

# ON PURPOSE?

LESSON 27 → Genesis 22:1-14; Isaiah 53:4-8; Hebrews 2:9-10

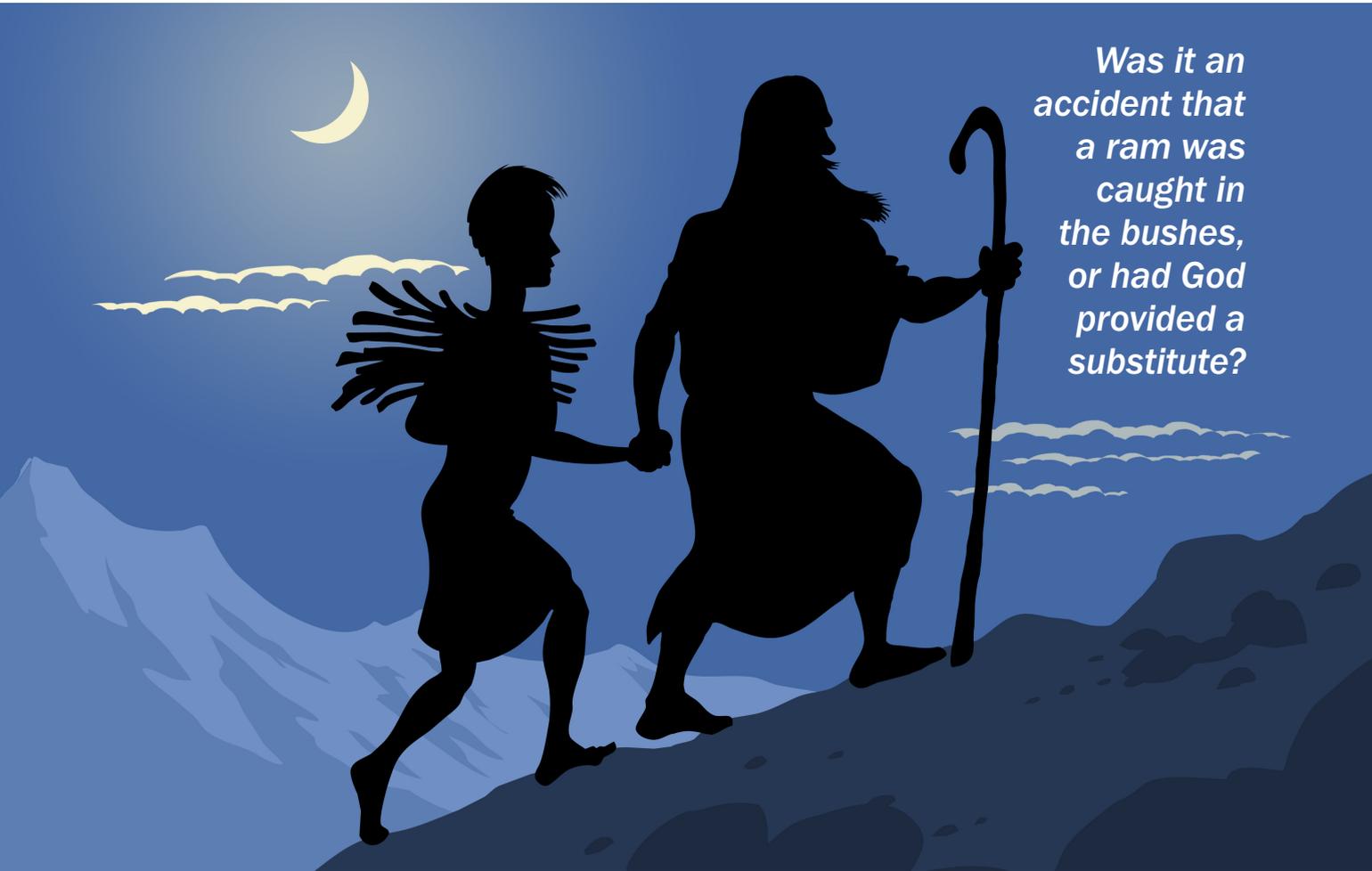
“Oh, no!” It was only five minutes until the school bus would pull up, and the bowl of cold cereal had just landed in Andy’s lap! “Now what? I’d better change my clothes really fast.”

*After scraping the cornflakes off his pants and into the garbage, Andy dashed up the stairs two at a time. He grabbed another pair of jeans out of the drawer and tossed the dirty ones into a hamper.*

*The extra minutes meant Andy had to run all the way to school, but he made it on time. After shoving his jacket into the locker, he slammed the door shut and hurried to his classroom. He looked toward the teacher’s desk as he opened the door. Would Mr. Carter be upset that he was rushing in just as the bell rang? But Mr. Carter wasn’t there. A tall man with glasses looked up from the teacher’s desk instead. A substitute!*

*Andy probably never stopped to consider it, but already that morning he had witnessed two examples of the word “substitute.” He had substituted a clean pair of jeans for his dirty ones, and he had seen one person take the place of another as a substitute teacher.*

*The Bible tells us about a man, Abraham, who learned about substitution. Abraham was trying to live his life in a way that pleased God. God appreciated the way Abraham was serving*

A blue-toned illustration showing the silhouettes of a man and a boy walking on a hill at night. The man, on the right, is taller, has a long beard, and is holding a staff. The boy, on the left, is carrying a bundle of sticks on his back. The background features a crescent moon, clouds, and a mountain range.

