

# **"His Only Son"**

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Abraham's great trial, when God told him to offer up his only son Isaac as a burnt offering, was not only to test his faith, and see whether he would obey the word of God at any cost to himself, but also to teach him more of the Gospel than he had been able to understand before.

You know well the familiar story,—the faith and obedience of Abraham, and how he was at the last moment kept by the angel of the Lord from slaying his son Isaac.

But how much better now he could understand the wondrous love and sacrifice of God in giving up His only Son to die for us. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Think of the joy that Isaac was to Abraham and Sarah, and the sunshine that he brought into their home. "Born of the Spirit," a child of God from his birth, he was loving, gentle, kind, and obedient. The name Isaac means "laughter," and at his birth his mother Sarah said, "God hath made me to laugh; so that all they that hear will laugh with me."

There were many servants and friends in Abraham's household, but only one son, and none could take the place of Isaac in their home and hearts. Through this Abraham could better understand what it meant for God to give up His own only Son.

There are ten thousand times ten thousand angels, and cherubim and seraphim in the household of God, but who in the Father's house could take the place of the Son of God? "For unto which of the angels said He at anytime, Thou art My son; this day have I begotten thee?"

In the eighth chapter of Proverbs Jesus is spoken of under the name of Wisdom (for Christ is "the wisdom of God and the power of God";) and here we are shown that He was with the Father in the beginning before this world was made, and the Father and the Son worked together in the Creation, as in all things.

"When He appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by Him as one brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him."

Speaking of the Father, Jesus Himself said, "I do always those things which please Him." But though He was the delight of His Father's heart, and the light and glory of the Father's house, God so loved you and me that He freely gave Him up that we "should not perish, but have everlasting life." "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things."

Not only did Abraham offer His Son, but Isaac also freely gave his own life to God. Remember how "they went both of them together" to the place of sacrifice. And so

when God "gave His only begotten Son," it was at the choice of Jesus Himself who freely "gave Himself for our sins."

When He came into this world, as the plan of God was gradually unfolded, at each step of the way He delighted to do the will of the Father, until He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Something of this no doubt Abraham learned through the cheerful obedience of his own son Isaac when he learned what God required of him.

Isaac carried the wood for his own sacrifice, and in this also he was like Jesus, who, "bearing His cross, went forth unto a place . . . where they crucified Him."

Abraham carried the knife to slay his son, and would have used it if his hand had not been stayed by the Lord. Even so, it was the hand of God Himself that dealt the death-blow of His own Son. It was the hiding of His Father's face through "the iniquity of us all," which was laid upon Him, that broke the heart of Jesus, that the healing stream of His life blood might flow forth to wash away all the sin that separates us from God. Hear the bitter cry of Jesus just before He laid down His precious life: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!"

Think, too, of the words of Abraham as he climbed the mountain with his son: "God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering." How unexpectedly these words were fulfilled when Abraham saw the ram caught in the thicket by its horns, "and offered it up in the stead of his son."

Surely this taught Abraham, as it now teaches us, to behold the perfect Sacrifice that God has provided—"The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "John [the Baptist] seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God."

Jesus is the One who takes our place and our sins, and all the sorrows that our sins have brought upon us, while we, like Isaac, may go free, rejoicing, for He has been offered in our stead.

"We may not know, we cannot tell,  
What pains He had to bear,  
But we believe it was for us  
He hung and suffered there.

"He died that we might be forgiven,  
He died to make us good,  
That we might go at last to heaven  
Saved by His precious blood.

"There was no other good enough  
To pay the price of sin;  
He only could unlock the gate  
Of heaven and let us in."