

**TEXT** Genesis 22:1-14; Isaiah 53:4-8; Hebrews 2:9,10

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE** Galatians 3:13,14

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to compare the story of the lamb substituted for Isaac to the offering of God's Son at Calvary.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. — Genesis 22:8

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot. — 1 Peter 1:18,19

**ANSWER  
TITLE:**

# On Purpose?

**SEARCH  
TITLE:**

# Saved by Substitution

## REFERENCE INFORMATION

Abraham had departed from his country and kindred; he had separated from his nephew Lot, who was a fellow believer; and he rejected his own plans and hopes as shown in his prayer for Ishmael. So when God tested Abraham, these previous consecrations laid the groundwork for him to also consecrate his son, Isaac.

The offering of Isaac was a picture-prophecy of the death of Christ: a father offering his son, a substitution made.

Thus it was a shadow of the great event to come.

Genesis 22, verse 5 says, "I and the lad will go . . . , and come again." How could Abraham say this knowing he was to sacrifice his son? We can find the answer in Hebrews 11:17-19, where Paul tells us Abraham offered up Isaac "by faith," believing God could also raise him from the dead.

## YOUR OPENER

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# Saved by Substitution

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## RESPONSES

1. Abraham had waited twenty-five years for the fulfillment of the promise that God would give him a son. Bring out in discussion that Isaac was the son of promise. God had promised through Isaac and the succeeding generation of Abraham's lineage, all the families of the earth should be blessed. Discuss further, the great love that must have lived in the heart of this elderly man, for his dutiful son, the son that he had yearned to have for so many years.

2. Allow opportunity for your students to give their answers, which will probably bring out that both were willing. How could Abraham willingly offer his son as a burnt offering? It could not have been easy! God had given Isaac to him in the first place, and Abraham probably had already dedicated and consecrated his son in his prayers and worship to God. God was Abraham's friend and Abraham proved that no worldly possession would stand between him and this friendship. At least Abraham was giving his son to his greatest Friend. On the other hand, for whom was God willing to offer His Son? He was not offering His Son for friends, although he loves the souls of all mankind, but for His enemies (Romans 5:8-10). God allowed His Son to be offered because He was not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

3. Both Isaac and Jesus were submissive to the will of their fathers. We do not know for sure how old Isaac was at this time, but one Jewish historian (Josephus) gives he age as 25, while a Bible commentator (Clarke) says that he was about 33. Discuss with the students that at this approximate age, Isaac would have been in the prime of his youth and could easily have overcome the demands of a father who was 125 - 130 years old, had he had a mind to do so. It seems Isaac had complete confidence with his father's relationship with God, and so was willing to do whatever was requested of him. In like manner, Jesus knew that He was doing His Father's will-giving His life in offering to take away the sins of the world (Galatians 1:4).

It takes no stretch of the imagination to know that Abraham went through the most crucial trial of his life in the offering of his beloved son, in complete surrender. But this trip to Mount Moriah signified far more than just a trial for Abraham. When Isaac was taken to Mount Moriah to be sacrificed, to a point he typified the "Lamb of God" who would be offered for the sins of mankind on the cross of Calvary.

1. What were the circumstances which might have made it particularly hard for Abraham to obey God's command about his son? See Genesis 17:19 and 22:2.

2. What similarity can be noted between God offering His Son and Abraham's offering of his son?

3. What parallel can be drawn between Isaac's response to the situation and Jesus' response? See Isaiah 53:7.

4. As Abraham and his son journeyed toward Mount Moriah, Isaac asked his father: "Behold the

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## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" What was Abraham's reply and in what way was it prophetic? See John 1:29.

5. While Isaac is typical of Christ, the comparison between the two stops at a certain point. What is that point? Explain its significance.

6. Why could there be no substitute for Christ? See Acts 4:10-12.

7. Note the similarities in the Scriptures given below.

A. Genesis 17:7 and Luke 1:33

B. Genesis 17:19 and Luke 1:31

C. Genesis 22:2 and John 3:16

D. Genesis 22:8,13 and John 1:29,36

In concluding this lesson, the important fact should be realized that it was Abraham's love for God and his absolute faith in Him that made it possible for Abraham to obey God in this test. It was God's love for Abraham that provided the substitute of a ram to be offered in the place of Isaac. It is the same love of God for all mankind that brought about Jesus' death on Calvary. No substitute could take the place of Jesus. He became our substitute, without which we would have died eternally for our sins. But Jesus died for all. Through His substitution, we can be redeemed and have the gift of everlasting life.

