

God Has Provided a Lamb for You

International Bible Lesson

Genesis 22:1-14

Sunday, December 18, 2011

“And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me” (Genesis 22:11-12—KJV).

“But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, ‘Abraham, Abraham!’ He answered, ‘Yes, here I am.’ ‘Don’t hurt the boy or do anything to him,’ he said. ‘Now I know that you honor and obey God, because you have not kept back your only son from him’” (Genesis 22:11-12—GNB).

“But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, ‘Abraham, Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ He said, ‘Do not 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’” (Genesis 22:11-12—NRSV).

To test him, God told Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac. On the way, Isaac asked his father why they took no sacrifice with them, and Abraham replied, “God himself will provide the lamb” (Genesis 22:8). On the mountaintop, Abraham built an altar, securely bound Isaac, and raised his knife to sacrifice his son. At that moment, Isaac knew with certainty that his father would offer him as a sacrifice to God unless the LORD provided the lamb. At that moment, God intervened and provided a substitute for Isaac, a ram, a male sheep—just as Abraham had promised his son.

The sacrifice that God required of Abraham and the substitute lamb that God provided him, God intended as an object lesson. God saved Abraham from offering his sacrifice, but God could not save His only Son from His sacrificial death. God provided Jesus the Messiah and His sacrifice as a substitute for the death sinners deserve as a consequence of their rebellion against God. Believers know that they deserve eternal separation from God because of their disobedience, and they thank God for providing a suitable substitute for them. Jesus became the Lamb of God, provided by His Father, so God could uphold His perfect law of love with justice while offering mercy and forgiving all who repent of their sins and receive the risen Lamb of God as their Lord and Savior.

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Thinking Further

1. Describe the type of faith a person must have to obey God immediately and without question?
2. How can people develop and maintain the strong type of faith that Abraham demonstrated?
3. Why do you think God tested Abraham?
4. If you were Abraham, what might you have talked with Isaac about during your three day journey and climb up the mountain?
5. If you were Isaac, how might you have felt from the time Abraham raised his knife to the time God provided the lamb as a substitute? How might this experience have an effect upon your faith?

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