

SACRIFICE



INTRODUCTION

God's original promises to Abraham was not based on Abraham's specific actions in carrying out the test, but rather was based on the faith and obedience of Abraham that showed through this test.

DISCUSSION

Do you think God has ever tested you?

When and how?

EXPLANATION

Why do you think God allows us to be tested?

Is a test always a bad thing?

Is God's love for us dependant on how we do in the tests?

(obviously, no...so, what benefit are the tests in our lives?)

APPLICATION

Read 1 Peter 1:3-7.

How do trials produce gold in us?

"The character of the faith that allows us to be transformed by suffering and darkness is not doubt free certainty; rather, it is tenacious obedience."

What do you think about this statement?

How does this statement and the verse from 1 Peter go hand in hand?

MISSION

Talk about this statement by Gerhard VonRad and how it relates to God's mission for us in the world: *"Abraham walks onto the road of 'God-forsakenness, where God seems to contradict Himself."*

Serve Santa Maria

Saturday, October 13th

<http://goo.gl/JqnTc>



GENESIS

Genesis 22:1-19

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Proverbs 4:23

Genesis 22:1-19

James 1:2-4

2 Corinthians 5:21

1 Corinthians 15:3

Hebrews 9:22

Galatians 3:16

1 Peter 3:18

1 Peter 2:24



Proverbs 4:23 “Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”

Genesis 22 is the pinnacle of Abraham’s faith and the perfect representation of Jesus’ coming sacrifice for His people, but it involves a lot of pain and testing.

Testing in the Old Testament is very interesting

- It is used ONLY in reference to the people of God, never to heathen nations.
- It is applied ONLY to people of faith (never to the ungodly).

Testing is reserved for those in a relationship with God—even though it is painful it is an act of love.

James 1:2-4 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

The first verse of Chapter 22 provides a necessary preliminary understanding of the events of the chapter “*God tested Abraham...*” Without it, God’s request that Abraham offer up Isaac as a “burnt offering” would be inexplicable. By stating clearly at the start that “*God tested Abraham,*” the writer quickly gets rid of any doubt about God’s real purpose.

There is, then, no thought of an actual sacrifice of Isaac in the narrative. Though, in the mind of Abraham within the narrative that was, of course, the only thought that was entertained. The whole structure of the narrative focuses so strongly on the Lord’s request that the writer apparently sensed the need to dispel any suspense or suspicion about God’s real intention.

Several features of the narrative serve to keep the reader’s attention focused directly on the inward struggle of Abraham as he carried out the Lord’s request, without any mention of the actual thoughts of Abraham’s mind.

We have to embrace the Bible as the wild, uncensored, passionate account it is; of people experiencing the living God.

- SOMETIMES Doubting the one true God.
- SOMETIMES Wrestling with, arguing with the one true God.
- SOMETIMES getting angry with the one true God.
- SOMETIMES reconciling with the one true God.
- SOMETIMES loving, worshiping, thanking, following the one who gives us everything.

Scripture is NOT something we can tame. We cannot tone it down...but there is always purpose.

There is the abruptness of God’s request within the narrative (apart from the remark in v. 1 that the narrative represented a test of Abraham, the reader is given no advanced warning of the nature of the request nor of its severity). The reader, in other words, is supposed to be as surprised and shocked by the Lord’s request as Abraham himself would have been.

The whole of the request is made up of three simple imperatives (v. 2):

1. “Take” (*qah-na’*),
2. “go” (*welek*),
3. “sacrifice him” (*weha`a lehu*).

The reader is given no reason to believe that Abraham himself had any further explanation.

We, as the readers, are forced to rely on the assessment of Abraham himself, within the narrative, and to view the events of the narrative through his eyes and by means of his response. At the same time, in the absence of any explanation from the narrator, we are forced to read our own thoughts and feelings into those of Abraham. Moses even prolongs the narrative with excessive and deliberate details of Abraham’s preparation for the journey and the journey itself.

When Abraham finally ends his silence in the narrative you begin to see the process of his mind when he says, “God himself will provide [*elohim yir’eh-llo*] the lamb for the burnt offering, my son” (v. 8). We, as the readers, are assured of the outcome of the narrative and of the quality of Abraham’s faith.

There is now also a silent confidence in the “Lord who will provide.” Abraham’s words should not be understood as merely an attempt to calm the curious Isaac. In light of the fact that they anticipate the actual outcome of the narrative, they are to be read as a confident expression of his trust in God.

God’s original promises to Abraham was not based on Abraham’s specific actions in carrying out the test, but rather was based on the faith and obedience of Abraham that showed through this test.

Isaac *IS* the child of *THE* promise to Abraham. Isaac knows his father loves him and knows his father loves God, but he needed to see faith exercised to make it all click. Up until this point God has been the “God of Abraham” and he now becomes the “God of Abraham and Isaac” and eventually becomes known as “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (Isaac’s son) for all future generations of Hebrews.