

# Isaac

## *“In the Beginning”*



*“And God said, ‘Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.’”* Genesis 17:19

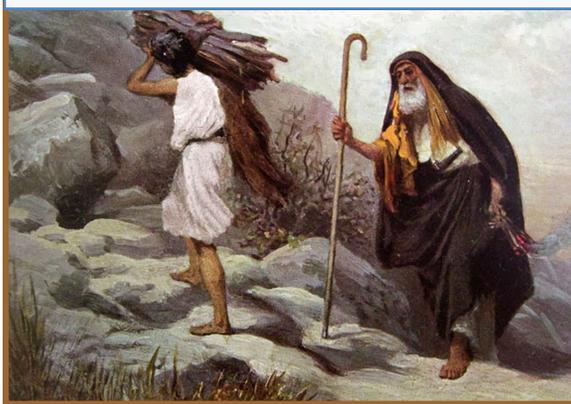
Can you imagine even thinking of sacrificing a child? Abraham was a very controlling father in many ways, and Isaac was a very obedient son. As I studied this story, I couldn't help wondering if Isaac didn't want to question his father as to why he was being bound and made ready to be put on the fire as a sacrifice.

Isaac's birth, the son of Abraham and Sarah, was in many ways a miracle. Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90. He was their first and only child. He was the one chosen by God to bear children who would eventually become the twelve tribes of Israel. He is often called the child of promise because he holds an important place in the lineage of Jesus. But that is not the part played by Isaac immediately.

Sometime, we assume during Isaac's early teenage years, God spoke to Abraham about a sacrifice. Abraham thought he was to sacrifice his son Isaac. So he arranged to take Isaac and take him to where they would build an altar, and Abraham would bind Isaac and sacrifice him to God. However, when they had built the altar God intervened and showed Abraham a more appropriate offering.

Isaac had much more to do in his life for God. In Genesis 22 we read:

*“They arrived at the place to which God had directed him. Abraham built an altar. He laid out the wood. Then he tied up Isaac and laid him on the wood. Abraham reached out and took the knife to kill his son. Just then an angel of God called to him out of Heaven, ‘Abraham! Abraham!’ ‘Yes, I'm listening.’ ‘Don't lay a hand on that boy!’ ‘Don't touch him! Now I know how fearlessly you fear God; you didn't hesitate to place your son, your dear son, on the altar for me.’ Abraham looked up. He saw a ram caught by its horns in the thicket. Abraham took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.”*



Isaac had asked where the sheep for the burnt offering were and Abraham just told him that God would provide and they kept on climbing the mountain. Supposedly as people have studied this “after the fact” they think it was not so much a sacrifice as it was a testing of Abraham's faith. But, did Isaac know that?

We don't hear anything more about Isaac until after Sarah dies and he is ready to be married. Abraham wanted to make sure that Isaac did not marry a Canaanite so he sent one of the men servants, Eliezer, to find a suitable wife for Isaac. God led the servant to the water fountain where he found a woman who was willing to help them. She was very beautiful. Her name was Rebekah. In a way this was a marriage arranged by God who interceded and had Rebekah at the well when the man servant arrived. The family took him in, and the brother offered him his blessing. Isaac must have been a very patient man.

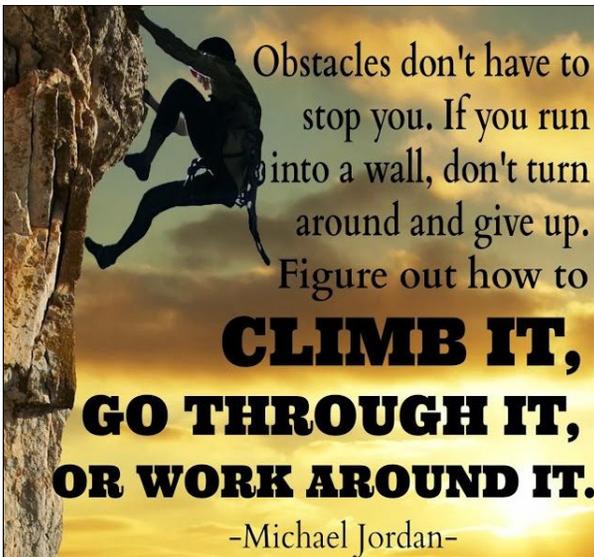
*“With love and patience  
nothing is impossible when  
God is in control.”*

Isaac married Rebekah, but not until he was 40 years old. And then it was another 20 years before Rebekah was able to conceive and bear children. When she did, they were twins, Jacob and Esau. The Bible tells us that they were fighting when they were in her womb, and would continue to fight just as their generations do today.

Through the conniving of his wife, Isaac was deceived by the twins, but that's another story. Isaac lived a very long and faithful life. He was buried with Abraham and Sarah in "Tomb of the Patriarchs" which is still fought over by the descendants of Abraham.

Today many authorities feel that the 12 tribes of Israel are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and eventually Jacob. The Arab nations of today will say they are the descendants of Abraham and Ishmael. Both are descendants of Abraham. Both claim descent from Abraham, the Jews through Isaac, and the Arabs through Ishmael. However, according to what we read in the Bible, we believe the true chosen descendants come through Isaac.

Isaac had a hard life. Even though he was deceived by his sons and his wife, God continued to bless him and his descendants. We can wonder why, but then we can wonder why we have so many blessings today when we don't deserve them. We are all the children of God and



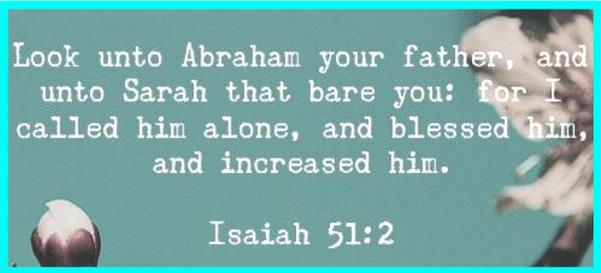
Jacob carried on the family line, and the actual beginning of the 12 tribes of Israel.

There is a beautiful song called "Here I am Lord." It is actually based on Genesis 46:2

by Daniel Schutte and is referring to Jacob, but I think it fits the devotion of Abraham and Isaac also. The chorus goes:

*"Here I am, Lord. It is I Lord.  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord, where you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart."*

As we study the people in the Bible, we realize that none of them were perfect. Isaac had problems, and he made many mistakes. We know that we make mistakes all the time too, but do we have the faith that Isaac had? I believe that we do at times. It is like the mercury in a thermometer. Sometimes it is high, sometimes it is very low. We sometimes have that faith when things are not going as we want, or when we are in a period of doubt. Other times we can be very self-sufficient. Regardless of the situation, we always want to know that God is there. And we say we will never doubt and always be patient!



Prayer: Lord, we have been given so much, and yet we always want for more. Help us to be satisfied and know that we have been given everything that we need, and particularly Your Son, Jesus Christ, a gift we can never repay. Help us to seek to do Your will just as Isaac did and we know it won't be easy, Lord, so we need Your help every day, all day. Thank you Lord. Amen

1. Why did Abraham not go through with offering Isaac as a sacrifice?
2. Why was Abraham concerned with the wife for Isaac? Would you want your marriage arranged?
3. Even though Isaac had a hard life, he did not complain to God. Are we too apt to complain at times?
4. Do we ever feel sorry for ourselves and think that we aren't loved only to realize we have so much when we look around?

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