

## **Genesis 22 – The offering of Isaac**

### **Faith's final test**

Abraham had had many hard tests in his life of faith. He had had to leave his father's household and his home (12:1-3). He had twice been separated from Sarah. He had been separated from Lot. He had had to banish his son, Ishmael. Now, at the end, he was given the hardest of all: to offer his one and only son Isaac as a sacrifice. The command came without any explanation. He was to go on a painful journey and give up all his hopes and dreams. This command seemed to go against everything God had said and promised. He was to end all his hopes himself, with his own hand against his only son. Yet (Hebrews 11:17-19), Abraham would not go against what God had clearly said. Here is true faith: it will do what God has said, no matter how hard, no matter how painful – it will not demand that God first explains himself or his plans, but totally submits to him. Do you have true faith?

### **Abraham's complete obedience**

Abraham got up early (v3). He did not wait and allow himself to be tempted to disobey. He got on with what God had told him to do. True obedience must be prompt! He expressed his faith (v5 – see Hebrews 11:17-19); he believed that somehow God had a solution; he believed in the resurrection of the dead. The two of them went together. Isaac now was at least a young man; he also trusted his father and was willing to submit to God's will.

### **God's response**

The angel of the LORD spoke (v11). Abraham's faith had been tested and found to be true. Of course, God always knew this; but he desired it to be known to all mankind too. A lamb was provided; God had mercy on Isaac and provided one to die in his place. The mount was named, and a new name for God was made known – God who provides (Jehovah Jireh). The angel spoke again, to confirm that God would certainly do all he had promised. Abraham received his blessings through faith – but true faith always works in obedience to God's commands. We are then told about Nahor's family; one of these, Rebekah, was destined to be Isaac's wife.

### **Where it was all pointing to – the death of Christ**

God did all this especially as a shadow of the coming death of his own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the long-awaited, promised one. “God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son” (John 3:16). Abraham had one, dearly beloved son. He and Isaac were one in purpose and heart. Isaac was to be offered up – but a substitute was found; a lamb who was offered in his place; one provided by God himself. Mount Moriah appears to be outside Jerusalem – in the same area, if not the same mountain, as Mount Calvary. Jesus carried his cross there, just as Isaac carried the wood – and the Father released his wrath, just as Abraham took the fire. On the third day he was seen again alive, having risen. Through his offering, great blessing came to the nations. “He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?” (Romans 8:32)