

## 08.15 Offering Isaac (Genesis 22:1–19; Galatians 3:6–9, 16; Hebrews 11:17–19; James 2:20–23)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

### Visuals and Tools:

- Visual aids found at the end of this lesson
- Some visual aids for this lesson are 3D-type figures. You may glue the pictures to card stock, laminate them with Contact® paper, and cut them out. Then make a criss-cross base by cutting a 1½" strip of card stock with a small slit in it to match a small slit cut into the base of the figure itself. This takes a LOT of time.
- (optional) *Herein Is Love Commentary Series: Genesis, A Commentary for Children*, written by Nancy Ganz and published by Shepherd Press in 2002. Thoughts or quotations borrowed from her in the following story will be acknowledged as (Ganz).

**Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach:** [Flashcard words are enlarged at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.]

- *burnt offering*: a sacrifice completely burned with fire
- *to tempt*: to try, prove, put to the test
- *day's journey*: between 20 and 30 miles (Holman Bible Dictionary)
- *oath*: a strong promise
- *angel of the LORD*: Jesus as sometimes physically revealed in the Old Testament; “Christ the Angel of the covenant, as appears from #Ge 22:12,16” (Poole).

### Scripture—(ESV)

Genesis 22:1 After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am. 2 He said, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you. 3 So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. 4 On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. 5 Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you. 6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. 7 And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? 8 Abraham said, “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So they went both of them together.

9 When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. 10 Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” 12 He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me. 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called the name of that place, “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

15 And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven 16 and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 I will

surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, 18 and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice. 19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham lived at Beersheba.

Galatians 3:6 Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness” 7 Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” 9 So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. . . . 16 Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ.”

Hebrews 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, 18 of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” 19 He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

James 2:20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God.

### **Introduction/Review:**

[Read the Abrahamic Covenant, parts 1–4. Remind the students of God’s promises to Abraham and that many of these promises hinge on Isaac.]

God had said, “Eliezer, your servant, shall not be your heir but one born from you, Abram” (Genesis 15:4). Before Isaac was born, God had said, “I will establish my covenant with Isaac” (Genesis 17:12, 21). Jesus, one of the three visitors, had said, “Within a year you and Sarah shall have a son” (Genesis 18:14). When Hagar left Abraham, God had said, “In Isaac shall your seed be called” (Genesis 21:12).

### **Story:**

Ishmael was gone. In a promise-kind of way, Isaac had always been Abraham’s “only son.” Now, in a practical way, Isaac was Abraham’s only son. How he and Sarah loved this boy who had probably grown into a teenager by the time this story begins.

#### ***Abraham’s tests***

Abraham had faced several tests in his lifetime. Here are three of them: “First, he was called on to separate himself from his native land and kindred (Gen. 12:1); Second, he was called on to give up Lot (Gen. 13:1–18); Third, he had to abandon his cherished plan about Ishmael (Gen. 17:17, 18)” (A. W. Pink). But Abraham was about to embark on a test to top all tests of all time.

After Hagar and Ishmael had departed from Beersheba, God tested Abraham. “Abraham!” God called.

Abraham answered, “Here I am.”

God said, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”

What did God say? [To offer Isaac as a burnt offering.]

Okay. Let’s stop here for a minute and think this out. Offer Isaac as a burnt offering? This is a pretty hard test. How would God’s promises be fulfilled if Isaac were dead? How could Abraham offer as a burnt offering this beloved miracle child of his old age? What would Sarah say if she heard about this? Would Sarah have to have another son in order to replace Isaac?

### ***Abraham's response***

Was Abraham fearful about this test? Was he worried? Sad?

The New Testament gives us the answer; it tells us exactly how Abraham felt. [Read Hebrews 11:19.] “He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead.” What did Abraham think when God gave this test? [God could raise him from the dead.] Students, Abraham was correct in his belief. After all, God had given Isaac in the first place as if he had come from “dead” parents.

