Abraham offers up Isaac Hebrews 11:17-19

The stories in the Old Testament have always been fascinating to me. They give us a picture of what life was like in Bible times. One such story is that of God telling Abraham to sacrifice his son. The full account of this story is found in Genesis 22, and is one of my favorites. God had appeared to Abraham at night and given instructions on what had to be done. Abraham was instructed to head out the next morning on a three day journey to Mt. Moriah where he would sacrifice his son Isaac and then burn him as a sacrifice unto the Lord.

The exciting part of this story is God had told Abraham and Sarah they were going to have a child, and that he would be the heir of God's promised seed. If you remember, Sarah was 90 years old when she had Isaac. Before she conceived she had persuaded Abraham to go in to her handmaiden to have a child, which was a terrible mistake. Abraham and Hagar had the child (Ishmael), but that was never God's plan.

In Genesis 22 God told Abraham "Take now thy son, thine only son." Why would God even say this? This represents a beautiful picture of God's

forgiveness. When God



JUST A THOUGHT
Rev. Tom Mansbarger



forgives, He forgets. Abraham was a man that had faced many tests in his life. He had been tried all through his life's journey. His father had died, he had packed up and left his home, left his brother, Nahor, and much of his family along with all the comforts of home. Now God is putting him to the ultimate test. Why would God even do this? Now, as a side bar to this story, I have thought of my own life. I don't believe I could do what Abraham did. This decision would be especially hard because it seems to be a direct contradiction to what God had already told him. God had made the promise that Abraham's son would be the

seed of a great nation

(Israel). Would God go back on His promise?

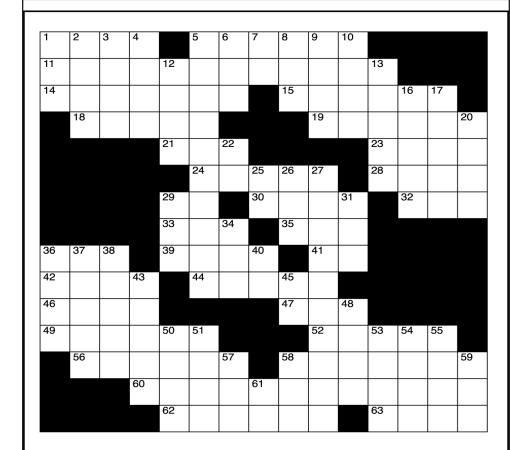
As this story unfolds, we can definitely see the obedience of Abraham. Scripture tells us that he rose early in the morning, gathered all that he would need for the journey and sacrifice, and then he headed out. He never sought help from anyone else or even consulted with Sarah. He simply acted in obedience to the directions he had received. Let's see three thoughts that represent Abraham's obedience:

- 1. What Abraham did was prompt. God spoke to him and there was no reason for hesitation, so he acted promptly. He never said anything to Sarah or Isaac. His obedience was as spontaneous as the command was startling. When God speaks, what can we do? OBEY! I Samuel 15:22 tells us that our obedience is more important than our sacrifice.
- 2. What Abraham did was persistent. Abraham had the Sustaining Force (God) on his side. We should always know where God leads, He provides. When God calls us, He also equips us. Whom God calls, He strengthens (energizes). Abraham was able to maintain his purpose.
- 3. What Abraham did was perfect. When Abraham lifted up the knife, the sacrifice was com-

plete. God stopped him because He knew Abraham's heart. Isaac had already been sacrificed upon the altar of the father's heart, and God knew it. What a story! We could share many more thoughts from this story, but I will leave it to you to fill in the blanks.

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Crossword and Sudoku answers, page 14

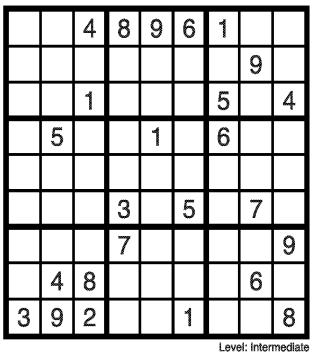


CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Popular musical awards show
- 5. Speech in one's honor
- 11. A state of poor nutrition
- 14. Not ingested
- 15. More lacking in taste
- 18. "Popeye" cartoonist
- 19. Helps to reduce speed
- 21. January 1 greeting (abbr.)
- 23. Georgian currency
- 24. Proverb expressing a truth
- 28. Jewish calendar month 29. Volume measurement
- 30. Fair-skinned
- 32. Patti Hearst's captors
- 33. Have already done

- 35. Touch lightly
- 36. Autonomic nervous system
- 39. Plant part
- 41. College degree
- 42. Military alliance
- 44. Tokyo's former name
- 46. Carpenter's tool
- 47. Before
- 49. Consent to receive
- 52. Passages
- 56. The Duke of Edinburgh
- 58. Utter repeatedly
- 60. Linked together in a chain
- 62. Quality that evokes pity
- 63. Maintained possession of

SUDOKU



Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles?
Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

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Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

CLUES DOWN

- 1. U.S. military school
- 2. Controls
- 3. Away from wind
- 4. Grab quickly
- 5. Being everlasting
- 6. Vase
- 7. Atomic #3
- 8. Type of medication
- 9. Encircle with a belt
- 10. Belonging to you
- 12. American state
- 13. City in Zambia
- 16. Good Gosh!
- 17. Of the country
- 20. Helsinki district
- 22. 36 inches
- 25. Reporters' group
- 26. The voice of Olaf
- 27. Explains in detail

- 29. Tooth caregiver
- 31. One point south of due east
- 34. Scottish river
- 36. Elsa's sister
- 37. Civil Rights group
- 38. Line of poetry
- 40. Doctor
- 43. Fatty acid
- 45. Avatar (abbr.)
- 48. Awe-inspiring garden
- 50. Fall down
- 51. Rock icon Turner
- 53. Asian country (alt. sp.)
- 54. UK museum network
- 55. Stairs have at least one
- 55. Stairs have at lea 57. Part of (abbr.)
- 58. Simpson trial judge
- 59. Sun up in New York
- 61. Exclamation of surprise