

## Lesson Twenty-Six

# ABRAHAM BELIEVED THAT GOD COULD RAISE THE DEAD (2)

**(Read Genesis 19:1-19)**

Even though it was not God's desire that human beings offer their children to him as a blood sacrifice that is exactly what he commanded Abraham to do. God said to Abraham, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering" (22:2).

Incredibly, Abraham got up early the next day with his son and two servants, cut some wood for the fire, and traveled about 80 kilometers to the mountain God chose. Abraham obediently went to Mount Moriah. 1000 years later this place was selected by God to be the place of the Jewish temple (2 Chronicles 1:3). It was also not far from the place that God sacrificed his only beloved son 2000 years after Abraham.

**As you get more familiar with the Bible you will begin to realize that these circumstances were not merely coincidences. There are many things in this story that are types, shadows, or figures of things to come in the future of God's plan.**

We don't know exactly how old Isaac was at this time but he was at least old enough to carry the wood to burn on the altar of sacrifice. This would make him old enough to realize what was happening. In fact, as they went up the mountain he asked his father, "*Look father, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?*" Abraham replied, "*God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering my son*".

Possibly Abraham believed then that God would change his mind. However, when they got to the top and no other sacrifice was visible, Isaac willingly allowed his father to tie him up and lay him on top of the wood and the altar. Abraham raised his arm and took the knife to kill his son. At the last second an angel spoke from heaven saying, "Abraham! Abraham!" Abraham answered, "Here I am!" The angel said, "*Do not raise your hand against the boy and do nothing to him, for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son from me.*" Abraham then looked behind him and found a ram whose horns were caught in a bush. This was the sacrifice God provided.

God then swore by his own name that he would keep all His promises to Abraham. He reminded Abraham that his offspring would be as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand of the seashore (22:17). God also repeated the

promise that through Abraham's seed ALL NATIONS would one day be blessed (Genesis 22:18).

What are some important lessons to learn from this important event in Abraham's life? **First**, even though God does not "tempt" any man, he does test our faith (compare Genesis 22:1 with James 1:13). By the time Abraham was asked to sacrifice his son he had been a believer in God for close to 50 years. He had passed many tests to his faith in the past and grew stronger each time in his trust of God. The ultimate test of our faith is will we choose God over wife, family, children, or friends? Jesus said during his ministry, *"If anyone comes to me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple, whosoever does not carry his own cross and follow after me is not worthy of me"* (Luke 14:26-27). Of course, Jesus told us to love our family. The word "hate" here is used for emphasis to show that our loyalty to Christ must come before loyalty to family. Most of the time our putting God first benefits our family and our other relationships, but sometimes persecution and temptations to sin come from those closest to us. We must be fully loyal to God to withstand these tests.

**Second**, twice in this story Isaac is referred to as Abraham's "only son who he loved" (22:3, 12). This reminds us of the way God referred to Jesus Christ. *"For God so loved the world he gave us His only begotten Son"* (John 3:16). Abraham's love and willingness to sacrifice his son made him feel exactly like God felt when he gave his own son as our sacrifice.

**Third**, when Isaac asked where the sacrifice was, Abraham answers, *"the Lord will provide the lamb"* (22:7). This was also symbolic of God providing the *"lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world"* when he sent Jesus into the world to die for us (see John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18-20).

**Fourth**, the near death of Isaac and his being spared was a type of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Listen to the writer of Hebrews:

*By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type. (Hebrews 11:17-19 NASB)*

How was Abraham able to offer his own son as a sacrifice? He was so sure that God's promise was true (that a great nation would come through Isaac) that he believed God would have to raise Isaac from the dead. What faith Abraham had in God's promises. In a sense, Isaac was raised from the dead right at the last minute. This event symbolized the eventual resurrection of God's son after his crucifixion.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Did Isaac cooperate in his being offered?
2. Can you think of a parallel between Isaac and Jesus in this regard?
3. Who must we love more than family?