

# FAITHFUL ONE

ABRAHAM TO ISAAC

Part 1: *The Blessing of Isaac*

## Part 2: *The Binding of Isaac*

Part 3: *The Kindness of Strangers (with Jimmy Rushton)*

### APPETIZER: Images of the Akedah (Binding)

What do these pictures say about God? About Abraham? About Isaac? About us?

### DINE IN: The (Almost) Sacrifice of Isaac

*Hineni* = Behold! See me!

Genesis 22

QUESTION 1: Why does God test Abraham?

Deuteronomy 8:2

Do we love God? Or do we use God because we love what God can do for us?

QUESTION 2: Why doesn't Abraham argue, debate, or plead with God?

2 Kings 16:3; Jeremiah 32:35

QUESTION 3: What was Abraham thinking?!

Thought A: God has the right to ask this from me.  
(Therefore I must resign myself to it *so I can pass the test.*)

Thought B: God will always uphold his promises.  
(Therefore I must not obey *so I can pass the test.*)

Resolution: I will obey and God will find a way.

Hebrews 11:17-19

YAHWEH YIREH = Yahweh Provides (God will see to it)

QUESTION 4: How does this story point to Jesus?

Luke 24:27; John 8:56; John 3:16; Romans 8:31-32; Galatians 3:16

QUESTION 5: Does God test us today?

John 6:5-6; 1 Thessalonians 2:4; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 4:12; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 2 Corinthians 2:9; 2 Corinthians 8:8; 1 Timothy 3:10; 1 John 4:1; Revelation 2:10

NOTE: God tests, Satan tempts.

BONUS QUESTION: What more might God be teaching Abraham/us?

Before announcing the end of sacrifice, with Christ, the Bible shows his gradually moving away from it in the story of Isaac. When Isaac asks his father: 'The fire and wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?' Abraham's answer is extraordinary, and one of the most significant points in the whole of the Bible: 'God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering' (Genesis 22.1-8). This sentence announces the finding of the ram that will replace Isaac, but Christians have always seen a prophetic allusion to Christ as well. God, in this sense, will give the one who will sacrifice himself in order to do away with all sacrificial violence. It is not ridiculous, it is marvellous. The great scene of Abraham's sacrifice is the renunciation of the sacrifice of infants (which is latent in the biblical beginning) and its replacement with animal sacrifice. However, in the prophetic texts, we are a step further: it is the moment in which animal sacrifices will not work any more, as expressed, for instance, in Psalm 40: 'Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced; burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require.' In other words, the Bible provides not merely a replacement of the object to be sacrificed, but the end of the sacrificial order in its entirety, thanks to the consenting victim who is Jesus Christ.

~ Rene Girard (Evolution and Conversion)

2 Samuel 22:26-27; Psalm 18:25-26; Psalm 50:51

HUMAN SACRIFICE → ANIMAL SACRIFICE → LIVING SACRIFICE  
(Early History) (Abraham & Isaac) (Jesus)

Romans 12:1; Matthew 9:13; also 12:7;  
Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8; Ephesians 2:8-10

TAKE OUT: Hearing God's Voice Today

John 12:45

## **HANGOUT** [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. What stood out to you from Sunday's sermon? New thoughts? Lingered questions?

## **HEAR** [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

2. Read **Genesis 22** again. Remember to use these questions more like a menu to choose from than a list to be fully completed.
  - a. What seems most significant to you in this text?
  - b. How would you explain this story to a skeptic who sees it as God-directed child abuse?
  - c. Review Question 4 in the notes and talk about the various ways this story points to Jesus.
3. God told Abraham, the man of FAITH, that God would use him to be a blessing to the world "because you have OBEYED me" (**Genesis 22:18**). Read **James 2:14-26**, about faith and works.
  - a. What is James saying about Abraham?
  - b. How does this passage reinforce **Ephesians 2:8-10**?
  - c. How does this apply to our faith in Jesus today?

## **HUDDLE** [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

4. What might God be saying to you through this week's discussion about your own walk with him? Talk about it and pray for one another.