



PARASHAT
VAYERA

פרשת וירא

Genesis 18:1-22:24

by
Ya'acov Natan Lawrence
& his kids

Note to the adult teacher: It will be necessary for you to give the scriptural context and background for each of the points listed below.

Great Discoveries In This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

- 18:1 Three Visitors and Abraham's Hospitality
- 18:9 YHVH Promises a Son to Abraham and Sarah
- 18:16 Sodom's Destruction Foretold; YHVH's Love for Abraham
- 18:23 Abraham Pleads for Mercy on Sodom for the Righteous' Sake
- 19:1 Lot in Sodom; Lot's Visit From the Angels and His Encounter With the Sodomites
- 19:15 Lot Is Saved out of Sodom and Flees to a Cave
- 19:31 Lot's Incest With His Daughters: Moab and Ammon Are Born
- 20:1 Abraham Journeys to Gerar Where Sarah Is Kidnapped
- 20:14 Abimelech Makes Peace With Abraham and Sarah Because of His Mistake
- 21:1 Isaac Is Born
- 21:9 Hagar and Ishmael Are Put Out of Abraham's Household
- 21:15 YHVH Saves Ishmael and Hagar From Starvation
- 21:22 Abraham Makes an Alliance With Abimelech
- 22:1 The Near Sacrifice of Isaac on the Altar (the Akeidah) at Mount Moriah
- 22:5 Abraham Declares That They Are Ascending the Mountain to Worship (the first place worship is mentioned in Scripture)
- 22:20 The Birth of Rebecca

Exploring This Week's Parashah:



Loving Elohim

How much do you love YHVH—your Father in heaven? How much does he love you?



(a) What are some biblical examples of the Father's love for you? (Read John 3:16;

Romans 5:8; 1John 3:1.) What is an example of Yeshua's love for those who killed him? (Read Luke 23:34.) What are some examples of men's love for YHVH? (Read Psalms 18:1; 31:23; 37:4; 42:1; 116:1; 119:97 and 127.)

Love is a very powerful force! It can be more powerful than one's concern for one's own life. Love can cause a friend—in battle, for example—to sacrifice his life to save his friends. We hear of people rushing into a burning building without concern for their own lives to save the lives of others. Love can cause a parent to sacrifice his or her life to save their child. Many believers in Yeshua have willingly died at the hands of evil men because of their love for Yeshua. This is a hard thing to comprehend, but the love one person has for another can be so strong that it will cause one to be willing to die for another.



The Bible says that YHVH Elohim made man in his own likeness and image (Genesis 1:23), and that men are like children to YHVH. He cares so much for us and wants us to be a part of his spiritual family (John 1:12; Romans 8:14; 1John 3:1-2) that he was willing to do whatever was necessary because of his love for you and me including allowing his own Son to be sacrificed to pay for our sins.




Abraham was a man after Elohim's own heart. That's how great Abraham's love was. Let's explore this righteous and faithful man's love for YHVH Elohim—his Father in heaven. How far was he willing to go to show Elohim his love for him?

2 YHVH's Promise to Abraham

YHVH wanted to use Abraham to start a nation of people who would love YHVH above anything else. The people of this nation would not only walk in a deep love for YHVH, but the love of those people for their God (Elohim) would be so great that it would shine like a beacon of light to all the nations of the world. All the other nations worshipped imaginary gods and idols made of wood, stone, metal or of their imaginations. This special nation that YHVH wanted to raise up would show the other nations that their Elohim was real and that their love and devotion for him was real. In this way, some people from those nations might want to forsake their pagan gods and follow the true God (Elohim) of Israel. This would result in YHVH's nation growing and YHVH would end up with more children to love.



Abraham was a very old man when YHVH told him of a plan to build a special nation that would love YHVH. He was so old that he and Sarah, his wife, were past the point of even being able to have children. How could a nation come from YHVH if Abraham had no son?

-  (b) What was Sarah's response when YHVH told her that she would have a son? (Read Genesis 18:10-15.)
-  (c) Did the word of YHVH come to pass and did Sarah give birth to a son even though she and Abraham were very old? (Read Genesis 21:1-2.)
-  (d) How old was Abraham when Isaac was born? (Read Genesis 21:5.)

3 YHVH Tests Abraham's Love



(e) How much do you think Abraham loved his son Isaac? Just imagine if you were in Abraham's place and you and your wife gave birth to your first son when you were 100 years old. How much joy would this bring to you? How much love would you have for your son? How thankful would you be to YHVH for performing a miracle and bringing you a son when it was impossible for your old wife to have any children?



YHVH was now about to put Abraham to the most important test of his life to prove how much he loved YHVH and how far he would go in trusting YHVH. After all, YHVH had promised Abraham that a great nation with millions of people would come from him and that all the nations of the world would be blessed through that nation. (Read Genesis 15:5; 17:2-9; 8:18.)

Did Abraham really believe YHVH's incredible promises to him? Did he have faith in the Word of YHVH? Did Abraham have the quality of character to be the father of such a great and special nation? YHVH had to prepare Abraham's heart so that he would be ready to fulfil his awesome mission.



(f) How did YHVH put Abraham to the test to prove his love for him? (Read Genesis 22:1-2.)



(g) What was Abraham's response to YHVH? (Read Genesis 22:3-10.) Was Abraham obedient to YHVH?

YHVH wanted to test Abraham to see if he loved YHVH even more than his own son.



(h) Was Abraham willing to give up that which was most precious to him because of his love for YHVH? What does this teach us about how much faith and trust Abraham had for YHVH?



(i) Read Hebrews 11:17-19. What does this scripture passage say that Abraham believed YHVH was able to do even if he had actually sacrificed Isaac?



