

# A Mistake We So Often Make

By : Do Not Grow Weary

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### Genesis 22:9-12 (NKJV):

**9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.**

**10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.**

**11 But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, â Abraham, Abraham!â So he said, â Here I am.â**

**12 And He said, â Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.â**

I think many of us when coming to this chapter in the Bible and reading this scripture question God's character as to why would He ask Abraham to sacrifice and kill his only son whom God Himself has promised to Abraham so many years prior it came to pass? This is a mistake we so often make when evaluating or researching God's character assuming that He is something that He is not: an angry and demanding God who does things on a whim of the moment. Not true, my friend.

God only tests us in the areas where we lack dying to ourselves in order to live for Him. For some of us that represent money, some of us career, some of us our own child/children, some of us spouse, some of us parents, etc. In the end, it's not the death of one that God seeks, but dying to ourselves in order to live for Him. Abraham waited for Isaac to be born for 25 years, since the day God promised him a son. Initially God spoke to Abraham and told him to leave his homeland when Abraham was 75 years old (**Genesis 12:1-4**), and we read that Abraham finally had Isaac when he was 100 years old (**Genesis 17:17**). I can see Abraham being obsessed with this boy being born to him by the woman he treasured for his lifetime, and God decided to test Abraham's heart whether he would still be obedient to the Lord.

The one thing I came to know and to experience for myself is when God plans to bless us tremendously, He puts us through some fiery trials in order to assure that one's heart is in the right place with Him. I know that, like Abraham, God has a plan to bless me, but before He can do that, He has to make sure I die to myself in the areas where I esteem something or someone above God.

This is what happened to Abraham as well. God had to test his heart to make sure Abraham died to himself, so he could live for the Lord, and by asking to bring Isaac into sacrifice, God used that as a metaphor for our hearts.

We all know that in **verses 11-12** God intervened and stopped Abraham from killing Isaac because all God wanted to do is to test Abraham's heart. Once God assured that Abraham was â deadâ to live for himself, God could continue using him living for the Lord to fulfill that promise He gave to Abraham:

**When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, â I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. 2 And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.â 3 Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: 4 â As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings**

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**shall come from you. 7 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. 8 Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.â (Genesis 17:1-8 NKJV)**

As we can see, the promise of God carries a great impact for the subsequent generations and for the whole world. Each one of us living on this earth, are called inheritors in Abraham. The bigger the blessing, the tougher trials one has to encounter to assure that one's heart can handle this level of responsibility and still keep the heart intact with God's standards. This is why Bible is so clear about us not estranging the trials:

**12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed (1 Peter 4:12-13 NIV).**

Peter told us as well not to be surprised or estranged of the fiery trials that we will (not may, but will as a guaranteed promise, encounter when walking with the Lord), for these trials will produce glory and joy in the end. It may not seem that way for you now if you go through some hardships, but this is a promise from the Lord that stands even if we don't see it coming to pass yet. I know that my circumstances would produce glory and joy for the Lord, and that's my biggest consolation.

I like the way **Oswald Chambers** related to this scripture about Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac:

*This event is a picture of the mistake we make in thinking that the ultimate God wants of us is the sacrifice of death. What God wants is the sacrifice through death which enables us to do what Jesus did, that is, sacrifice our lives. Notâ â Lord, I am ready to go with You . . . to deathâ (Luke 22:33). Butâ â I am willing to be identified with Your death so that I may sacrifice my life to God.â*

*It is of no value to God to give Him your life for death. He wants you to be a â living sacrificeâ â to let Him have all your strengths that have been saved and sanctified through Jesus (Romans 12:1). This is what is acceptable to God.*

I have to agree with his evaluation that many assume that God requires or wants someone's death, but that is not the case.

Here is what David wrote in **Psalm 51:16-17 (NKJV)**:

**16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heartâ These, O God, You will not despise.**

God doesn't delight in anyone's death, and a burnt offering refers exactly to that point. In the Old Testament we have a list of animal sacrifices that had to be made in order to atone for sins, or thanksgiving sacrifice, or a feast sacrifice, etc. God's heart is not in the spilling of the blood, although in the Old Testament that was a requirement to survive for the Lord, but God delights in the offering of one's heart. Meaning: God wants us to die to our own desires and to seek living for Him.

I faced death 4 times in my life, and if God really wanted me dead, He wouldn't have saved me every time. I had different circumstances in each of the 4 times that I faced death, and I gave up on that idea. I realized that it looks like God has a plan for my life, and He wants me alive for that, so I'll live to fulfill what he has in store for me.

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The same with this scripture when we read of Abraham bringing his own son for a sacrifice: it's not that God wanted Isaac dead because God doesn't contradict His word, and we all know that by now from the endless scriptures that I tried to show you in all my previous articles by using both the Old and New Testaments, but God wanted Abraham's heart to be completely committed to the Lord and prepared for all the blessings He had in store for him. God didn't want Abraham to become prideful when inheriting all the promises God gave him, so He tried Abraham's faith to assure that his heart was in sync with God's will.

The whole message of the Bible and of God is that we don't perish but have an everlasting life, and so that life would be for His glory and not for ourselves.

First of all, He seeks that every heart gets saved through the blood of Jesus and believing that Jesus is the Son of God who came to this earth, died, and rose again as the only necessary sacrifice to atone for everyone's sin.

Secondly, God seeks our hearts to die to our own desires, so we could live for Him. This is it, folks. God's character is loving and carrying, but He does allow trials and tests in our lives to identify our priorities and to pinpoint where they disagree with God's plans. Trials are a checkpoint for one's heart to see it in relation to the Lord and to oneself.

If you questioned God about this scripture in your previous times when reading this passage in the Bible, I encourage you to look at this scripture from the God's heart's perspective: dying to yourself, so to live for Him. If you have any area in your life that you assert control over and claim ownership, expect God testing your heart there. He would do that only if you claim your life for the Lord. I had to lay my daughter on the altar because God knew how obsessed I was with her. He did promise me to return her to me in His own time, but I really had to battle with God on this one.

Remember, when God gives us knowledge, He makes us responsible for it. So if you read this passage today, and God speaks to your heart about a particular area in your life that needs dying to yourself, I encourage you to obey the Lord. He would bless you and use you for His glory. I can assure you that this is the most rewarding way to live one's life. If you had a wrong perception of who God is when reading this scripture, please note the **verses 11-12** where God stopped Abraham from killing his own son because He doesn't delight in shedding of anyone's blood, but He desires our hearts to be committed completely to Him. Sometimes that requires drastic methods on His part. If you misjudged God's character before, hopefully, this will not be the case anymore.

Let us seek the Lord and ask Him to clarify scriptures that we don't understand rather than choose making this mistake of misjudging His character. He would be more than willing to answer our questions and to direct our paths.

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