me yet will I trust in you.” Job 13:15

22:4 The test of Abraham was agonizing.

- 1) The reality of the journey, “Then on the third day.”
 - * For three days Isaac was as one dead in the mind of Abraham.
- 2) Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.
 - * Mount Moriah is seen at about a distance of three miles.

22:5-14 The obeying of Abraham’s faith.

22:5-6 The proclamation of faith.

- 1) The complete expression of faith by Abraham. Vs. 5
 - a) The purpose of the journey was to worship God, “And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the

donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship.” Vs. 5a-c

- 1)) The word lad “na’ ar” is young man, Isaac could have been 17-30 years old.
- 2)) A complete expression of faith.
- 3)) Obedience to the revelation of God is worship.
- 4)) They would indeed worship together on the mount.
- b) The positive return by both from the journey, “And we will come back to you.” Vs. 5d
 - 1)) A complete expression of faith.
 - 2)) In Isaac the descendents would be named. Gen. 21:12
 - 3)) But equally he knew that God would be able to raise him up, Heb. 11.17-19
 - 4)) Abraham believed God and it was... you see that by works a man is justified and not by faith alone. Ja. 2:21-24
- 2) The complete expression of fellowship by Abraham and Isaac. Vs. 6
 - a) The participation of Isaac is clear, “The So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid [it] on Isaac his son.” Vs. 6a-b
 - b) The purposeful intent is unmistakable, “And he took the fire in his hand, and

a knife, and the two of them went together.” Vs. 6c-e

22:7-8 The confirmation of faith.

1) The pointed question of Isaac. Vs. 7

a) The obvious provisions. Vs. 7a

* 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.” Vs. 7a-h

b) The obvious omission. Vs. 7i

* “But where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”

2) The prophetic certainty of Abraham. Vs. 8

a) The revelation, “And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” Vs. 8a-c

b) The jubilation, “So the two of them went together.” Vs. 8d

c) Abraham's firm faith in God's provision and righteousness. Is. 53:7, Jn. 1:29, 36, Rom. 8:32, 1Jn. 2:2

22:9-12 The execution of faith.

1) The appropriation of faith by Abraham. Vs. 9a-b

a) He obeyed God’s instructions, “Then they came to the place of which God had told him.” Vs. 9a

b) He made preparations to worship God, “And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order.” Vs. 9b

2) The submission in faith by Isaac. Vs. 9c-d

a) The trust of the son, “And he bound Isaac his son.” Vs. 9a

b) The terror of the father, “And laid him on the altar, upon the wood.” Vs. 9b-c

3) The demonstration of faith, “And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.” Vs. 10

4) The interruption from heaven. Vs. 11

a) The person, “But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!”

1)) The initial call mentioned his name only once, the two-fold call in our text emphasizes the urgent nature of the situation.

2)) The Angel of the Lord is Jesus Christ.

b) The personal response, “So he said, “Here I am.”

1)) The sensitivity to the voice of God was critical.

2)) The potential insensitivity would endanger the life of Isaac.

5) The proclamation from God. Vs. 12

- a) The good news was declared to Abraham, “And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him.” Vs. 12a-c
- b) The godly character of Abraham was attested, “For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” Vs. 12d-f
 - * Perhaps Abraham began to be enamored more with Isaac than the One who gave Isaac

22:13-14 The celebration of faith.

22:13 The faithfulness of God.

