

“God Was Able to Raise Him Up”

Hebrews 11:17-19; Genesis 22:1-19

The story of the offering of Isaac is a familiar one. It is a picture of the offering of Christ, the Son of God, on the cross for the sins of the world, and the resurrection of Christ from the grave in order to complete the atonement. What is taking place is a clear type – God has said throughout the Bible that human sacrifice is an abomination and since He can't contradict Himself, what He told Abraham to do here can be nothing other than a type of what was to come – and Abraham would have recognized that.

Think about the agony that Abraham must have gone through as he prepared for this sacrifice. And then, think about what God must have gone through when He sent His only Son to die for the sins of mankind. That's what this story is about.

A friend visited an elderly woman badly crippled by arthritis. When asked, "Do you suffer much?" she responded, "Yes, but there is no nail here," and she pointed to her hand. "He had the nails, I have the peace." She pointed to her head. "There are no thorns here. He had the thorns, I have the peace." She touched her side. "There is no spear here. He had the spear, I have the peace." That is what the atonement of Jesus Christ means for us--He gave of himself so that we might have the peace.

Ralph Turnbull, If I Only Had One Sermon to Preach

I. THE OBEDIENCE

A. Of Abraham – a type of the Father

1. Abraham was told by God to offer his “only son Isaac” – Gen. 22:2.

[Genesis 22:2](#)

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.

2. Abraham obeyed without question. He believed God when He told him that Isaac would be the father of a great nation and he had no doubt that God would raise Isaac from the dead in order to fulfill that promise. It was this faith in the promise of God that was the means of Abraham’s salvation.

[Romans 4:3](#)

³ For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

[Galatians 3:6](#)

⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

[James 2:23](#)

²³ And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

3. Abraham wasn’t God – he was only a type, a representation of what the Father did for us in giving His own Son for our sins – but, as that type, we see that God had no other choice but to give His Son a sacrifice for all.

B. Of Isaac – a type of the Son

1. In the story given in Genesis there is no mention of argument or hesitation on Isaac's part – he simply obeyed his father and walked on.
2. The only thing Isaac did was ask (Gen. 22:7), "Where is the lamb?" He knew there was going to be a sacrifice, but he didn't understand at that point what was happening – yet, he walked on.
3. There is a great deal of speculation as to how old Isaac was at this point
 - a) It says he was a "lad" (Gen. 22:5) but that can be anyone from an infant to an adult
 - b) He went without his mother, so he was at least 6
 - c) However, he is said to carry the wood for the offering (22:6) and that had to be a significant weight and no 6-year-old could have done that
4. Most knowledgeable theologians believe he was a young man – anywhere between 16 and 37.
5. All that to say this – he was certainly old enough to know what was happening when he was bound and laid on the altar and he would have done all of that willingly, without fighting back against his father.

Philippians 2:5-8

⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

⁷ But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

II. THE SACRIFICE

A. *Of Abraham – offering his “only begotten son”*

1. In Hebrews 11:17 it is recorded that he offered “his only begotten son”

Hebrews 11:17

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his **only begotten son,**

- a) The only other time this phrase is used in all the Bible is when it is used in relation to Jesus as the Son of God the Father (the Greek word is used one other time in Luke 9:28, where it is translated “only child”).

John 1:14

¹⁴ And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 1:18

¹⁸ No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:18

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

1 John 4:9

9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

b) Comparing Scripture with Scripture, it can be seen, very clearly, that Abraham offering Isaac is a clear type of God the Father offering His Son for our sins.

2. Abraham, representing God the Father here, is seen as one who "spared not His own son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Rom. 8:32).
3. When Abraham was told by God to offer his son as a sacrifice, he considered him dead at that point – Heb. 11:17 says that Abraham "offered up Isaac" – he was considered already a sacrifice, already dead

Hebrews 11:17

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

B. Of Isaac – offering his life

1. Again, we see that Isaac, as a type of the Son of God, willingly offered up his life to Abraham, his father.
2. When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, He prayed that if it were possible that He didn't have to die that the Father would provide another way – if not, He said, then "thy will be done."
 - a) Isaac was willing to die if there was no other way for Abraham to be righteous in God's eyes.
 - b) He was willing to die, although he was not guilty of anything, for the sake of another (his father Abraham) and their righteous standing before God.
3. Isaac's life was forfeited for others and through his seed the world would be blessed, which points to the Messiah.
4. Gen. 22:8 – when Isaac asked "where is the lamb" Abraham responded with this great verse – that God would "provide himself a lamb" – He was the Lamb (seen as "he himself the lamb").

Genesis 22:8

⁸ And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

John 1:29

²⁹ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Revelation 5:6

⁶ And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Revelation 5:12

¹² Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

5. One of the greatest illustrations in the Old Testament of what Jesus did for us on the cross is in Gen. 22.

Under the Old Testament system, every worshiper had to bring his own lamb. If he had no lamb, he had to buy a lamb. He could not borrow a lamb. No one could give him a lamb. He had to provide his own lamb. In the New Testament everything is reversed. God provides the Lamb!

III. THE RESULT

A. For Abraham – his son was returned to him alive

1. Gen. 22:4 – on “the third day” – it was that third day that Jesus rose – it was the third day that Isaac was returned to Abraham alive.

Genesis 22:4

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

2. Gen. 22:5 – Abraham told the servants that went with them (represents Peter, James and John in the Garden with Jesus) to wait for Isaac and him to return – he said they would “come again.”

Genesis 22:5

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.

3. Heb. 11:19 – Abraham believed that God would raise him from the dead – he had no doubt.

Hebrews 11:19

¹⁹ Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

B. For Isaac – his life was returned to him

1. When Jesus prayed in the Garden, and then hung on the cross, He knew He would come back alive – but the sacrifice still had to be made, and the pain and agony of all of mankind’s sin being laid on Him (the wood Isaac carried being a type of this – Abraham laying it upon his son) was still almost unbearable.
2. For Isaac, laying there knowing he was innocent, knowing, too, there was a reason for his sacrifice, paid the ultimate price for the sake of another.
3. But all was not lost, all hope was not gone – as Abraham had told the servants, and as Jesus had told His disciples – Isaac

came back again – **AND SO DID JESUS.**

Matthew 28:5–6

⁵ And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

⁶ He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

Conclusion: What a story! How sad it would have been if Isaac would have been sacrificed at Abraham's hand and the story would have ended there! But, it didn't – God brought him back.

How sad it would have been if Jesus had been sacrificed at the hand of His Father and the story had ended there! But, it didn't – God brought Him back!

For family devotions, Martin Luther once read the account of Abraham offering Isaac on the altar in Genesis 22. His wife, Katie, said, "I do not believe it. God would not have treated his son like that!" "But Katie," Luther replied. "He did." -- Roland Bainton in Here I Stand.