(j) Do we have a clue from Genesis 22 that perhaps Abraham didn't really think YHVH would allow him to kill his own son? What reason did Abraham give his servants for why he and Isaac were going up to the mountain? (Read verse 5.) What does he say at the very end of the verse? Another very old Bible translation called the



Septuagint records Abraham as saying to his servants, "We will return to you." What does this tell us about Abraham's faith?

4 The Substitute Sacrifice

As Abraham and Isaac were heading up the mountain, Isaac asked his father a very honest question.


 (k) What was that question? (Read Genesis 22:7.) What was Abraham's response? (Read verse 8.)

 (l) What did Abraham mean by his answer? What was he thinking?

Noah had been alive until Abraham was about 100 years old when Isaac was born. Abraham probably knew Noah. Certainly, Abraham knew Shem, Noah's son, who died during the time of Jacob. Certainly Abraham must have known about the animal skins (probably lamb skins, that YHVH covered Adam and Eve in after they sinned (Genesis 3:21). He must have known about the lambs that righteous Abel offered to YHVH (Genesis 4:2-4). He knew about the burnt offerings (including the lamb) that Noah offered to YHVH after the flood (Genesis 8:20). He must have known that somehow these lambs or rams were a special sacrifice that was pleasing to YHVH. Scripture doesn't say what was going on in Abraham's mind, but he had faith that YHVH would provide a lamb for the sacrifice, and that if YHVH allowed him to kill Isaac, YHVH could resurrect Isaac from the dead.

The Bible speaks of Yeshua as the Lamb of Elohim, which takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). He is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" to pay for our sins (Rev 13:8; 1Peter 1:18-20). How much about YHVH's plan to save men from their sins did Abraham know about? We don't know. But he must have had some knowledge about sin and man's need to be saved or redeemed from his sins in order to have a right relationship with Elohim.

 (m) Did YHVH provide a lamb (or ram) for Abraham to sacrifice instead of Isaac? (Read Genesis 22:13.)

 (n) Was this ram a picture of Yeshua? Was Isaac also a picture of Yeshua? (Read Genesis 22:16 and compare it to John 3:16.) Do you see any similarities between these two Bible verses?

Whatever Abraham knew or didn't know, we know that the "ram caught in the thicket" in Genesis 22 is a prophetic picture of Yeshua carrying the sins of humanity while dying on the cross.

Because of his love for Elohim, Abraham was willing to give that which was most precious to him on earth—his son Isaac—as an offering to Elohim. Likewise, because of Elohim's unspeakable love for you and me, he was willing to give his only Son, Yeshua, as a love offering to us to pay the price for our sins.

The ram that YHVH provided for Abraham to sacrifice in place of Isaac points to Yeshua in some other important ways, as well. Scripture says that the sins of man were to be laid upon the Messiah (Isaiah 53:6). Furthermore, in Matthew 13:22, in Yeshua's Parable of the Sower, we see that some of the seed was cast into the thorns, which Yeshua explained



represents the sinfulness of man. These references to thorns and thicket are a picture of sin. The crown of thorns Yeshua wore while on the cross is a picture men's sins.



The horns of the ram point to Yeshua, as well. In Hebraic thought, the left horn, corresponds to the right hand of YHVH, and points to his mercy and grace. Furthermore, the left horn points to the purpose of the first coming of Messiah Yeshua. At his first coming, Yeshua brought mercy and grace—not quenching a smoking flax or breaking a bruised reed—and like a meek and quiet lamb he was led to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7; 42:3; Matthew 12:20). On the other hand, the right horn of the ram represents judgment. In Hebraic thought, Elohim's right hand is the hand of power, might and judgment. Thus, this horn represents the second coming of Messiah, who currently is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven (Acts 2:32-33). At his second coming, Yeshua will come to the earth in power as King of kings to judge the living and the dead, to destroy the wicked, and to rule the earth with a rod of iron for a thousand years.

Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac, his only son (by his wife Sarah) because of his deep love for Elohim. Our Father in heaven sacrificed his Son because of his deep love for us. What a beautiful picture Genesis 22 is of a man's unconditional love for his Creator, and our Heavenly Father's love for us, his creation.



M A T A N S S D O Y L O S B Y N E O K N
 N V A B E H S R E E B H A O A W E S S T
 E U R I T R R A E K H E R E U L G U I E
 E C R N E A M M M T C T R R L S O F R N
 B U A C N M E C T E S I S E T E O T A R
 E G N K O R F A A E F I W S T O L R M E
 S O G N T S I U D A Y E S H U A L T A R
 D M E S S E N G E R S S G G S R W A T G
 S O D O M A K H T R B I A F T I M O A T
 G R T P I R A T O O R T O L A E R A S M
 M R H A R A S I U N S R H M L W A A N O
 D A E R B D E N E V A E L N U D E K A B
 S H W A U C D T N L A K O Y E F W G B T
 E H O A G H F H L A T I D L T E I T A E
 L M O D I I K I G B W F A A G R B W R W
 H A D S C M P C H R M U E T O W I D O A
 B N S B E R R K A A G R T R D A W M O A
 O O L I V S R E T H G U A D O W T D E E
 N H U U T A B T E A B I M E L E C H H R
 W R G F R B L D B M R M T B F R R S T U

- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| A Great Feast | Bound His Son | Laughed | Sarah |
| Abimelech | Brimstone | Lot | Sin |
| Abraham | Destroy | Lot's Wife | Sodom |
| Altar | Fire | Messengers | Tamarisk |
| Ammon | Gomorrah | Moab | Two Daughters |
| Arranged The Wood | If Ten Righteous | Oath | Water |
| Baked Unleavened Bread | Isaac | Pillar Of Salt | Well |
| Beersheba | Knife | Ram Caught In Thicket | Wicked |