- 1) The substitute offering of God. Vs. 13
 - a) The offering is Divinely provided, “Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns.” Vs. 13a-b
 - b) The offering must be humanly received, “So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. Vs. 13c-d
- 2) The memorializing of the offering of God. Vs. 14
 - a) The present fulfillment for Isaac, “And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide.” Vs. 14a-b

- 1)) Yahweh Jireh, Literally Yahweh sees.
- 2)) The idea is sees to the provision.
- b) The future fulfillment for all of mankind, “As it is said to this day, "In the Mount of The LORD it shall be provided." Vs. 14
 - * Substitute for Isaac was the ram!
 - 1)) The entire event is prophetic of Jesus Christ.
 - 2)) Abraham received Isaac as a figure of Christ Jesus. Heb. 11:19
 - 3)) His only son. Vs. 2
 - 4)) He offered him on Mt. Moriah, Calvary. Vs. 2
 - 5)) The wood a type of the cross. Vs. 3
 - 6)) The three days for a type of the resurrection. Vs. 4
 - 7)) God will provide himself a lamb, the type of the atoning lamb. Vs. 8, Jn. 1:29, 8:56
 - 8)) The substitute for man’s sins. Vs. 13; 2Cor. 5:21; 1Jn.2:2
 - 9)) Isaac is not mentioned or seen again till chapter 24 when he receives his bride Rebekah. Vs. 19
 - 10)) 2,000 years later, Jesus Christ would be offered

22:15-19

The rewarding of Abraham’s faith.

22:15-16 The particular reason was in view of the test.

- 1) The pronouncement came from heaven. Vs. 15
 - a) The person remains the same, “Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time.”
 - * The second time, distinct from the first time to stop him from slaying Isaac. Vs. 11
 - b) The place of origin also remains the same, “Out of heaven.”
 - 1)) The place of the original calling for the mission.
 - 2)) The place of trustworthy revelation.
- 2) The pre-eminent authority is God. Vs. 16
 - a) There being nothing higher than God, “And said: “By Myself I have sworn.” Vs. 16a-b
 - * The person of ultimate dependability!
 - b) The basis being the covenant relationship, “Says the LORD.” Vs. 16c
 - * The principle for God’s delegated authority on earth!
 - c) The basis for the oath, “Because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son–.” Vs. 16d-f

* The priority of life and for life is to love the Lord our God, with all our mind, soul and strength, above all others!

22:17-18 The particular blessings were in view of the test.

- 1) The promise was to bless the descendents of Abraham innumerable. Vs. 17a-b
 - a) God would be the One doing this, “Blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants.”
 - b) God uses two similes to communicate the literalness of their numbers, “As the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore.”
 - * This is the only time the phrase “sand of the seashore” is used for their increase.
- 2) The promise was to bless them to be victorious over their enemies. Vs. 17c
 - a) The language has to be understood in the culture of the day it was written, “And your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.”
 - b) The mention of gate” represents the place of authority and ruling, the place where the king and elders carried on all business and legal transactions.

- c) Therefore, the reference is clear to conquer and rule over the authority and power of those who hate and attempt to harm them.
- 3) The promise was to make them a blessing to the entire world. Vs. 18
 - a) The promise is in the person of the Messiah, “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.” Vs. 18a
 - 1)) The reference to “seed” is singular, the promise to Adam and Eve of the Redeemer. Gen. 3:15
 - 2)) Paul the apostle makes this very clear to the Galatians. Gal. 3:16
 - * “Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ.
 - b) The particular reason is repeated, “Because you have obeyed My voice.” Vs. 18b
 - 1)) Abraham loved God more than his son Isaac.
 - 2)) Abraham trusted God to be able to raise Isaac from the dead.

22:19 The personal witness in view of the test.

- 1) Abraham did what he told his servants he would do, “So Abraham returned to his young men.” Vs. 19a
 - a) Despite his knowing that he would sacrifice his son, he told them he and Isaac were going to worship Yahweh.
 - b) Despite his knowing that he would sacrifice his son, he told them he and Isaac would return to them.
- 2) Abraham returned quite a different man than before, “And they rose and went together to Beersheba.” Vs. 19b
 - a) The return trip was festive in contrast to the departure in mourning.
 - b) At departure Isaac was as good as dead in the mind of Abraham, but at the return trip Isaac was very alive.
 - c) The departure the love of Abraham for God was being tested, the return trip his love for God had been proven.
- 3) Abraham lived as a sojourner, “And Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.” Vs. 19c
 - a) Believing the promises of God.
 - b) Resting in the provisions of God.
 - c) Experiencing the peace of God.
 - * Blessed is the man that endures temptation. Ja. 1:12

22:20-24 **The report from Mesopotamia about Abraham’s family.**

22:20 The genealogy of Nahor, the brother of Abraham.