Abraham didn't waste any time showing he believed God. Very early the very next morning, he got up, saddled his donkey, cut the wood for the burnt offering, and took two of his young men with him, and took his son Isaac. They began the three-day journey to the place God had said to go.

### ***Abraham's destination***

People who study the Bible believe the mountain God had specified was near the city that is now Jerusalem. In fact, many believe the Temple was later erected on the very same place that Abraham visited with Isaac.\* We know that Jerusalem would have been about a three-days' journey from Beersheba [locate on a map]\*\* where Abraham lived after his encounter with Abimelech.

“On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. Then Abraham said to his young men, ‘Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you’” (Genesis 22:4, 5). Students, do you see another hint to tell you that Abraham believed God would somehow deliver Isaac? [“I and the boy will go . . . and come again to you.”]

### ***Abraham's faith***

Abraham took the wood off the donkey and placed it on Isaac. Abraham carried the knife and the fire pan. They still had a long way to go.

Isaac did not know what was about to happen. He wondered aloud to his father. “Father?” he asked.

“Yes, Son?” answered Abraham.

“I see the fire, and I see the wood. But where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”

Abraham's answer reveals another hint that he was fully trusting God: “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.”

Right here we can see the gospel, the good news of salvation to those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Lamb of God. His sacrifice paid the price for our sins. Isaac didn't know it, but he was picturing Jesus Christ, who 2000 years later died for sinners.

To me, Abraham has already shown great faith in God. But he demonstrated it even further. When the two got to the place God had specified, Abraham prepared the altar; he laid the wood on it and said, “Come here, Son.”

### ***Abraham's sacrifice***

“What?” (✓This conversation is not given us in the Bible, but we can imagine it from what is told us there.)

✓“Let me tie your hands,” said Abraham.

✓“Tie my hands?”

✓“Yes. God has told me to offer you, my beloved only son, as a burnt offering. This isn't easy, Isaac, but I am sure, since God has given me many promises concerning you, that He will surely raise you from the dead even if you are sacrificed. Can you trust God and your father in this thing, Isaac?”

✓“Oh, Father! I don't know. I do know you love me. I know God can do anything. 'Does not the Judge of all the earth do right?' . . . Yes, Father, I willingly give myself into your hands. Tie me. Place me on the altar.

I'll trust you and God."

Abraham tied Isaac; he placed him on the altar. Then he reached for his knife.

### ***God's interruption***

Suddenly, the angel of the Lord called out from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

Abraham answered, "Here I am."

The angel of the Lord said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me."

### ***God's provision***

"And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son."

"So Abraham called the name of that place, 'The Lord will provide'; as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.'" What will be provided? [(1) A substitute ram for Isaac; (2) A Substitute Lamb—the Lord Jesus Christ—to pay for our sins.]

### ***God's promise***

However, with Abraham's fantastic passing of this trust test, God was not done talking to Abraham. "And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, 'By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord.' If God swears by Himself, because there is no one higher to whom He may swear, He can and will keep that promise.

'Because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son [Teacher, direct attention to these points on your Part 5 chart of the Abrahamic Covenant], I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies.' (This sounds, again, like the Lord Jesus Christ whose Body, the Church, will storm the gates of Hell; cf. Matthew 16:18.) 'In your offspring [singular "seed"—Jesus Christ; cf. Galatians 3:16]\*\*\* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.'"

What a marvelous reaffirmation God makes of His promises to Abraham! And guess what. We, too, can be the recipients of those promises if we know Jesus Christ as our Saviour, for Galatians 3:7 states, "Those who are of faith are the sons of Abraham." If we are children of Abraham, then we, too, will inherit all these promises.

---

\*\*\*"The writer has little doubt that the particular 'mountain' upon which Isaac was bound to the altar was Calvary itself. Here, the mountain is not denominated, it was 'one of the mountains' in the 'land of Moriah' (it is significant that 'Moriah' means 'the Lord will provide'), and Calvary was one of the mountains in the land of Moriah. What seems to identify Isaac's mountain with Calvary is not only that the marvelous fullness and accuracy of *this type would seem to require it, but the fact that in Genesis 22:14 this mount on which Isaac was offered is distinctly termed 'the mount of the Lord.'* Surely this establishes it, for what other save Calvary could be thus named!" (A. W. Pink in Online Bible).

