

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 22

In this chapter we have an account of an order given by God to Abraham to sacrifice his son, (^{f1221}Genesis 22:1,2); of his readiness to obey the will of God, he immediately preparing everything for that purpose, (^{f1223}Genesis 22:3-10), of the order being reversed, and another sacrifice substituted in its room, which occasioned the giving a new name to the place where it was done, (^{f1221}Genesis 22:11-14); upon which the promise of special blessings, of a numerous offspring, and of the seed in whom all nations should be blessed, is renewed, (^{f1225}Genesis 22:15-18); after this Abraham returns to Beersheba, where he is informed of the increase of his brother Nahor's family, (^{f1229}Genesis 22:19-24).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass after these things*, etc.] Recorded in the preceding chapter: according to the Talmudists ^{f1247}, the following affair was transacted quickly after the weaning of Isaac, when he was about five years old, which is the opinion of some, as Aben Ezra on (^{f1224}Genesis 22:4); makes mention of; but that is an age when it can hardly be thought he should be able to carry such a load of wood as was sufficient to make a fire to consume a burnt offering, (^{f1226}Genesis 22:6); the age of thirteen, which he fixes upon, is more likely: Josephus ^{f1248} says, that Isaac was twenty five years of age; and in this year of his age Bishop Usher ^{f1249} places this transaction, twenty years after the weaning of him, in A. M. 2133, and before Christ 1871; and near to this is the computation of a Jewish chronologer ^{f1250}, who makes Isaac to be at this time twenty six years of age; but some make him much older: according to the Targum of Jonathan, he was at this time thirty six years old; and it is the more generally received opinion of the Jewish writers ^{f1251} that he was and with whom the Arabic writers ^{f1252} agree: so that this affair, after related, was thirty years after the weaning of Isaac and the expulsion of Ishmael, supposing Isaac to be then five years old. But, however this be, what came to pass was after many promises of a son had been given him, and those fulfilled; and after many blessings had been bestowed upon him; and when he seemed to be well settled in the land of the Philistines, having entered

into an alliance with the king of the country; his family in peace, and his son Isaac, the son of the promise, grown up and a hopeful youth; the first appearance of which seemed to threaten the destruction of all his comforts, hopes, and expectations; and it was so,

that God did tempt Abraham; not to sin, as Satan does, for God tempts no man, nor can he be tempted in this sense; and, had Abraham slain his son, it would have been no sin in him, it being by the order of God, who is the Lord of life, and the sovereign disposer of it; but he tempted him, that is, he tried him, to prove him, and to know his faith in him, his fear of him, his love to him, and cheerful obedience to his commands; not in order to know these himself, which he was not ignorant of, but to make them known to others, and that Abraham's faith might be strengthened yet more and more, as in the issue it was. The Jewish writers^{f1253} observe, that Abraham was tempted ten times, and that this was the tenth and last temptation:

and said unto him, Abraham: calling him by his name he well knew, and by that name he had given him, to signify that he should be the father of many nations, (^{Q17B}Genesis 17:5); and yet was going to require of him to slay his only son, and offer him a sacrifice to him:

and he said, behold, [here] I [am]; signifying that he heard his voice, and was ready to obey his commands, be they what they would.

Ver. 2. *And he said, take now thy son*, etc.] Directly, immediately; not thine ox, nor thy sheep, nor thy ram, nor thy lamb, nor thy servant, but thy son:

thine only [son] Isaac; for, though Ishmael was his son, he was a son by his maid, by his concubine, and not by his wife; Isaac was his only legitimate son, his only son by his lawful wife Sarah; the only son of the promise, his only son, in whom his seed was to be called:

whom thou lovest; on whom his affections were strongly set, being a lovely youth, a dutiful son, and the child of promise; on whom all his hope and expectation of a numerous offspring promised him was built, and in whose line the Messiah was to spring from him; even Isaac, which stands last in the original text: so that, if what had been said was not sufficient to describe him, he is expressed by name, and the description is gradually given, and the name of his son reserved to the last, that he might be by degrees prepared to receive the shocking order; every word is emphatic and striking, and enough to pierce any tender heart, and especially when

