



Shadows of the Messiah in Genesis 22

In Genesis 22 we come to the greatest test of Abraham's faith, the command to offer his son (Isaac) as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that God would show him (Gen 22:1-2). We cannot even imagine such a test, yet our spiritual father Abraham faced that very test. God allowed the test to proceed right up to the moment before Abraham would plunge the knife into the chest of his beloved son Isaac, it was then that God intervened and provided for himself a lamb.

The test of Abraham's faith contained within Genesis 22 is amazing. But what is even more amazing is the types, the pictures, the shadows of the coming Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, here in Genesis 22. It is worth noting that the Messiah would not come for another 2000 years. But here, in this real story involving Abraham and Isaac, we see many events, items, and/or details that would be repeated in the life and in particular the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This paper mentions those that I saw as I worked through the text in preparation for our Sunday School lesson on Genesis 22. Each of these items is worthy of additional study as we seek to know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, as we are being conformed to the image of his death (Phil 3:10).

Ways that Isaac served as a picture of the coming Messiah:

- 1) **Both were promised sons** (Gen 15:4; Is 9:6-7, Is 53)
- 2) **Both had a miraculous birth** (Gen 18:11,14; Luk 1:35)
- 3) **Both were named by God before they were born** (Gen 17:19; Mat 1:21)
- 4) **Both had their conception and birth prophesied** (Gen 18:13; Luk 1:30-31)
- 5) **Both came at the time appointed by God** (Gen 18:10; Gal 4:4)
- 6) **Both are the "only son" of their father** (Gen 22:2, 12; Joh 1:14)
 - a. We talked about what God likely meant in Gen 22 in our lesson.
- 7) **Both were dearly loved by their father** (Gen 22:2; Mat 3:17)
- 8) **Both were mocked by their own kin** (Gen 21:9; Mat 27:29)
- 9) **Both are cases where the father offers up the son** (Gen 22:6, Mat 27:46)
 - a. Isaac was fully planned
 - b. Jesus was fully accomplished
- 10) **Both offerings were in the same area** (Gen 22:2; IIChr 3:1)
- 11) **Both had a three-day experience** (Gen 22:4; Mat 16:21)
 - i. Isaac – 3-day journey to Mt Moria
 - ii. Jesus – 3-day journey from cross to resurrection
- 12) **A donkey was involved in both stories** (Gen 22:3; Mat 21:1-7)
- 13) **Both were accompanied by two men** (Gen 22:3; Mat 27:38)
 - i. Isaac – 2 unnamed servants
 - ii. Jesus – 2 unnamed criminals
- 14) **Both carried their own wood** – (Gen 22:6; Mat 27:32)
- 15) **Both submitted to their father** – (Gen 22:6,9; Joh 10:17-18)
- 16) **Both asked their father a question** (Gen 22:7; Mat 27:46)
- 17) **Substitution is part of both stories** – (Gen 22:8; Isa 53:3-6)
- 18) **Propitiation is part of both stories** – (Gen 22:13; Rom 3:25)
- 19) **Both were brought back from the dead** (Heb 11:19; Mat 28:6)
 - a. Isaac figuratively
 - b. Jesus literally

- 20) **It is possible that both men were approximately the same age** (Gen 23:1; Luk 3:23)
- a. Isaac possibly 33
 - b. Jesus approximately 33

I suspect there are others, but this is enough to cause us to stand in amazement at the similarities between these two stories that are separated by approximately 2000 years.