

Connect360: The Results of Obedience

March 28, 2023

- *Lesson 2 in the Connect360 unit “How Great Is Our God: Passing the Faith Along” focuses on Genesis 22:1-18.*

The awesome text we are studying is what theologians might call a shadow, a type or a symbol of another reality we can find embodied in the life of Jesus. Imagine you are walking on a path toward the morning sun, with your head down, looking at the path. Then someone walks toward you. The first thing you would see is their shadow, a rough outline of what the person really looks like. As you move further along you meet the full, living person who cast the shadow. Now you see the three-dimensional person, and the living reality. You saw the shadow before the real person appeared.

The events of Abraham and Isaac are real, yet they were also a shadow of events that occurred in the New Testament. In this study, we will examine the event with Abraham and Isaac, but the reader should also reflect on what is happening in the story as a rough representation of the New Testament salvation process, containing many parallels.

For instance, God also had a one and only Son, and it became necessary for God to walk with Jesus up a hill, near this same location, called Golgotha or Calvary. Interestingly, the hill of Moriah was where Solomon built the Temple (cf. 2 Chronicles 3:1), near the hill where Jesus, the Lamb of God, gave his life to take away the sins of all who believe in him. So, look for glimpses of parallels between Abraham and God, and Isaac and Jesus.

Abraham had left all to follow God. God promised he would make Abraham's offspring as numerous as the sands of the seashore. For

decades, Abraham and Sarah were childless. But God had promised an heir, and many offspring. Finally, when Abraham was 100 years old, Isaac (whose name means “laughing”) was born. God was beginning to unfurl his plan of salvation to Abraham, which would develop through his seed, and in the fullness of time, this seed will be Jesus (cf. Galatians 3:16).

Now that Abraham finally had an heir, he was told to take Isaac to a hill near Moriah to offer him as a burnt sacrifice to God. That is something that would test anyone’s faith. How would it feel if after waiting all those years, you finally have a one and only son, and you are asked to sacrifice him? Isaac was the proof of God’s promise. Was that now in doubt?

Isaac was Abraham’s total hope for the future. At 100 years old, how could he ever have such numerous offspring as the sands of the sea, if he now must sacrifice his one and only, beloved son? Talk about testing your faith!

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