told what was to be done to him. The Jews ^{f1254} represent God and Abraham in a discourse together upon this head: God said, take now thy son; says Abraham, I have two sons; take thine only son; says he, they are both only sons to their mothers; take him whom thou lovest; I love them both, replied he; then take Isaac; thus ended the debate:

and get thee into the land of Moriah; so called by anticipation, from a mountain of that name in it; the Septuagint render it, “the high land”, the hill country of the land of Canaan, particularly that part of it where Jerusalem afterwards stood, which was surrounded with hills: hence Aquila, another Greek interpreter, renders it, “conspicuous”, as hills and mountains are, and a mountainous country is; Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it, “a land of worship”, of religious worship; for in this country afterwards the people of God dwelt, the city of the living God was built, and in it the temple for divine service, and that upon Mount Moriah; and the Targum of Jerusalem has it here,

“to Mount Moriah;”

the Jews are divided about the reason of this name, some deriving it from a word ^{f1255} which signifies to “teach”, and think it is so called, because doctrine or instruction came forth from thence to Israel; others from a word ^{f1256} which signifies “fear”, and so had its name because fear or terror went from thence to the nations of the world ^{f1257}; but its derivation is from another word ^{f1258}, which signifies to “see”, and which is confirmed by what is said (^{<0214>}Genesis 22:14):

and offer him there for a burnt offering; this was dreadful work he was called to, and must be exceeding trying to him as a man, and much more as a parent, and a professor of the true religion, to commit such an action; for by this order he was to cut the throat of his son, then to rip him up, and cut up his quarters, and then to lay every piece in order upon the wood, and then burn all to ashes; and this he was to do as a religious action, with deliberation, seriousness, and devotion:

upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of; for there were several of them adjoining to, or pretty near each other, which afterwards went by different names, as Mount Sion, (^{<0148>}Deuteronomy 4:48); the hill Acra; Mount Calvary, (^{<0233>}Luke 23:33); and Mount Moriah, (^{<400>}2 Chronicles 3:1); supposed to be the mount intended; and so Aben Ezra says it was the place where the temple was built, and where was the threshing floor of

Araunah, (~~400~~ 2 Chronicles 3:1). Some learned men are of opinion, that the account which Sanchoniatho^{f1259} gives of Cronus or Saturn sacrificing his own son, refers to this affair of Abraham's; his words are,

“there being a pestilence and a mortality, Cronus offered up his only son a whole burnt offering to his father Ouranus;”

which Porphyry^{f1260}, from the same historian, thus relates; Cronus, whom the Phoenicians call Israel, (a grandson of Abraham's, thought, through mistake, to be put for Abraham himself,) having an only son of a nymph of that country called Anobret, (which according to Bochart^{f1261} signifies one that conceived by grace, (see ~~3811~~ Hebrews 11:11);) whom therefore they called Jeoud (the same with Jehid here, an only once); so an only one is called by the Phoenicians; when the country was in great danger through war, this son, dressed in a royal habit, he offered up on an altar he had prepared. But others^{f1262} are of a different sentiment, and cannot perceive any likeness between the two cases: however, Isaac may well be thought, in the whole of this, to be a type of the Messiah, the true and proper Son of God, his only begotten Son, the dear Son of his love, in whom all the promises are yea and amen; whom God out of his great love to men gave to be an offering and a sacrifice for their sins, and who suffered near Jerusalem, on Mount Calvary, which very probably was a part of Mount Moriah; and which, with other mountains joining in their root, though having different tops, went by that common name.