\*\*[Although Barnes seems to argue elsewhere against Moriah's being the mountain in Jerusalem, yet, here he shows that place to be three days' journey from Beersheba.] "On the third day.' From Beer-sheba to the Shalem of Melkizedec, near which this hill is supposed to have been, is about forty-five miles. If they proceeded fifteen miles on the first broken day, twenty on the second, and ten on the third, they would come within sight of the place early on the third day" (Barnes in Online Bible).

\*\*\*\*"Christ was sacrificed in our stead, as this ram instead of Isaac, and his death was our discharge. And observe, that the temple, the place of sacrifice, was afterwards built upon this same mount Moriah; and Calvary,

where Christ was crucified, was near. — A new name was given to that place, for the encouragement of all believers, to the end of the world, cheerfully to trust in God, and obey him. Jehovahjireh, the Lord will provide; probably alluding to what Abraham had said, God will provide himself a lamb” (Matthew Henry in Online Bible).

### **Lessons from this lesson:**

- Trials in the Christian life come but none so trying as this one. This is the only time God asked for the sacrifice of a child except in His own case of His giving His own Son in order to save us. Isaac’s death could never have atoned for sin, but it shows us the great cost to God the Father in sending His Son to die for the salvation of His people. “Hereby we know the lovingkindness of God our Saviour towards sinful man, in that he has not withheld his Son, his only Son, from us. Hereby we perceive the love of Christ, in that he gave himself a sacrifice for our sins” (Matthew Henry).
- Trust Jesus in the trials of life; trust Him for your eternal salvation.

### **Activities:**

- Play dough: donkey, pile of wood, knife, altar
- Sing “Mary Had a Little Lamb” to the tune, “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear” (Author unknown; published in a tract by Faith Prayer and Tract League)
  1. Oh, Mary had a little lamb.  
He came on Christmas night.  
She laid Him in a manger bed,  
This King of life and light.  
He ate with poor and sinful folk;  
He claimed He was God's Son.  
It made the leaders plot His death,  
This holy, sinless One.
  2. He came to give us joy and peace,  
To take away our sin.  
He heals the sick and calms the storm  
And ushers justice in.  
What makes the Lamb love Mary so  
And all the world beside?  
By grace alone He chose His own;  
For them He lived and died.
  3. And we must love the Lamb, you know.  
His blood will wash us clean.  
Our words must show that we are His;  
Our lives by all are seen.  
One day this Lamb will come again,  
More Lion than a Lamb;  
Defeat His foes, reward His own.  
Oh, praise the day He came!
- Sing stanzas 1–10 of “Abraham” found in Lesson 08.01 or on the Songs page at [teachingthebibleto kids.org](http://teachingthebibleto kids.org).
- Put a teaspoon of sand in a dish and see if students can count the grains (Genesis 22:17).
- Read Galatians 3:6–9, 16: “Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness” Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God

would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. . . . Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ."

