

Should Sacrifice Be Such A Struggle If God Provides Everything?

Genesis 22-23

Introduction:

Romans 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

I. We Prove: Faith Proves That We Trust God To Provide (Genesis 22:1-8)

A. The Test Of _____ (1)

¹ After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

B. The Test Of _____ (2-7)

²He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. ⁵Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you." ⁶And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. ⁷And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

- Can we give up what we love if God asks for it?
- Do we trust God to provide for what we sacrifice to Him?
- Should giving up to God be such a struggle if He's the One who provides what we sacrifice?

C. The Test Of _____ (8)

⁸ Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

II. He Provides: Jehovah Jireh (Gen 22:9 – 23:20)

A. God Provides A _____ (22:9-14)

B. God Provides A _____ (22:15-24)

C. God Provides In Our _____ (23:1-20)

Conclusion:

1. God provided a sacrifice for our sins – will you place your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior?
2. In a proper response to His mercy, we present ourselves a living sacrifice to Him. Will we?
3. What is God asking us to give over to Him? Is it so painful if we know God is our Provider?

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- Today, on Father's Day, we acknowledge our fathers who joyfully sacrifice for us. Why is it so joyful for fathers?
 - We love our kids
 - It's an honor to even be a father
 - We want to see them grow
 - So with the right perspective – it's not drudgery, it's not a painful
 - It's still a sacrifice, and at times, it's a struggle.
 - But overall, the sacrifice of a father is joyful.
- Summer Camp or Day Camp: Pivotal times in a young person's life to not only respond to the Gospel but also to ensure that the proper response to the Gospel is to give our lives a living sacrifice to God.
- As youth, we would wonder why the same people struggled every year at campfire to rededicate their lives.

Romans 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

- It's been said that the trouble with a living sacrifice is that it keeps jumping off the altar.
- But our understanding of God as **Jehovah Jireh** will help us understand that sacrifice is not painful when He's the Provider – but as a response of love and thanksgiving to Him – our Providing Father.
- This Father's Day, as we appreciate the wonderful sacrifices our fathers make for us – we will find the key to a joyful sacrifice is to relish in God as Jehovah Jireh – the God who provides.

I. **We Prove: Faith Proves That We Trust God To Provide (Genesis 22:1-8)**

*1 After these things God **tested** Abraham*

- V. 1 = "tested"
 - Bruce Waltke: "The Hebrew word 'tested' does not mean 'to entice to do wrong.' With a personal object it means 'test another to see whether the person proves worthy' (1 Kings 10:1; 2 Chron 9:1; Dan 1:12,14)." (*Genesis*, p. 304)
 - Youngblood: "Satan tempts to destroy us, but God tests us to strengthen us." (ibid)
- Like in school, tests monitor progress
- It's not a punishment
- Ie/ woodshop – build trusses from balsa wood and put weights on it to determine it's strength
 - Not punitive, but a test of strength and reliability

Abraham's School of Faith

Test	Text	Action	Result
Family	11:27 – 12:5	Leave family – new land	Partial Pass
Famine	12:10 – 13:4	Trust God to provide food	Fail – went to Egypt
Fellowship	13:5-18	Gave Lot 1 st choice of pastureland	Pass
Fight	14:1-16	Defeated kings	Pass
Fortune	14:17-24	Said no to Sodom's wealth	Pass
Fatherhood	16	Impatient with Sarah, child with Hagar	Fail
Farewell	21:14-21	Sent Hagar & Ishmael away	Pass - heartbroken

Wiersbe, Warren W. (2010-01-01). *Be Obedient (Genesis 12-25): Learning the Secret of Living by Faith (The BE Series Commentary)* (p. 132). David C. Cook. Kindle Edition.

A. The Test Of Availability (1)

¹ After these things God **tested** Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

- First, are we available to God?
- God called to Abraham and he responded "Here I am"
- Isaiah gave a similar response as did the fishermen to Jesus
- What's not provided in this chapter:
 - What were the ages of Abraham & Isaac?
 - What was Sarah's response?
 - What was Isaac's response to being bound at the altar?
 - But the focus is not on man, but on God – He is the Provider
- Many are not ready to respond to the call to sacrifice because they make themselves unavailable
- Ie/ If I don't recognize a phone number, I don't answer it. If an unrecognized number leaves a message from a person I do recognize, I'll call back. Otherwise, I'm unresponsive and unavailable.
- Ie/ Maybe your boss is calling you to work on the weekend or you've been summoned to jury duty during your summer vacation – we're unavailable.
- Many of us are hanging up God's call. We're not available to Him.
- Will you make yourself available to God.
- Your best **ability** is your **availability** to Him.

B. The Test Of Love (2-7)

²He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. ⁵Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here

with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you.” 6And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. 7And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”

Genesis 17:9 And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.

