



**Reading:** Genesis chapter 21 verses 22-34 and chapter 22

**Key Thought:** Romans 12 verse 1: "Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God."

**Context:** In chapter 21 we read of a situation unfamiliar to us in the modern world. In those days, digging a well was like staking your ground – it gave you the right of property in the land. This agreement at Beersheba, between Abimelek and Abraham, had significance for the future. Abraham was claiming a stake in God's Promise that his descendants would one day inherit the land. As part of his claim, Abraham planted a tree to make it a significant place. And there 'he called upon the name of the Lord' (Ch. 21v33). We may wonder why this meeting was special, but as we read on, we see that Abraham had to be close to God – in preparation for what would happen next.

**Making sure we call on God each day, spending time in prayer, helps us to be prepared for whatever that day might bring.**

### Content:

Imagine the conversation between God and Abraham –

**Take your son, your only son** – Ishmael has gone, I only have Isaac. My only son? **Whom you love** – The one I love more than anything in the world! **Sacrifice him.** Give him to you? Show you I love you more than Isaac – really? But your character, Lord, your promises for the future ... **On Mount Moriah**

**Note:** Mount Moriah is the place where the Temple was built hundreds of years later in Jerusalem, and near to where Jesus was crucified.

We read only of Abraham's obedience, and nothing of his internal struggles. It is clear that Abraham obeyed and trusted God: Verse 5 – "We will come back". Verse 8 – "God will provide a sacrifice". Abraham knew he could trust God because of the covenanted promises that God had given him. He knew that God would have to spare Isaac or raise him from the dead.

**In the same way, when everything seems to be going wrong, we can trust in God's promises to us.**

Where there seems to be no way ahead, God will prepare a way – He's always one step ahead of us!

**In the event, God made another sacrifice available.** Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son prefigures God's willingness to let Jesus die on the Cross for us. The Lamb (a young ram) died in Isaac's place. Jesus was the Lamb of God who was the substitute sacrifice for us. (We should feel as relieved as Isaac did!!!)

### Challenges:

Would God ever require the same of us? At the very least ... we should consider our priorities.

Oswald Chambers says:

It is not, "Lord, I am ready to go with you ... to the death", but "Lord, I am willing to be identified with Your death, so that I may sacrifice my life to you".

In other words, God wants us to be living sacrifices – not dead ones which would serve no function!

God doesn't ask us to give up things for the sake of giving them up. But He does sometimes ask us to give them up for the sake of his Kingdom. In this way we can become living sacrifices for Him. And it is then that we can know God as Jehovah Jireh – Our Provider (Ch.22v14).

**Therefore, offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.**

### Communicate:

Feel free to let us know if you have questions or comments about this study. Perhaps you have a testimony or word of encouragement that might help others. Or maybe you would like prayer as you begin a new thing for God in your life. We will gladly get back to you.