- Sing the song, "Song of Abraham" (The Sacrifice Isaac) to the tune, "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow" (Author unknown):
  1. A-bra-ham loved God each da-y,  
But God test-ed him this wa-y:  
He said , "Of-fer your son I-saac,  
And you'll prove your love for me, for me."
  2. A-bra-ham took wood to be burned.  
Took the knife and fire, but he yearned  
For a way to save his dear son,  
But his love for God was strong, so strong.
  3. [Isaac:] "Fa-ther I see wood and fi-re,  
But I think as we climb high-er,  
'Where's the lamb that we will of-fer  
To the God that we both serve this day?'"
  4. [Abraham:] (Oh, how can I tell my dear son  
For the of-fer-ing he's the one?)  
"Do not wor-ry God will pro-vide."  
And he bound his son, his son I-saac.
  5. Took a knife and raised it up high,  
But an an-gel came near by-y.  
Stopped his hand be-cause God now knew  
A-bra-ham would al-ways be so true.
  6. In the bu-shes was a ra-m,  
Put there just for A-bra-ha-m  
To com-plete his sa-cri-fi-ce  
To show God his love for Him that day.
- Review questions: (Game: Put flocked-backed or felt stars on the flannel board for each correct answer.)
  1. What unusual thing did God command Abraham to do to Isaac? [Offer him as a sacrifice.]
  2. What was Abraham's response to God's command? [He obeyed.]
  3. How many days did Abraham and Isaac travel? [Three.]
  4. Bible scholars believe the mountain would later be which city? [Jerusalem.]
  5. What did Abraham know about what God might do if Isaac died? [God was able to raise him up because God had already told him that in Isaac his family would be blessed.]
  6. Name one other hint that Abraham knew Isaac would not die on the altar? [He said, "I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you" and "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering."]
  7. In Abraham's offering Isaac is a picture of Jesus' death on the cross. In this picture who represents God? [Abraham.]
  8. Who represents Jesus? [Isaac.]
  9. The altar represents what? [The cross.]
  10. Isaac's being raised off the altar represents what? [Jesus' resurrection.]
- Sing "Father Abraham" (altered) found at Lesson 08.12 or on the Songs page at

teachingthebibleto kids.org. (Please note that the song sheet shows the last stanza when all the motions are included in the song. Follow the directions found at the bottom of the song sheet.)

**Memory Verse[s]:**

Galatians 3:7—“It is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.”

**Handwork:** Color the picture of a ram caught in the thicket found below. Glue fiber fill or cotton to the ram and a stick from a rose bush to the fiber fill.

*burnt offering*

*to tempt*

*to swear*

*oath*

*angel of the LORD*



Abrahamic Covenant in previous lessons:

Genesis 12, Part 1 (Abram is 75 years old.)

1. I will make of you a great nation.
2. I will bless you.
3. I will make your name great
4. You shall be a blessing.
5. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you.
6. In you shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Jesus, the Saviour)
7. Unto your descendants I will give this land.

Genesis 13, Part 2 (Abram is 76 years old.)

7. (expanded) I will give all this land to you and your descendants forever.
8. I will make your descendants as numberless as the dust of the earth.

Genesis 15, Part 3 (Abram is 86 years old.)

8. (expanded) I will make your descendants as numberless as the stars.
9. Someone who comes from your own body will be your heir.
10. Your descendants shall serve and be afflicted in a strange land 400 years.
11. I will judge that nation.
12. Afterward your descendants shall come out with great substance.
13. You will die in peace at a good old age.
14. Your descendants shall come back to this land.
7. (expanded) I have given your descendants this land from the Nile to the Euphrates rivers.

Genesis 17, Part 4 (In this part Abram and Sarai's names are changed) (Abram is 99 years old.)

8. (expanded) I will multiply you exceedingly.
15. You shall be the father of many nations.
8. (expanded) I will make you exceedingly fruitful.
15. (expanded) I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.
16. I establish my covenant with you and your descendants for an everlasting covenant to be your God and their God.

7. (expanded) I will give to you and your descendants all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession.

17. You and your descendants will keep my covenant by circumcising all males.

18. Sarah will have a son, Isaac. My everlasting covenant will be with him, not Ishmael, and with Isaac's descendants.

[New] Genesis 22, Part 5 (God promises with an oath; Abraham is at least 116 years old.)

