

Sarah's Story, part 2

Based on Genesis 22, Isaiah 7:14, Micah 5:2.

One day, Sarah watched her husband, the Prophet Abraham, walk away from their home with her only son. Abraham said they were going to make a sacrifice to God, but there was no animal to kill. Perhaps she knew that God had told Abraham to sacrifice this precious child to Him.

Abraham and the boy walked for three days until they came to a special place for making sacrifices. It was high on a mountain. The boy also noticed that they had no animal for the sacrifice. When he asked his father about it, Abraham said, "God will provide."

After they built the altar, Abraham tied up their son and laid him on it. Taking the knife, he prepared to kill the son that God had given them as He promised. Just before the knife fell, God called to Abraham. "Do not lay a hand on the boy," He said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." When Abraham looked up, he saw a ram caught in a bush near the altar. So he and the boy sacrificed the ram to God. Then God promised him, "I will surely bless you . . . and through your offspring, all nations on earth will be blessed."

Notice that God told Abraham to sacrifice his son, but then God also supplied the ram. Like God provided a substitute for Sarah's child, is it possible that there is a substitute for us as we try to repair our relationship with God?

God had promised Abraham that his descendents would be like the stars in the sky or the sand on the seashore: unable to be counted. Those descendents became the people of Israel. Through the years, God sent other prophets to the Israelites to remind them of his expectations and of how to give him honor. God also revealed bits of his eternal plan to many of these prophets: He would send the Messiah. About this Messiah's birth, God told the prophet Isaiah, "The Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." Through the prophet Micah, God said, "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel." Four hundred years after the last prophet to Israel, God began to fulfill these words.

"God presented . . . a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith." Romans 3:25



