

Commentary Genesis Chapter 22 by Chuck Smith 2.26.25

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January 2025 memory verse (NKJV)

Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

February 2025 memory verse

Luke 24:46 (NKJV) Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

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Now it came to pass after these things, that God tested Abraham ([Gen 22:1](#)),

Or proved Abraham. "Let no man, when he is tempted, say that he is tempted of God: because God never tempts a man to do evil" ([James 1:13](#)). Our enticements to evil come from our own flesh, the lust of our own flesh. God doesn't tempt you to do evil things. God does test us. Jesus went through great testings and He learned obedience through the things that He suffered.

We as Christians experience testings but the purpose of testings are manifold. There is not just a single purpose for a test, it isn't always just to make you fail, it's oftentimes to prove how much you do know, how far along you've come in your understanding, in your development.

And so we are tested as Christians, not by evil from God. "Let no man say when he is tempted I am tempted of God" ([James 1:13](#)). God tempted me to do an evil thing. Now God doesn't do that. I'm tempted to do an evil thing when my own lust is drawn away, I'm enticed. But God does bring me into many testings and God was testing Abraham, proving him. In this manner,

God said unto Abraham, He called him and said, Abraham: Abraham said, Here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah ([Gen 22:1-2](#));

This is the first time the word "love" is used in the Bible. And it's interesting it's not used of a mother's love for her children or a husband's love for his wife, but it's used of a father's love for his son as the greatest love, because we have a picture here of the love of the heavenly Father for His own only begotten Son, that relationship that exists between the father and his son. So "take now thy son, thine only son." Wait a minute, we've just sent Ishmael away. He was a son of Abraham through Hagar. God doesn't

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even recognize him. Why? Because Ishmael was the product of the flesh and God does not recognize the works of the flesh.

Jesus said that "in that day, many were going to come saying, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in thy name and we healed in thy name and we cast out devils in thy name and did marvelous works in thy name? And Jesus said, I will say unto them, Depart from me, you workers of iniquity; I never knew you" (Luke 13:27). They were works actually of the flesh, not really of the Spirit, directed and guided by the Spirit.

There are a lot of our works that we have done for God that are totally unrecognized by God because they are works of the flesh. The Bible says "in that day our works are going to be tried by fire to determine what sort they are" (1 Corinthians 3:13). And if your works will endure the fire, then you'll be rewarded for them. But much of our works are as wood, hay and stubble. They will be consumed in the fire. You're not going to get a reward for it because of the motivation behind it.

"Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac." God doesn't even recognize Ishmael, the work of the flesh. In another way, that's sort of a glorious thing that God doesn't recognize the works of my flesh. I am glad He doesn't. In my flesh I've done some pretty lousy things and I'm glad that God doesn't acknowledge those works of my flesh. "Take now thy son, thine only son." Of course, it brings us to the New Testament, "God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16), and you can only understand the twenty-second chapter of Genesis as you compare it with the New Testament and God giving His only begotten Son.

Here Abraham is called to do what God later did in giving His Son, His only begotten Son as a sacrifice. And "take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, get thee into the land of Moriah"

and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went to the place which God had told him of (Gen 22:2-3).

Notice the repetition of the word "and." It is a form of Hebrew grammar known as polysyndeton which speaks of a continued deliberate action; in other words, no hesitation. Notice Abraham rose up early in the morning; the immediate obedience to God. There wasn't any hesitation. And the implication of this polysyndeton is that his actions now are deliberate and willful and continued. There is no stopping, no hesitation in obedience to the command of God.

And on the third day (Gen 22:4)

Significant. "Third day,"

Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off (Gen 22:4).

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For Isaac was dead in the mind of Abraham for these three days. And yet though he was dead in the mind of Abraham, somehow Abraham was believing in the resurrection. Now Paul said, "The gospel that I preach, how that Jesus died, according to the scriptures; and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). I can give you plenty of scriptures in the Old Testament that speak of the death of Jesus Christ. But where in the Old Testament do you find the Scriptures speaking of His being dead for three days and rising again? Here it is.

Now Abraham by faith offered Isaac as a sacrifice unto God believing that God would, if necessary, raise him from the dead to fulfill His promise, for God had said, "Through Isaac shall thy seed be called", Hebrews the eleventh chapter speaking of Abraham's faith in this test. You see, Abraham had a promise of God. The promise of God was this: "Through Isaac shall thy seed be called."

