



03. Getting to the promised land – “Yahweh Will Provide” Part 2 (Wednesday Night)

On Sunday we looked at Genesis chapter 12 in which God made certain promises to Abraham. He promised Abraham and his seed the land which now includes what we call the Promised Land. Scripture then wonderfully describes the events of Abraham’s life including his willingness to sacrifice his son, Isaac, on an altar. In Genesis chapter 22

The Complete Jewish Study Bible notes that while the “binding of Isaac” passage or the *Akedah*, is read during every Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) service it is “by far the most difficult passage of the Torah.” A superficial reading of the story may easily leave the reader with a sense that God is some sort of sadist who leads Abraham on a murderous emotional wild-goose chase.

Abraham went to an undisclosed location to sacrifice his son, only to have God stop him at the last moment. Then Abraham saw a ram caught in some thorny bushes, sacrificed it, and called the place, "Yahweh-Jireh" - "The Lord will Provide." Why would God treat them like this?¹

22. After these things, God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” He said, “Here I am.” 2 He said, “Now take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go into the land of Moriah. Offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will tell you of.” 3 Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his donkey; and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son. He split the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went to the place of which God had told him. 4 On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place far off. 5 Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there. We will worship, and come back to you.” 6 Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. He took in his hand the fire and the knife. They both went together. 7 Isaac spoke to Abraham his father, and said, “My father?” He said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “Here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” 8 Abraham said, “God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So, they both went together. 9 They came to the place which God had told him of. Abraham

¹ <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/god/what-does-it-mean-that-god-is-jehovah-jireh.html>

built the altar there, and laid the wood in order, bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, on the wood. 10 Abraham stretched out his hand, and took the knife to kill his son. 11 Yahweh's angel called to him out of the sky, and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" He said, "Here I am." 12 He said, "Don't lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." 13 Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and saw that behind him was a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 Abraham called the name of that place "Yahweh Will Provide". As it is said to this day, "On Yahweh's mountain, it will be provided." 15 Yahweh's angel called to Abraham a second time out of the sky, 16 and said, "'I have sworn by myself,' says Yahweh, 'because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 that I will bless you greatly, and I will multiply your offspring greatly like the stars of the heavens, and like the sand which is on the seashore. Your offspring will possess the gate of his enemies. 18 All the nations of the earth will be blessed by your offspring, because you have obeyed my voice.'" (World English Bible)

So, the question which we are all asking ourselves is "Why would God ask Abraham to sacrifice His son? This is indeed one of the strangest texts that we find in the Bible. It seems inconsistent because throughout the Old Testament we see that God is against human sacrifice and it is something that the Canaanites practiced in their wickedness and idol worship. Some of you have no doubt heard of their god "Molech" that was basically an large statue with a barbecue pit in it for burning up infant children. This is horrific and is totally contrary to what we understand God. So, what is this all about?

In this passage God commands Abraham to take his only son of promise and to sacrifice him on an altar. The text tells us that God asked Abraham to do this so that Abraham would demonstrate his obedience. The angel says, "***now I know (it has been revealed to me- I've experienced it) that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me***".

God asked Abraham to do this so that Abraham could demonstrate his obedience, and we need to understand that God had a plan of providing the sacrifice. God is omniscient. He knows everything and He knew that Abraham would not go through with such a heinous act.

This is also an almost perfect picture of God's plan of redemption for mankind. This is a direct foretelling of Calvary, and what would happen 2,000 years later.

Abraham was not ultimately required to sacrifice his son, but God did sacrifice His Son when Jesus died for our sins on the Cross. In the Old Testament, the sacrifices were a way to get rid of the sin problem. When fellowship was broken

between God and man due to sin, a sacrifice provided a way for the person to understand the severity of their sin and to be put back into intimacy with God.

GotQuestions.org gives us several parallels between the story of Abraham's obedience and Christ's sacrifice.

1. Genesis 22:2 says, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac..." John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son..."
2. Again, in Genesis 22:2 we read, "Go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there..." It is believed that this area is where the city of Jerusalem was built, where Jesus was crucified outside the city walls.
3. Verse 2 also tells us that Abraham was told to sacrifice his son as a burnt offering. I Corinthians 15:3 tells us, "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."
4. In verse 6 we read, "Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac" We read in John 19:17 that Jesus carried the wood used for His sacrifice on his back.
5. In verse 7 Isaac asks, "But where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" In John 1:29 tells us, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"
6. Isaac was willing to be sacrificed. Abraham was an old man when Isaac was born. It would be likely that Isaac could have overtaken him if he chose to do so, but he willingly laid himself on the altar. (v.9) and Jesus was likewise willing to lay Himself down as a sacrifice out of obedience to the Father. "Yet not as I will, but as you will." Matthew 26:39
7. Abraham believed God and His promises so much, he believed God would raise his son from the dead if he would be sacrificed. You can read this testimony of Abraham's faith in Hebrews 11:17-19. While Abraham believed his son would have his life restored, the life of Jesus was restored in His miraculous resurrection!

The Bible is about God's relationship with mankind. Messiah is threaded through the warp and the woof of the entire Bible.

This Genesis 22 passage is a beautiful foretelling of the coming sacrifice of a Messiah. God sent His only son for you and for me! He was a lamb without spot and blemish that gave Himself for each of us. This broke down the barrier between us and God.

This provision of a ram reveals one of the most beautiful names of God. He is Yahweh-Jireh (Sometimes called Jehovah-Jireh). He is the provider.

On the way up the mountain to the place of sacrifice, Isaac inquired as to the animal to be sacrificed, and his father said, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son” ([Genesis 22:8](#)). After God’s provision of a ram to take Isaac’s place on the altar, “Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide” (verse 14). Thus we have another character-revealing name of God: *Yahweh-Yireh*.

But that interpretation reveals more about the reader than it does the text or God Himself. One of the crucial details missing in that reading is the trust displayed by both Abraham and Isaac.

Scripture doesn’t tell many details about the private thoughts and feelings of Abraham or Isaac in this story. But in [Hebrews 11:19](#), we are told that Abraham knew God’s character and power enough to trust that if God took Isaac at that moment, because of all God’s other promises about Isaac, Abraham knew God would fulfill His word even if He had to raise Isaac from the dead. Abraham was doing this difficult task with assurance in his heart.

The Meaning of Yahweh-Jireh (sometimes called Jehovah Jireh)

Abraham calls the place, “God will provide.” The word there is richer than our English denotes.

- “Provide” in Hebrew is also “see to it,” which is similar to the name a woman named Hagar calls the Lord in [Genesis 16:13](#) – “The God who Sees.”
- That Hebrew word also means “perceive” and “experience.”

When Abraham calls God Yahweh-Jireh, he isn’t just saying, “God gives the goods!” He is saying, “God, You see/experience all this need of mine, and You make provision for it.” It is a deeply personal expression of a huge part of God’s relationship with us.

The other great teaching in this text is seeing Isaac, who at least could have outrun his old father, yet he was prepared to innocently accept whatever his father was doing. Three great patriarchs are pronounced each time the “God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” is mentioned. Isaac presents the perfect foreshadowing of Jesus who willingly went to the cross in submission to the will of the Father.