4. (expanded) I will surely bless you.
8. (expanded) I will surely multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore.
19. Your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies.
6. (repeated) In your seed [Jesus] shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

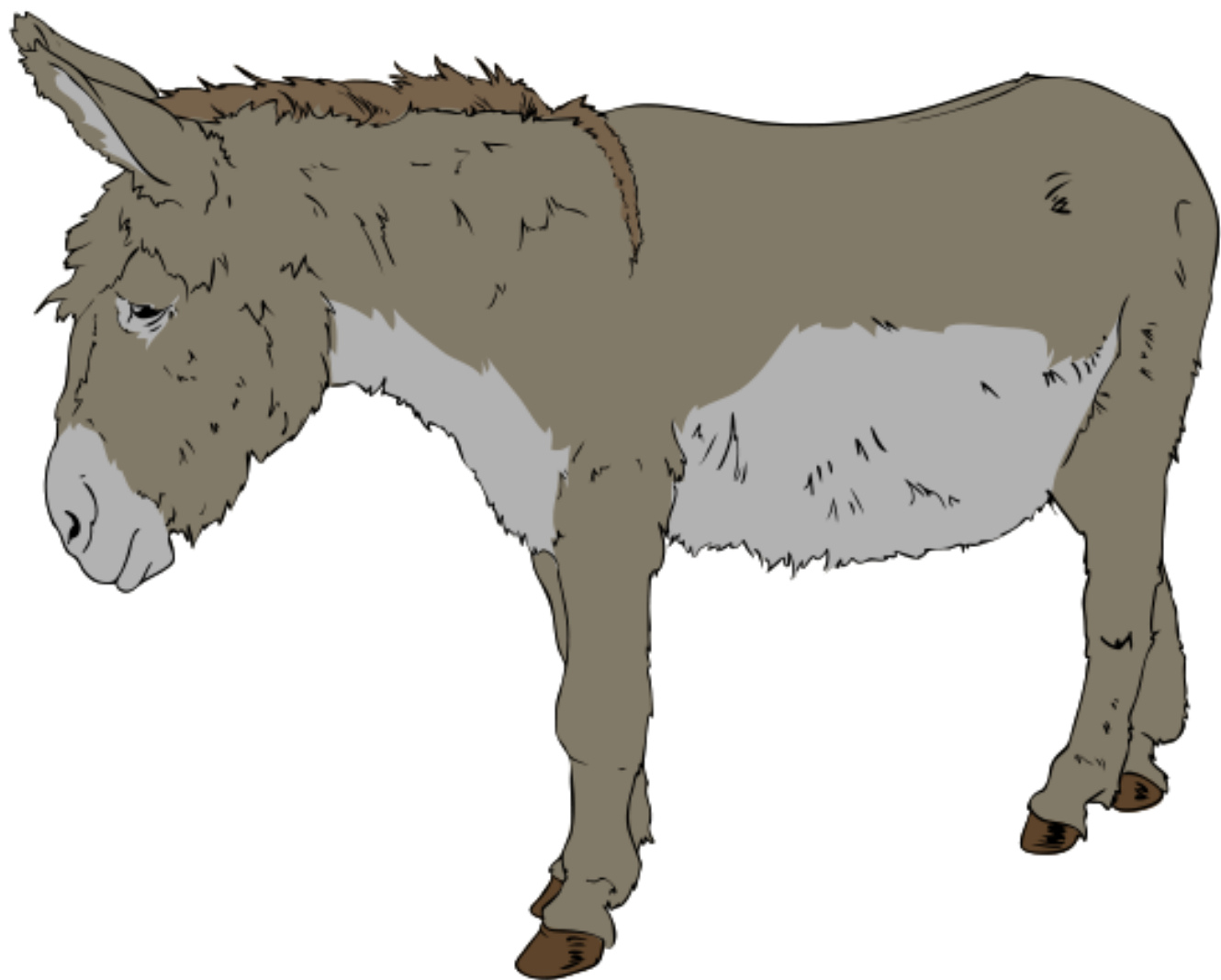
# **Genesis 22**

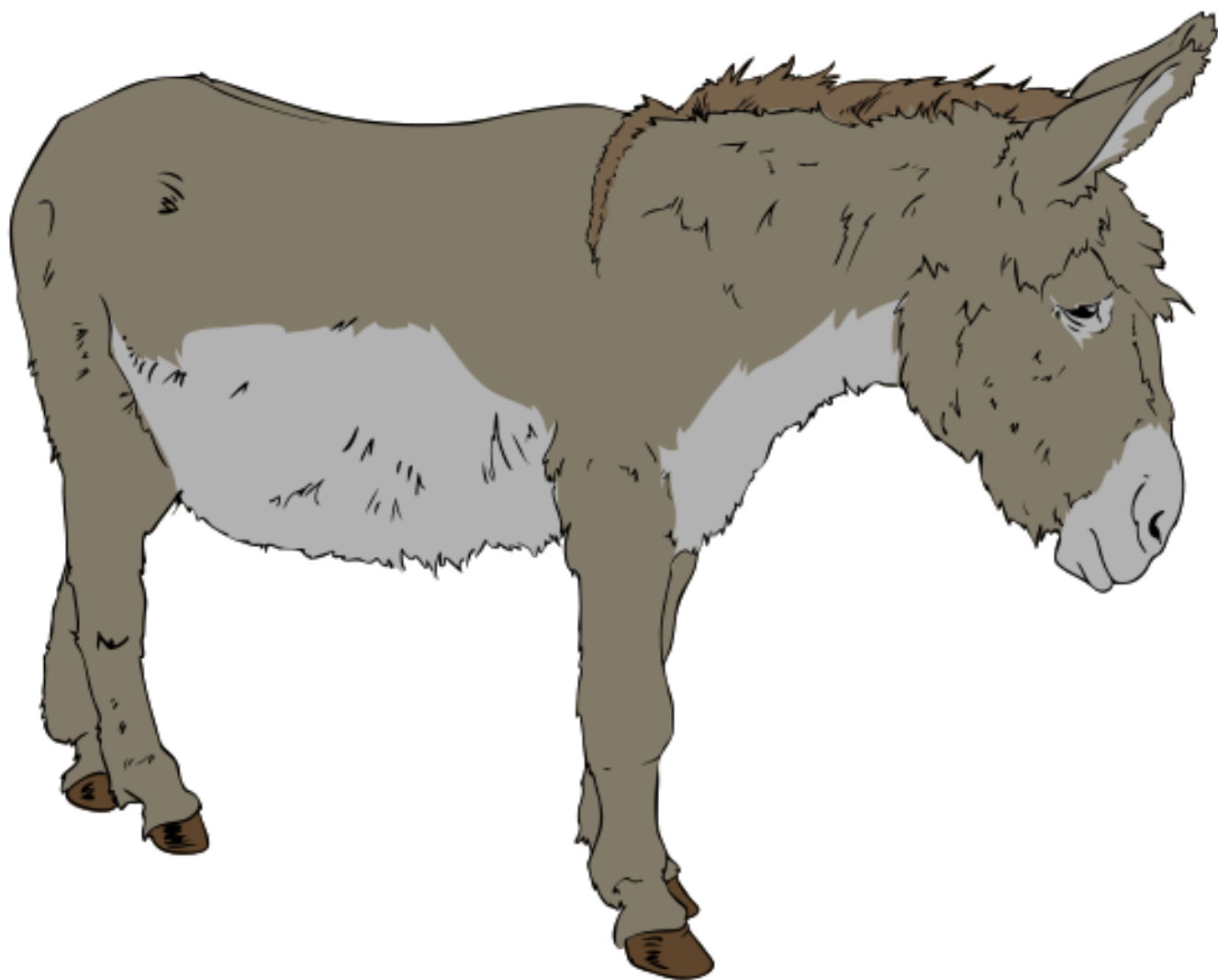
## **Part 5 of the Covenant**

**God Promises with an Oath**

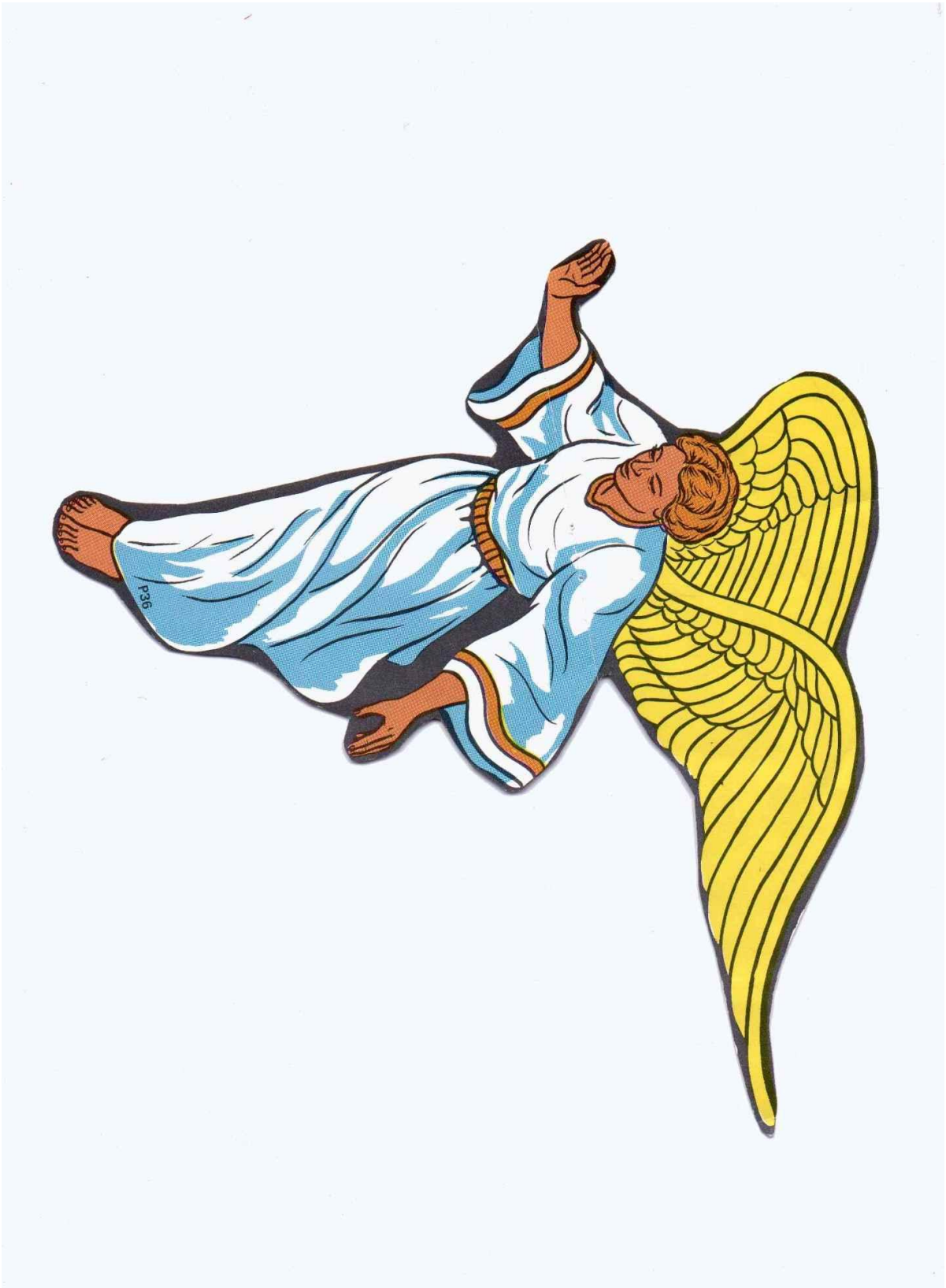
**Abraham at least 116 years old**

- 4. (expanded) I will surely bless you.**
- 8. (expanded) I will surely multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore.**
- 19. Your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies.**
- 6. (repeated) In your seed [Jesus] shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.**









