

# Genesis 22

April 21, 2024



## CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

## MAIN POINT

Just as God provided the sacrifice to take Isaac's place, so He has provided Christ, the Lamb of God, to take our place.

## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

**What is the most difficult sacrifice or decision you've ever had to make?**

**How did this decision test your faith? How did your faith inform your decision at the time?**

**How did the results of that decision confirm and/or challenge your faith?**

In His infinite and mysterious wisdom, God sometimes leads us to do things that don't make sense to our finite minds. God does not always act how we expect or prefer that He would.



In today's passage, God's command for Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac seems not only strange but also morally atrocious. Yet, here we are given a glimpse of the gospel itself: blessing and salvation would come to the world through a Son of Abraham who was offered up as a sacrifice.

## **UNDERSTANDING**

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

🌿 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ GENESIS 22:1-10.

**Why do you think people struggle with passages like these in the Bible? How can we keep ourselves from feeling embarrassed or ashamed about parts of the Bible that are not pleasant or easily reckoned with?**

**What is most shocking to you about Genesis 22 and God's command for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac? Has God ever shocked you with one of His commands?**

**Given Abraham and Sarah's experience with barrenness and God's earlier promises to them, why would this command come as a shock?**

**Which details in verses 1-10 indicate that Abraham was obedient to God's command?**

**How do verses 5 and 8 indicate that Abraham believed Isaac would somehow survive the burnt offering?**

Notice God gave Abraham very little information here. Abraham knew this command was clearly from God. Still, it certainly seemed out of character for God to tell Abraham to do such a thing. But for Abraham, the question was never "What?" but "Who?" And the answer was God. Sometimes we don't see the steps God wants to take us through in advance; still, He calls us to trust Him unconditionally.

🌿 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ GENESIS 22:11-24.

**Why might God wait until the last moment to intervene and prevent Abraham from killing Isaac?**

**What does God providing a ram as a substitute indicate about His character and grace? Why was God within His rights and justice to require Isaac's life?**



**What does God’s statement to Abraham in verses 16-18 say about His role in bringing about His earlier promises to Abraham and for the world (see Genesis 12:1-3)?**

God tests the hearts of His people not because He doesn’t know the state of our being but because we need to know. Testing helps us build greater trust in the Lord, to become people who are always in a “yes” position. God wants His people to be men and women always ready to surrender all to Him, even when it’s hard.

As we increasingly put our trust in God, we discover that following Him no matter the cost is preferable to anything else. And the more confident we are in God, the more compelling our faith will be to others.

### **APPLICATION**

*Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.*

**When has God provided for you at what seemed like the last moment? What did this reveal to you about your level of confidence and trust in God? About Him?**

**What can we glean from this passage about how we should approach difficult texts in the Bible? Why must we keep the “big picture” in view when looking at difficult texts (or any individual text)?**

**How does Abraham’s trust in God—to the point of being willing to sacrificing his son—challenge you? What sort of things might God be calling you to sacrifice to demonstrate your trust in Him?**

### **PRAYER**

*Close your time together by sharing prayer requests, praying for each other, and the group.*

Thank God for His gracious provision of His only Son, Jesus, through whom blessing and salvation come to the world. Ask Him to help you trust Him fully in every situation.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

*Encourage your group to look ahead to next week’s scripture passage as we continue our study of the life of Abraham:*

**April 28, 2024 --- Genesis 23**



## COMMENTARY

Genesis 22

**22:1-2.** Abraham's ultimate test of obedience to God is described in 22:1-19. God used this event to affirm the sterling character of Abraham's faith by giving him the incredibly difficult task of sacrificing his son Isaac. Pagans in Canaan during the OT period regularly practiced child sacrifice by making them pass through the fire (2Ki 16:3) to give them as food to their gods (Ezek 23:37). With this command God was asking Abraham to demonstrate that he was as committed to the Lord God as pagans were to their gods.

**22:3-4.** Confirmation of Abraham's amazing trust in God is found first in the fact that he was up before sunrise (early in the morning) the next day to begin the journey. His diligence in going to the place God had told him about contrasts sharply with Jonah's actions (Jnh 1:3). Traveling from Beer-sheba, it was not until the third day that Abraham reached the Jerusalem area.

**22:5-8.** Evidence that Abraham believed God could raise Isaac from the dead (Heb 11:17-18) is found in his comment, we'll come back. Abraham carried the most dangerous elements of the sacrifice—the fire and the sacrificial knife—himself, perhaps as a sign of his protective love for Isaac. Ignorant of God's command and surprised that his father would forget the most important element in an animal sacrifice, Isaac asked Abraham where the lamb was. Abraham's faith-filled response was that God Himself would provide the lamb ("sheep").

**22:9-14.** Abraham followed the standard procedure for a burnt offering involving a living being. In describing his preparation, the Bible emphasizes only Abraham's systematic acts of obedience, omitting any mention of Abraham's or Isaac's feelings. Just before the knife was put to Isaac's neck, the Angel of the Lord spared him. The patriarch had passed the test, providing experiential evidence that he feared God more than he loved his only son. Exactly as Abraham had predicted (v. 8), God had miraculously provided a sheep—and the most prized variety, a ram. To memorialize the event Abraham named that place The Lord Will Provide.

**22:15-19.** As the Angel of the Lord who had the Lord's authority, the divine emissary delivered a second message (v. 12), this one in the first person. Because Abraham had passed the "priorities test" by obeying God and not withholding his only son, the Lord would indeed bless him with offspring, victory, land, and goodwill.

**22:20-24.** The first three words of verse 20 duplicate the first three words of verse 1. The record describes the expansion of the patriarchal family tree. Milcah, Lot's sister, now the wife of her uncle Nahor, had become the mother of Uz and Buz and six other children. The text explains this because one of those children, the last named Bethuel, became the father of Rebekah.

