



*... Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and 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...*

*<sup>6</sup> Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: <sup>7</sup> Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. <sup>8</sup> That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. <sup>9</sup> For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. <sup>10</sup> And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; <sup>11</sup> (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) <sup>12</sup> It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. <sup>13</sup> As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. (Romans 9:6-13)*

I underlined the 7<sup>th</sup> verse from the text above to draw one's attention to the nature of that Promised Seed of Abraham and its relationship to the called out and elect of God. Faith is a miracle and not born of the common will of man. Faith is an endowment from Heaven that we might believe and turn from our wicked ways – which ways are the nature of the carnal heart. God chose between Ishmael and Isaac. God made that choice before either was born. He did so, as well, with Esau and Jacob. The human reason might suggest a preference for the firstborn son in both cases (Ishmael and Esau), but God knew them before they were ever conceived. He even named them before conception. Human reason cannot account for the will and purpose of the Almighty! Paul's benediction in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans gives a clear explanation of our inability to understand the works of God by human reason: *<sup>33</sup> O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! <sup>34</sup> For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? <sup>35</sup> Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? <sup>36</sup> For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen. (Romans 11:33-36)*

I have read often in popular commentaries of the human reasoning of theologians attempting to explain away the clear words of prophecy and Gospel in order to make the very words mean something different from what they clearly articulate. I do not pretend to understand more of God's Word than these learned men,

but one thing I know: whether I understand every whit of what God says has no bearing on the truth. Whatsoever He has said in His Word is truth, and I may not amend it by human reason or strenuous equivocation.

God tested Abraham long ago in Canaan. After waiting in his old age to have, miraculously, a son (Isaac), the Lord said to him: *Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and 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.* (Gen 22:2) It might be added here that Isaac was now a boy perhaps in his early teens. Abraham had become enamored with this special son of promise of the Lord. But now, God tells Abraham to do something Abraham could never have understood. When we do not understand why the Lord tells us to undertake a mission, or to go a certain place, what do we do? We must go anyway, and that is what Abraham did. You must remember that Abraham believes the Promise of God to send a Redeemer, but he does not know the means of that redemption in the Ultimate Seed of Promise (Jesus Christ). His understanding of God's plan, at that point, was too primitive to comprehend the cost that God would pay for our salvation. So, God decides on a means to alert our minds to that cost. God asks Abraham to sacrifice his only begotten son for a reason that Abraham does not know. Those lost of the world today have no primitive concept, either, as to why the death of Christ on the cross could redeem them from their sins.

Without hesitation, Abraham immediately obeys God. How strong is our own faith to obey God under every heart-breaking circumstance? <sup>3</sup> *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 unto the place of which God had told him. <sup>4</sup> Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.* (Gen 22:3-4) Amazingly, the journey to Mt. Moriah was a three-day journey during which time Isaac was as good as dead - The same period in which Christ was in the stone-cold tomb! The Temple at Jerusalem, where the yearly Passover Sacrifice was made, is located on the same mountains of Moriah. Imagine the woe and despair in the heart of Abraham at the sight of this place of horror! Serving the Lord is not always a prospect of happiness. There will be times of great sorrow. Often, such sorrow is only a mirage as in the case of the sacrifice of Isaac. All sorrows undertaken on God's part is a mere mirage.

It will be important to remember that Isaac's birth was a miraculous fulfillment of God's Promise.

Though Abraham does not fully understand the mysteries of God's plans, he has a premonition that God will make all well in fulfillment of His promises concerning the progeny of Abraham. Look closely at the next verse of Genesis 22: <sup>5</sup> *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) If we were to diagram that sentence, what would be the subject of the second clause? Would it not be a compound subject of Abraham and the lad? What are these subjects going to do? They are to "go yonder and worship". But there is also a compound verb: "and come again to you." Abraham does not say that he and the lad will go and worship, and then that only he (Abraham) will come again to you - the subjects are the same in both cases. In other words, he and the lad will go and worship, and (he and the lad) will come again to you. This is not a complex or convoluted matter - it is simply what God's Word clearly tells us. He didn't know how, but Abraham believed that God would restore his son (Isaac) to him even if he sacrificed him on the altar. Any creature placed on an altar belongs to God. Isaac belonged to God and his Seed of Promise to come after. *And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son.* (Gen 22:6a) Like the wood of the cross, Isaac carried this wood to his place of sacrifice.

Does the term, Burnt Offering, ring a bell? Remember the Brazen Altar of Burnt Offerings at the very entrance to the Wilderness Tabernacle. No man came further than that altar into the tabernacle without a sacrifice. That altar was the only one upon which a sacrifice was made in the Tabernacle. That Brazen Altar typified the Lord Jesus Christ in the same way that the Brazen Serpent on the Pole of the Wilderness represented Christ! The altar upon which Isaac would be laid would confirm the promise of God that Isaac and his spiritual progeny would belong to God. Not necessarily the carnal descendents of Isaac, but all who believed in that Promise, by faith, made to Abraham. (Romans 9:8) God demanded Abraham's BEST for a sacrifice, and He demands your best be given unto Him as well – though blood sacrifice will no longer avail except that sacrifice made by Christ.

Next is recounted a dialogue that would break any father's heart. Hear what Isaac asks his father at the foot of Moriah: *7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?* (Gen 22:7) Abraham knows that whatever sacrifice is made will be the provision of God, whether Isaac, his son, or a lamb. The response to Isaac's question is the most profound and dramatic prophecy of the promised Messiah to that point in Scripture! *8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.* (Gen 22:8a) If we are still in a mind to diagram sentences, you will immediately see that the object of this sentence is "himself (a lamb)". The Lord will provide Himself to be the Lamb for the burnt offering of the Tabernacle..... *11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;* *12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.* *13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* (Rev 5:11-13)

Isaac, as the only begotten of Abraham, prefigures the only Begotten Son of God. God will not demand the child of any man as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. Only His own Son can bear such a burden, or is worthy to do so – and He did! *9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.* *10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.* *11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.* *12 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.* (Gen 22:9-12) Now Abraham's eyes are averted to a thorn-bush in which a ram is caught by the horns: *13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.* (Gen 22:13) A ram caught in the thicket by his horns much like the Lamb of God tortured with a crown of thorns. It is my desire that every reader will see in this account the perfect will, foreknowledge and foreordination of God in the affairs of His people.