- 1) The time of the news was simply in the process of time after the these things.
 - a) The testing of Abraham to offer Isaac.
 - b) The time specific time is not stated.
- 2) The news regarded the children Nahor had fathered with Micah.
 - a) Milcah was the wife of Nahor.
 - b) Nahor was the brother of Abraham.

Gen. 11:29

22:21 The children born to Nahor.

- 1) Huz his firstborn, Buz his brother, probably twins. Vs. 21a-b
 - * This could refer to land of Uz in Edom. Gen. 10:23; 36:28; ,.Job 1:1; 32:6
- 2) Kemuel the father of Aram. Vs. 21c
- 3) Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel. Vs. 22
 - * The people Mesopotamia, Syria and Northern trans-Jordan.

22:23 The grandchildren of Nahor.

- 1) Bethuel begot Rebekah. Vs. 23a
 - * Rebekah was Isaac's future bride.
- 2) The summary statement gives the total number of children, "These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother." Vs. 23b-c

22:24 The children of Nahor's concubine.

- 1) The concubine was named Reumah. Vs. 24a
- 2) She bore four children, Tebah, Gaham, Thahash, and Maachah. Vs. 24c-f

23:1-2 The death of Sarah.

23:1-2 The age of Sarah at her death.

- 1) Sarah was one hundred and twenty-seven years. Vs. 1a
 - a) We come to the first funeral gathering in scripture and it is for Sarah, the faithful wife of Abraham.
 - b) Sarah is the only woman to be recorded.
 - c) Abraham was 137 years old.
 - d) Isaac was 37 at the time.
- 2) These were the total years of the life of Sarah. Vs. 1b

23:2 The location of Sarah's death.

- 1) Sarah died in Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. Vs. 2a-c
 - a) The names differ due to time, 20 miles south of Jerusalem.
 - b) She died in the land of promise.
- 2) Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. Vs. 2d
 - a) Abraham could have been at Beersheba. Gen. 22:19

- b) Abraham mourned or grieved and wept for her, the usual tearing of the garments, putting sackcloth and cutting his beard.
- c) For 62 years she dwelt with Abraham by faith in the land.
- d) Mourning and weeping is never condemned in scripture, only if it is without hope. 1Thes. 4:13
- e) There is a time to mourn and weep, then life must go on (2 Sam. 12:23 David and child)
- d) Jesus wept for the pain and sorrow sin brought at Lazarus' grave. Jn. 11

23:3-20 The purchases of a burial place for Sarah.

- 23:3-4** The solicitation to buy the property to bury Sarah.
- 1) Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth. Vs. 3
 - a) They were the land owners.
 - b) The descendants of Heth were Canaan through Ham. Gen. 10:15
 - 2) Abraham entreats them in humility, not being born there, “I am a foreigner and a visitor among you.” Vs. 4a
 - 3) Abraham pleads with them to acquire a burial plot for Sarah, “Give me property

- for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.” Vs. 4b-c
- a) The word give “natan” is a key word, used four times by Abraham. Vs. 4, 9, 20
 - b) Heb. 11:9; 1Pet. 2:11

23:5-11 The negotiations for the purchase of the burial property.

