

## Abraham and Isaac Genesis 22

Poor Abraham! He and Sarah had waited for almost a hundred years to have their own child, Finally, after the visit of some angels, Isaac had been born – what a thrill- the long promised child was here.

Then while Isaac was still quite small Abraham gets the message from God that he is to sacrifice this precious child, in the same way that he would sacrifice a lamb. Being God's true servant he prepares to do as he is told.

Anyone who has been on a trip with a small child can imagine the conversation... *Where are we going Daddy? How long will it take? Are we nearly there yet?*

After 3 days of travel they reach the mountain, Isaac has seen his father make sacrifices before and as they leave the servants behind and start climbing up to the place God has told him to go... *Have we got to climb to the top Daddy? where's the sheep for the sacrifice? Are we nearly there yet?*

They reach the spot for the sacrifice, Abraham, perhaps somewhat reluctantly builds an altar, puts the wood on it, and ties up the small boy placing him on the altar, then suddenly as he raises the knife an anguished Abraham hears a voice calling his name!

There's nobody around, they are at the top of a mountain but there's the voice 'Abraham, Abraham!' with joy in his heart Abraham hears God tell him to use a ram that is caught in a nearby thicket, I imagine that the ropes tying little Isaac were cut almost before God finished speaking. What an amazing story! But God still had more lined up for Abraham. Before he and Isaac go back to the servants, God tells Abraham that through him all the nations of the earth will be blessed. We have the benefit of knowing how that promise comes to fulfillment many hundreds of years later in Jesus, but Abraham had trusted God enough to be willing to sacrifice the son he had been told would be the route to God's blessing on his family.

I wonder how good we are at trusting God?

We don't hear very often of people being asked to do anything as dramatic as this, but we all have to do things that show our trust in God, for some of us it's going into a work or family situation where people laugh about our faith, or it might be talking to a neighbour who we know holds very different values to us, dealing with a situation where we know things need to be done differently - even giving up chocolate for Lent or preparing a Sunday evening service. Most of the time we start out by trying to do these things in our own strength and then when it doesn't work we start to ask God for His help. How much better would it be if we started by doing them with God and for God. In 1 Samuel chapter 18 we find this about David, a descendent of Abraham's

12 Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had departed from Saul. 13 So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns. 14 In everything he did he had great success, because the LORD was with him. 15 When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. 16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

I can't promise that everything will succeed if you follow the example of Abraham and David and Trust in God for everything you do, but I can promise that it will be better than when you try to do things in your own strength.