- V. 2 “take” – the Hebrew adds “by yourself” (personal act, not a social act)
- “your only son Isaac”
- “whom you love” – God asks for what we love
 - our kids – just gave up our #2 daughter to the Lord in Lebanon for 2 weeks
 - our spouse – give our spouse over to the ministry God has called him/her to
 - our home – give to Him for ministry
 - that \$20 bill in our wallet – who can it help today?
- Moriah – the site of a future Jerusalem
- “offer as burnt offering”
 - This doesn’t make sense to Abraham
 - He heard from God that He would make an everlasting covenant and that it would be through Isaac
 - Now God wants him to offer his son up as a sacrifice
 - He waited all these years with Sarah
- But yet, he obeyed immediately
- V. 3 – 2 servants – indicative of how prominent Abraham was
- V. 4 – 3rd day – 3 days is a time period of preparing for something prominent in biblical times
 - This was a sacrifice that was contemplated, not a rash reaction
- V. 5 – servants told to stay behind
- V. 6 – Isaac old enough to carry the wood – probably in his teen years
- V. 7 – Isaac starts to realize there’s no lamb for the burnt offering – I wish we had commentary on his feelings at this point
- **Question For Us: Can we give up what we love if God asks for it?**
 - **Because We Love Him, We Give**
 - **Because He Loved Us, He Gave Us His Son**

- **Do we trust God to provide for what we sacrifice to Him?**

- I believe Abraham trusted God so much on this day that he was confident God would resurrect Isaac
- There was no murderous heart in Abraham
- He was so confident that God would use Isaac that he trusted in the resurrection power of God
- WHY? Because God said so!

- **Should giving up to God be such a struggle if He's the One who provides what we sacrifice?**

- Many of us complain that giving up our lives for God's purpose is a struggle
- Is it really if God is our Jehovah Jireh?
- Ie/ If you gave your kids a \$100 bill and told them it was for the offering, would they struggle – "I wanted to buy some iTunes songs or a fidget spinner – can't I keep some/most/all of it?"
 - Parent: "But I gave it to you for the purpose of giving it. You didn't earn it. It's not even yours. It's mine."

C. The Test Of Faith (8)

8Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

- Abraham saw Isaac as the lamb – he hoped in resurrection
- John the Baptist – "Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29)

II. He Provides: Jehovah Jireh (Gen 22:9 – 23:20)

A. God Provides A Sacrifice (22:9-14)

9When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. 10Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. 11But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 12He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." 13And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

- God planned all along to provide a sacrifice
- He provided us a sacrifice
- **Jehovah Jireh** – the Lord will provide, the Lord will see to it
 - English word: “Provide” = *pro* – before, *video* – to see
 - Providence, Provide
 - God sees beforehand what we need
 - J. Hudson Taylor had a plaque with 2 Hebrew words on it: Ebenezer & Jehovah Jireh – the Lord helped us (1 Sam 7:12) and “The Lord will see to it”
- Because God loves us, He gave His only Son
- This offering is a foreshadow of Christ
- God gave a sacrifice because we couldn’t pay for our own sins

B. God Provides A Legacy (22:15-24)

15And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven **16**and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, **17**I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies,**18**and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” **19**So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham lived at Beersheba. **20**Now after these things it was told to Abraham, “Behold, Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor: **21**Uz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, **22**Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.” **23**(Bethuel fathered Rebekah.) These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham’s brother. **24**Moreover, his concubine, whose name was Reumah, bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

- We work so hard to secure our own legacy – financial security, providing for kids education, nice home, guarding whom they associate with or marry, etc.
- God is a God of promise – He will fulfill His will
- What if you had to give up your child to the Lord and they do something you didn’t want or plan for them to do?
- Giving up your child to God’s will needs to be connected with Jehovah Jireh – He gave you a child to raise up for Him and to return to Him
- God is at work in our children’s future – He sets up our legacy

C. God Provides In Our Death (23:1-20)

- E.g. In ancestor worship, the family is responsible to provide for the deceased in the after life.

- Some customs will burn paper money, paper houses and paper Mercedes Benz
- Some offer food
- Some Japanese fear converting to Christianity because their parents guilt them into not providing for them in the afterlife through ancestor worship
- If this were true, any human that fails leaves the deceased without supply and provision – God does not leave it up to man – God provides
- God provides all we need in death and after death

1Sarah lived 127 years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. **2**And Sarah died at Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.**3**And Abraham rose up from before his dead and said to the Hittites,^a **4**“I am a sojourner and foreigner among you; give me property among you for a burying place, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.” **5**The Hittites answered Abraham, **6**“Hear us, my lord; you are a prince of God among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will withhold from you his tomb to hinder you from burying your dead.” **7**Abraham rose and bowed to the Hittites, the people of the land. **8**And he said to them, “If you are willing that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me and entreat for me Ephron the son of Zohar, **9**that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he owns; it is at the end of his field. For the full price let him give it to me in your presence as property for a burying place.”

10Now Ephron was sitting among the Hittites, and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the Hittites, of all who went in at the gate of his city, **11**“No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field, and I give you the cave that is in it. In the sight of the sons of my people I give it to you. Bury your dead.” **12**Then Abraham bowed down before the people of the land. **13**And he said to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, “But if you will, hear me: I give the price of the field. Accept it from me, that I may bury my dead there.” **14**Ephron answered Abraham, **15**“My lord, listen to me: a piece of land worth four hundred shekels^c of silver, what is that between you and me? Bury your dead.” **16**Abraham listened to Ephron, and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver that he had named in the hearing of the Hittites, four hundred shekels of silver, according to the weights current among the merchants.

17So the field of Ephron in Machpelah, which was to the east of Mamre, the field with the cave that was in it and all the trees that were in the field, throughout its whole area, was made over **18**to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the Hittites, before all who went in at the gate of his city.**19**After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah east of Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. **20**The field and the cave that is in it were made over to Abraham as property for a burying place by the Hittites.

- Sarah is the only woman in the Bible to have her age given at death
- 127 years old – Isaac was 37 at the time of her death
- Abraham lives 38 more years after her death
- God provided a place for her to be buried after some land dispute – since Abraham is a foreigner without land rights – he makes a contract a Ephron

Conclusion:

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