Now Isaac did not have any children yet. He was not married yet. But Abraham knew that God's word had to be fulfilled. He had that kind of confidence in the word of God. If God said it, God is going to do it. And having that confidence that God would keep His word, when God called upon him to make the sacrifice of his son, he knew that somehow Isaac would be raised from the dead, if necessary, because God's word had to be fulfilled, "through Isaac shall thy seed be called."

And so because of the promise that through Isaac his seed was to be called, he was obedient to the call of God to offer now his son, his only son Isaac as a burnt offering on the mountain that God would show him. And so he got together the altar, the wood and the materials for the altar and the servants, and they journeyed for three days until they came to the place that God showed to him.

And now again, in verse five, the use of this Hebrew grammar again, the polesintudon, the repetition of the "and."

And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you (Gen 22:5).

Now "will go yonder and worship, and come again." The two verbs are associated with the nouns "I and the lad" so that Abraham is saying, I and the lad are going to go, we're going to worship and we're going to come again. He's declaring that Isaac is going to come again with him. Isaac's coming back. "I and the lad are going to go and worship, and we'll come again." Confidence in the promise of God that through Isaac shall his seed be called.

And so notice verse six.

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son (Gen 22:6);

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A picture of Christ who bore his own cross. They laid the cross upon Him and He bore His own cross. So he put the wood on Isaac and Isaac was carrying the wood. And it is at this point

he took the fire and the knife in his hand; and they journeyed both of them together. And Isaac broke the silence, he said to his father, Father: Abraham said, What do you want, son. And he said, Here's the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together (Gen 22:6-8).

What a beautiful prophecy; God will provide not for Himself a lamb, but God will provide Himself a lamb, for God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. And here Abraham is prophesying the fact that God is going to provide Himself as a lamb for the burnt offering. A prophecy of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh who was offered as a sacrifice for man's sins. So they journeyed both of them together.

Now don't let the term "lad" confuse you. This term "lad" is used for an unmarried man. Till you were married you were still a lad. So Isaac at this point was probably twenty-five, twenty-six years old. The word is translated actually young man in other places and it doesn't mean a little child of six or seven. Isaac could, at this time because of his age and physical maturity and because of the age of his father, who at this point was nearing a hundred and thirty; he could have overpowered Abraham. When Abraham decided, started to tie him and lay him on the altar, "Hey, what's going on here? Getting senile, dad". It's far enough. And he could have overpowered his dad, but he was obedient unto the call of God upon his father's life.

Submitting, even as Jesus could have escaped the cross. When Peter drew the sword and began to strike out against the soldiers and the servants that had come to take Jesus, Jesus said to Peter, "Put away thy sword, Peter. Don't you realize that at this moment I could call ten thousand angels to deliver Me?" One angel went through the camp of the Assyrians and wiped out one hundred and eighty-five thousand in one night. Imagine what ten thousand could do. But Jesus was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, submitting to the will of the Father for He prayed, "Father, not my will, thy will be done" (Luke 22:42). And thus submitting Himself to the will of the Father, even as Isaac was submitting unto the will of his father Abraham.

So interesting picture all the way through.

Abraham and Isaac came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built the altar there, and they laid the wood in order, and he bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called to him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here I am. And he said, Don't lay your hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that you fear God, seeing that you have not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and he looked, and behold behind him there was a ram caught in the thicket by his

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horns: and Abraham took the ram, and offered him for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of the place Jehovahjireh (Gen 22:9-14);

Or "Jehovah sees literally". It has come to be interpreted, "Jehovah provides" but literally in the Hebrew it is "Jehovah sees". But with God there is very little difference between vision and provision. God sees. Jesus said over and over, "I know thy works" (Revelation 2:2). God sees. God sees your need. God sees your heart. God sees the problems that you're facing. God sees the tests you're going through. And because God sees, He provides. Jehovahjireh.

and it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen (Gen 22:14).

So they started saying, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

Mount Moriah, in Second Chronicles, the second chapter, "And so Solomon began to build the temple in Mount Moriah" (2 Chronicles 3:1). And so the place where the sacrifices were to be offered through the history of the nation is the same mountain where Abraham was offering the sacrifice of his son. But the prophecy was, "the Lord will provide himself," and then, "in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

And so it is significant that when Jesus was crucified, they led Him out of the city to a place called Calvary or Golgotha, the place of the skull. And today if you go to Jerusalem and you stand there in the garden tomb, just above the Arab bus depot, and you look to the left there on the face of the mountain, you distinctly see the impression of the skull there on the mountain.