- 1) The sons of Heth responded to Abraham, saying to him. Vs. 5
- 2) They were respectful and honored Abraham. Vs. 6
 - a) The recognized Abraham as a chief ruler, a noble title, “Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us.” Vs. 6a-b
 - * The word hear “shama” is another key word. Vs. 6, 8, 11, 13, 15
 - b) They conceded to his request, “Bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead.” Vs. 6c-e
- 3) Abraham entered the second dialogue. Vs. 7-11
 - a) Abraham reciprocated the honor and respect given the him, “Then Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, the sons of Heth.” Vs. 7

- b) Abraham petitions that they be intermediaries for him in the owners of the land, And he spoke with them, saying, “If it is your wish that I bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and meet with Ephron the son of Zohar for me.” Vs. 8
- c) Abraham expressed his desire to purchase the cave and land and not simply be able to bury Sarah, “That he may give me the cave of Machpelah which he has, which is at the end of his field. Let him give it to me at the full price, as property for a burial place among you.” Vs. 9
- d) Ephron himself responded himself at the place of legal transactions, the gate of the city, “Now Ephron dwelt among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the presence of the sons of Heth, all who entered at the gate of his city.” Vs. 10
- e) The words of Ephron offered the land without payment to Abraham, “No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field and the cave that is in it; I give it to you in the presence of the sons of my people. I give it to you. Bury your dead!” Vs. 11

23:12-16 The purchase of the burial property.

- 1) Abraham respectfully declines the offer as a gift. Vs. 12-13
 - a) Abraham bowed in respect and appreciation of the offer. Vs. 12
 - b) Abraham directed his words to Ephron and in the hearing of the people of the land, saying. Vs. 13
 - * He offer to buy it, “If you will give it, please hear me. I will give you money for the field; take it from me and I will bury my dead there.”
- 2) Ephron suggests a price indirectly to Abraham. Vs. 14-15
 - a) Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, “My lord, listen to me; the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver.” Vs. 15a-b
 - b) Ephron tried to play it off, “What is that between you and me? So bury your dead.” Vs. 15c
- 3) Abraham understood that was Ephron’s price. Vs. 16
 - a) Abraham paid the price, “And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed out the silver for Ephron which he had named.” Vs. 16a-b
 - * Abraham did not want to bargain!
 - b) Abraham did this before witnesses, “In the hearing of the sons of Heth,

four hundred shekels of silver,
currency of the merchants.” Vs. 16b-d

* We are to be fair and just. Prov.
20:14

23:17-20 The transaction of ownership of the
burial property.

- 1) This was a legal sale documented with all
the particulars, “ Vs. 17-18
 - a) The description of the property, “So
the field of Ephron which was in
Machpelah, which was before Mamre,
the field and the cave which was in it,
and all the trees that were in the field,
which were within all the surrounding
borders, were deeded.” Vs. 17
 - b) The rightful owner was named, “ To
Abraham as a possession.” Vs. 18a
 - c) The required witnesses for the
transaction, “ In the presence of the
sons of Heth, before all who went in
at the gate of his city.” Vs. 18a-b
- 2) The new owner took possession. Vs. 19-
20
 - a) The occupation of the property, “And
after this, Abraham buried Sarah his
wife in the cave of the field of
Machpelah, before Mamre (that is,
Hebron) in the land of Canaan.” Vs.
19

* A Christian church was erected
over the traditional site of the cave
of Mephelah and later converted
into a mosque.

- 1)) Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah,
Jacob and Leah were all buried
there. Gen. 25:9; 35:27, 29; 49:29-
31
- 2)) Jacob buried by Joseph at
Macphelah. Gen. 50:13
- 3)) Mamre was two miles north of
ancient Hebron.
- 4)) Joshua says Joseph’s bones were
buried at Shechem. Josh. 24-32
- 5)) Moses took them as Joseph asked.
Gen. 50:24-25; Ex. 13:19
- 6)) Stephan says Joseph and Jacob
were buried at Shechem. Acts
7:16-17
- b) The possible solution.
 - 1)) Abraham bought two burying
places, Macphelah and Shechem.
 - 2)) Joseph was buried at Shechem and
Jacob at Macphelah.
- c) The summarization of the transaction,
“So the field and the cave that [is] in
it were deeded to Abraham by the
sons of Heth as property for a burial
place.” Vs. 20