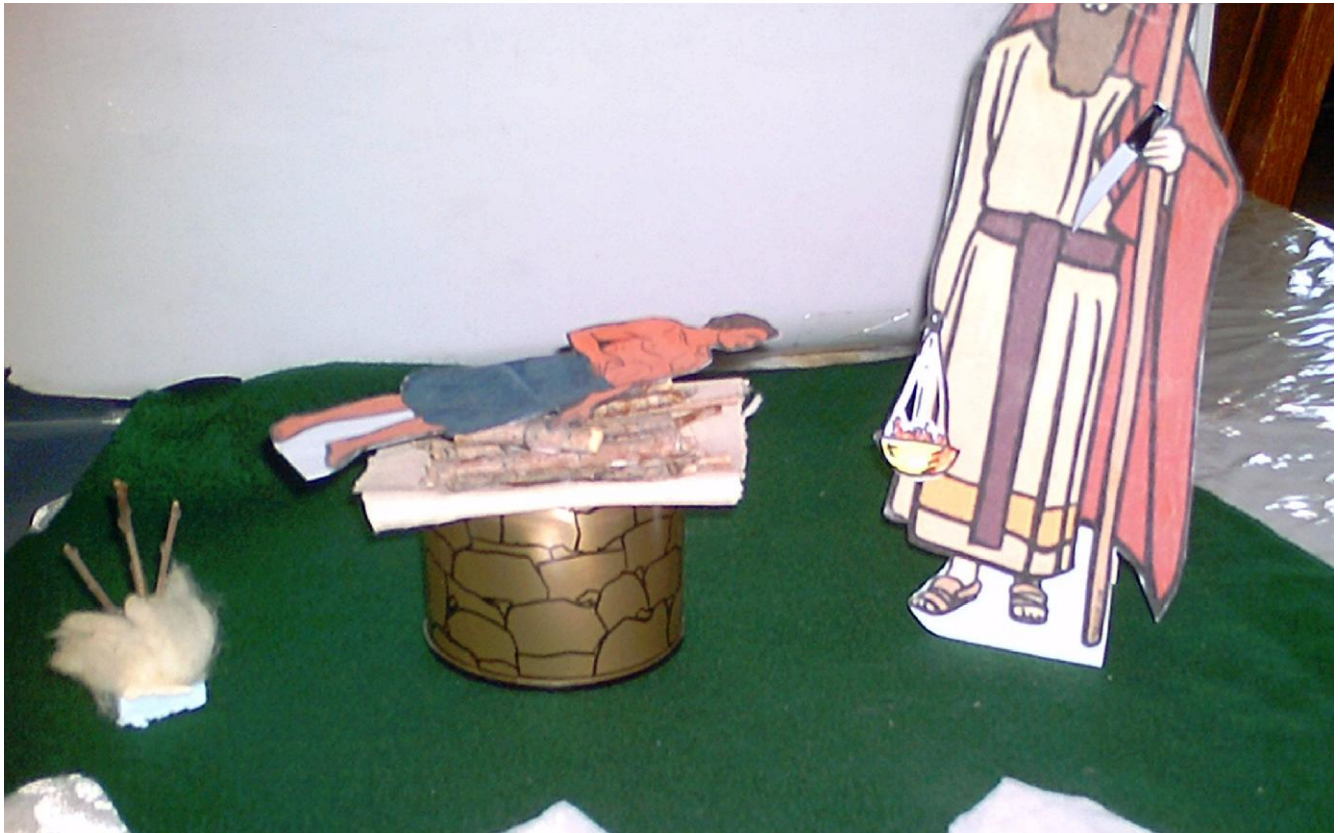








This photo stand-up figures as described at the beginning of this lesson. The wood sticks are glued to a piece of canvas. The wood and canvas can be removed from the donkey and placed on the altar.



This is another scene from "The Offering of Isaac." The altar is made from a can that originally contained nuts. The sheep is caught in a "thicket" at the left but should be behind Abraham. (Sorry about Abraham's head in this photo.)



**ABRAHAM OFFERING UP ISAAC --- GEN 22**