*Was it an accident that a ram was caught in the bushes, or had God provided a substitute?*



## JESUS TOOK MY PLACE.

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

Him, and promised to make him a great nation, and bless him for generations to come by giving him a son, even though he and his wife were very old (Genesis 17:19). They named their son Isaac. He was a good boy and meant much to his parents in their old age.

*One day, a startling thing happened.* God told Abraham to take Isaac to Mount Moriah and offer him as a sacrifice! Imagine the thoughts that ran through Abraham's mind. Hadn't God promised that this boy would be the beginning of a great nation? What was going on?

*Many things could have happened* at this point, but the Bible tells us that the very next morning Abraham was on his way to the mountain God had appointed. He hadn't drawn anyone's attention to what he was going to do, asked for anyone's sympathy, or spent time begging God to change His mind. Instead, he set out to follow God's instructions, not knowing what would happen.

*Abraham took with him two* servants, a donkey, wood, fire, rope, a knife, and his son. On the third day of his journey, Abraham spotted the right mountain. He told his servants to wait with the donkey. He and Isaac would go ahead to worship, and return later. Abraham believed that even if Isaac did die, God would

bring him back to life (Hebrews 11:17-19). He was confident that God's promise to him regarding Isaac would not fail.

*Isaac had been taught about* sacrifices, and must have helped his father before. As they climbed the mountain, he became curious. He asked, "My father . . . Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" He knew they had always brought an animal along. Abraham told him God would provide the lamb. Isaac respected his father's trust in God and didn't press him for details.

*After the altar had been built* and the wood laid in place, Abraham explained everything to his son in a way that made Isaac willing to be tied up with the rope and laid on the altar. Isaac understood the importance of obeying God. Until now, Abraham had been in this by himself, but at this moment he and Isaac were in it together—both waiting on God. Abraham raised his knife and suddenly an angel called out, "Abraham, Abraham!" He was quick to answer, "Here am I." The angel told him not to harm his son. What relief must have flooded over them!

*What was this incident all* about? God had been testing Abraham to see if all the promises he had made with his mouth were really in his heart. By Abraham's willingness to

give up what meant the most to him, God could see that He was still first in Abraham's life.

*Just then Abraham noticed a* ram caught by his horns in some bushes nearby. He took the ram and offered it on the altar in place of his son. Was it by chance that the ram turned up just when Abraham needed it? No, God had provided the offering as a substitute for Isaac.

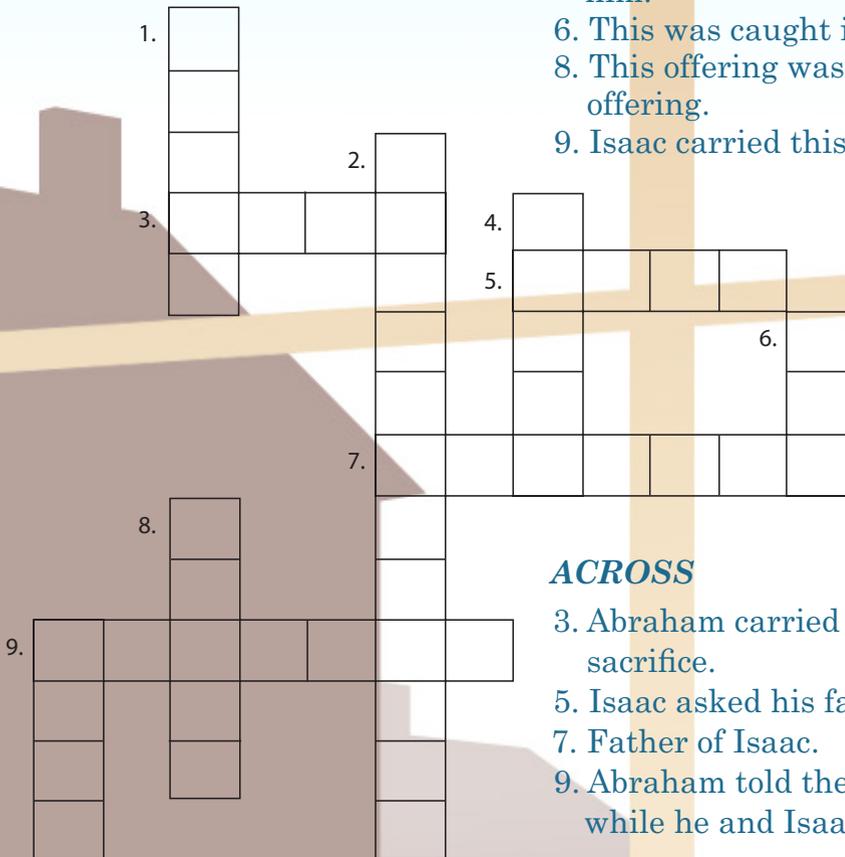
*Years later, God's Son would be* willing to die on a cross for the sins of all the people in the world. Every man born into this world since the time of Adam is born with sin in his heart. The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death, so every one of us should have to die to pay the penalty for our sins. But Jesus was willing to be our Substitute. He was willing to die for us.

*Abraham loved his son very* dearly, and it must have been a hard thing for him to be willing to sacrifice Isaac. Surely, it must have been hard for God to sacrifice His only Son, Jesus, to pay for the sins of mankind. But He did that for us because He loves us.

*Jesus became our Substitute* and took our sins that we might be saved. We can accept His gift to us by asking Him to forgive us for our sins, and purposing, with His help, to live our lives for Him.

**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**

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

**ACROSS**

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