

# SOUL FOOD

JANUARY 21, 2017

## GENESIS 22      GOD TESTS HIS PEOPLE

The testing of Abraham by the offering of his son is well known. No modern- day movie can match the intensity of the drama depicted here. When he tells his servant that WE will come back after worshiping on Mount Moriah, was Abraham speculating that God would raise his son back from the grave? How could Abraham explain to his son about what was to take place?

Earlier in the incident, Abraham's reply to Isaac's question about the lamb is a masterful expression of faith: **"God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."** The passage does not indicate that Abraham foresaw the cross and the sacrifice of Christ. Judging by the way he was prepared to go through with the sacrifice, it is not even clear he expected that God would actually provide a literal animal. Yet in the framework of the story, Abraham appears to speak of things that were better than he actually knew. God did provide the ram, a substitute for Isaac. Abraham was prophetic in that God would provide not only the animal that served as a substitute in this case, but the ultimate substitute, the Lamb of God, who alone could bear our sin and bring to pass all of God's wonderful redemptive promises.

Abraham did indeed understand that God would provide. Abraham's faith issues in such stellar obedience that he does not allow his love for his son to dethrone his love for God. In the light of Abraham's faith and obedience, God reiterates and connects Abraham's faithfulness to the covenant: **"I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."**

As reiterated in the book of Hebrews, such statements by God serve as an anchor for our souls as God swears by His own Name to keep His covenant promises. God certainly tests His people. He cannot nor does not tempt them. He does this to strengthen our faith and to enable us to be faithful with even more fruit. God cannot lie and He can't help but keep His promises.