But standing there, if you look over to your right and look at the city wall near Herod's gate and you'll see that the wall has been built up over the mountain, over the bedrock. And that this valley where the bus stop is, has actually been quarried out. And that the mountain that you see on the right, on the walls where the walls of Jerusalem are built over, were actually once a continuation of this same mountain. And that the top of the mountain is to your left where the skull is.

Now going on the other side and following the topography, you see that this mountain slopes right on down to the temple mount, the place of the sacrifices or Mount Moriah. So really, the place of the crucifixion Golgotha was the top of Mount Moriah. There are several mountains around Jerusalem, Mount Zion, the Mount of Olives, Mount Escopas, but the most important was Mount Moriah. And Mount Moriah crested above the area where the skull is, the place where Jesus was crucified.

Abraham no doubt took Isaac to the top of the mountain, because usually when they would build their altars, they would build them right at the top of the mountain. And so at the very spot where Abraham built the altar in obedience to God, and he prophesied "God will provide himself a lamb," and the people picked it up and said, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Two thousand years later God provided Himself a lamb for a burnt offering. It was seen, for God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. And in

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the very spot where Abraham built his altar, the cross of Christ was placed as God gave His only begotten Son because He loved the world.

And so we have that beautiful picture here in the Old Testament as Abraham was acting out a drama that would later on in history become a reality where God gave His only begotten Son that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life.

And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself (Gen 22:15-16)

Now the angel of the Lord here is, of course, Jesus Christ, for He said, "By myself"

have I sworn, saith the LORD, [saith Jehovah] for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee (Gen 22:16-17),

Now in Hebrews tells us that God, because He cannot swear by any higher, has to swear by Himself. Now man when he takes an oath, he swears by something greater: By my mother's honor, I swear by God I will do it. We swear by something greater, but if God wants to make an oath that is very positive, who can He swear by? Nothing greater than God so He has to swear by Himself. And so the Lord swore by Himself in order to confirm the oath, to give force to it. "By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, for because you have done this thing, and not withheld thy son, thine only son. That in blessing I will bless thee,"

and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies (Gen 22:17);

So God promised great posterity, "As the stars of heaven, as the sands of the sea." Now in both of them you have an innumerable multitude. And that's the idea. It's just numberless that are going to come from thee. You won't be able to number them or count them.

It is interesting that God relates two things: the stars of heaven, the sand of the sea. Now in those days, the scientists believed that there were six thousand one hundred and twenty-six stars. Now it's obvious there are many more sands of the sea than there are stars. So there were no doubt the critics in those days saying, "Look, you know, how foolish the Bible is. If God really knew, you know, what He was talking about, He wouldn't have said 'As the stars of the heaven and the sand of the sea' because you can't compare the two of those". We know there's only 6,126 stars but my, who can count the sands of the sea? And the critics were no doubt making fun of God's word in those days because He related the two together.

But then came the advent of the telescope and we found out that there were far more than the six thousand one hundred and twenty-six stars. In fact, it is now estimated in all

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the galaxies and so forth that there are ten to the twenty-fifth power stars in the universe. But also if you count the number of sands in a bucket or in a square foot and figure how many square feet there are in the earth, you find out there are about ten to the twenty-fifth power grains of sand upon the earth. So there is a close relationship between the number of stars in the heaven and the grains of sand upon the earth, ten to the twenty-fifth power. Now you can go ahead and count them if you want or you can take my word for it.

But what God was actually saying is that they'll not be counted. Now that is why David got in trouble when he decided to have a census. David numbered the people and the judgment of God came upon Israel because God said, "Hey, you're not going to be able to number them". But David decided he liked to know how many people were in His kingdom and so he took the census. And the judgment of God fell upon David for the taking of the census because God said, "They're going to be innumerable. You're not going to be able to number them".

So from the time of God's judgment upon David, the Jews refused to take census. In fact, what they have began to do was everybody had to put a temple shekel in and so they would count the shekels then. Everybody throw in the shekel, they count the shekels. They wouldn't count people. And the Orthodox Jew today still won't count people. You're at a party. You need the number for a game. They'll say, Not one, not two, not three, not four, not five; ways of getting around everything, I guess.

So Abraham returned unto his young men (Gen 22:19),

So Isaac, the type of Christ; gone after the sacrifice and doesn't appear again until the servant is bringing his bride. And he arises and goes forth to meet his bride as she comes.

So it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor (Gen 22:20);

And so they brought a message to Abraham telling him about his family back in the land and how that the various children, his brothers, the children that they had and the children of his brother's children.