4. Abraham's answer to his son was "God will provide Himself a lamb." His answer was prophetic, because many years later God did, indeed, offer His only Son, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Ask a student to read Revelation 13:8, then ask the class what this verse means, leading the discussion to conclude that God ordained from the foundation of the world the means by which He would redeem men from sin. Is God a respecter of person? Have someone read Revelation 5: 9, 10 to show the extent of Christ's salvation.

5. The Voice which spoke out of Heaven spared Abraham's son, and a substitute was provided for Isaac; but the Lamb of God went to Calvary. There was no substitute for Christ. God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all" (Romans 8:32).

6. There could be no substitute for Christ because He alone was sinless. He gave Himself to atone for our sins. He bore our sins and took our penalty of death. Read Isaiah 59:15, 16, then bring out through discussion that if there could have been any other way to bring about the salvation of mankind, God would have provided it. The Apostle assures us there is salvation only through Jesus, that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

7. A. God made an everlasting covenant with Abraham and the generations to follow. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that Christ's Kingdom would be without end, everlasting.

B. Isaac was the son of promise. Jesus was the promised Son of God. They were both given names before they were born.

C. The cost was great! Abraham offered his only son of promise. God offered His only begotten Son, Jesus.

D. The substitute God provided for Abraham was a lamb, a ram caught in a thicket. The substitute God provided for us was the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Sometimes substitutes in our daily experience constitute the replacing of one product with an inferior one. Explain how the reverse is true in Christ's substitution for us.

What do you think is the meaning of the word *substitute*?

Imagine you are Abraham. Consider the love he must have had for his son Isaac. How would you feel at hearing God's command to sacrifice your son?

Discuss the importance of having our ears tuned to God's call. What if Abraham hadn't heard God say, "Abraham!" when He told him to stop and spare his son?

What was the condition of Isaac's heart that he would permit himself to be used as a sacrifice? What do you suppose his thoughts were at the time?

Why did Abraham have reason to believe and trust God to make things come out right in this situation?

How can Abraham's son, Isaac, be compared to God's Son, Jesus?

In both parts of the ANSWER story, the word *substitute* was used. How?

## THINGS TO DO

Before going to class, cut a sheet of white poster board into the shape of a large lamb. Divide it into as many puzzle pieces as you have students in your class. On each piece, use a marking pen to write the reference for a Scripture verse that has to do with the lamb offering (see following Scriptures). When your class starts, pass out the puzzle pieces to the students. They must find their verse in the Bible and read it to the class before they can add their piece to the puzzle. The puzzle may be assembled on a table or floor or pinned to a bulletin board.

Lambs for offerings: Exodus 29:39, Leviticus 3:7, Leviticus 4:32, Leviticus 5:6, Numbers 6:12

Lamb of God: Isaiah 53:7, John 1:29, 1 Corinthians 5:7, 1 Peter 1:19, Revelation 7:9, Revelation 15:3, Revelation 21:22

Prepare a set of review questions for your class. For each question you will need a large heart (God's love) or an outline of a sheep (the substitute) or another shape of your choice, made from construction paper. Choose the shape and cut out as many as you will need. Then cut all of them in half identically. On the left-hand half of

each shape, write a review question. Write the answer on the other half. Pin the question half of each shape to a bulletin board (leaving room to add the answer half later). Keep answers separate. Draw your students' attention to the questions. When you have completed your lesson, lay the shapes with the answers face up or face down on a table. If face up, have the students come up one at a time, read a question, find the correct answer on the table, and then pin or tape it in place. If face down, they should draw an answer off the table and then find the proper question that matches it.

To introduce the thought of substitution, bring several items to class which help to illustrate the meaning of the word: margarine for butter, a disposable diaper for a cloth one, etc. Have your class help you list other examples on a chalkboard.

Print the word SACRIFICE down the left side of a large piece of paper. Have the students fill in words of things Christians must be willing to sacrifice. (Each word must begin with one of the letters in the word SACRIFICE.) You could also use the words WILLINGNESS or OBEDIENCE in the same way.

## Answers for ANSWER

### God Will Provide

Because of the parallel between Isaac and Jesus, God's Son, this story holds an even deeper meaning than that of Abraham's faith and obedience to God. Read the text in Genesis 22:1-14 and fill in the answers to the crossword puzzle. It will help you remember the story.

**DOWN**

- Isaac's father was going to use this to slay him.
- The name Abraham gave to the place where Isaac was laid on the altar. It means, "The Lord will provide."
- Isaac's father laid him on this to sacrifice him.
- This was caught in the thicket by its horns.
- This offering was to be a \_\_\_\_\_ offering.
- Isaac carried this to the place of the sacrifice.

**ACROSS**

- Abraham carried this to the place of the sacrifice.
- Isaac asked his father where this was.
- Father of Isaac
- Abraham told the two young men to wait while he and Isaac went to do what?