Ver. 3. *And Abraham rose up early in the morning*, etc.] For it seems it was in a dream or vision of the night that the above orders were given; and as soon as it was morning he rose and prepared to execute them with all readiness, and without any hesitation and delay:

and saddled his ass; for his journey, not to carry the wood and provision on, which probably were carried by his servants, but to ride on; and this Jarchi thinks he did himself, and the words in their precise sense suggest this; but it does not necessarily follow, because he may be said to do what he ordered his servant to do; of the Jews' fabulous account of this ass, (see ~~3809~~ Zechariah 9:9):

and took two of his young men with him; the Targum of Jonathan says, these were Ishmael his son, and Eliezer his servant; and so other Jewish writers^{f1263}, who tell us, that just at this time Ishmael came out of the

wilderness to visit his father, and he took him with him; but for this there is no foundation: they were two of his servants, of whom he had many:

and Isaac his son: who was the principal person to be taken, since he was to be the sacrifice: whether Abraham acquainted Sarah with the affairs and she consented to it, cannot be said with certainty; it is plain Isaac knew not what his father's design was; and though Sarah and the whole family might know, by the preparation made, he was going to offer a sacrifice, yet they knew not where, nor what it was to be;

and clave the wood for the burnt offering; not knowing whether he should find wood sufficient on the mountain, where he was to go; and that he might not be unprovided when he came there, takes this method, which shows his full intention to obey the divine command:

and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him; that is, he mounted his ass, and rode towards the place God had spoken of to him, and who had directed him which way to steer his course.

Ver. 4. *Then on the third day*, etc.] After he had received the command from God, and from his setting out on his journey; for he had now travelled two days, Mount Moriah being forty miles from Beersheba, where Abraham dwelt^{f1264}; or, as others compute it, forty: Hebron^{f1265} was twenty miles from Beersheba, and Jerusalem twenty two from Hebron; and to travel twenty miles a day on foot, as Isaac and the servants seem to have done, there being but one ass among them, was far enough in those hot countries. Now all this while Abraham had time to reconsider things in his mind, and deliberate thoroughly what he was going about; and by proceeding in it, after he had such leisure to revolve things in his mind, it appears that he was satisfied it was not an illusion, but an oracle of God he was going to obey; and that he did not do this rashly and hastily, and that his faith and obedience were sufficiently tried, and found genuine. The Jews^{f1266} take great notice of this third day, and compare the passage with (~~2ND~~Hosea 6:2); and which they interpret of the third day of the resurrection; and the deliverance of Isaac on this third day was doubtless typical of Christ's resurrection from the dead on the third day; for from the time that Abraham had the command to offer up his son, he was reckoned no other by him than as one dead, from whence he received him in a figure on this third day, (~~3RD~~Hebrews 11:19):

Abraham lift up his eyes, and saw the place afar off; where he was to offer his Son. Baal Hatturim says, the word “place”, by gematry, signifies Jerusalem: it seems by this, that as God had signified to Abraham that he would tell him of the place, and show it to him, where he was to sacrifice, so that he gave him a signal by which he might know it, which some of the Jewish writers ^{f1267} say was a cloud upon the mount; with which agrees the Targum of Jonathan,

“and Abraham lift up his eyes and saw the cloud of glory smoking upon the mountain, and he knew it afar off.”

And others say ^{f1268}, he saw the glory of the divine Majesty standing upon the mount, in a pillar of fire, reaching from earth to heaven; and they further observe, that the place where he was, when he saw this, was Zophim, a place not far from Jerusalem; and from hence, when the city and temple were built, a full view might be taken of them ^{f1269}, from whence it had its name.

Ver. 5. *And Abraham said unto the young men, abide you here with the ass*, etc.] At the place from whence he had his first sight of Mount Moriah: he chose not to take his two servants with him, lest when they saw him binding his son, and going about to sacrifice him, they should lay hold upon him, and restrain him from doing it; and to prevent this he takes this precaution, which shows how fully intent he was to yield obedience to the divine precept:

and I and the lad will go yonder and worship; pointing to the place where the signal was, but whether they saw it or no is not certain: the Jews say ^{f1270} Isaac did see it, but they did not; however, Abraham made them to understand that he was going to one of the mountains which were in sight, and there worship God by offering sacrifice to him. Isaac is here called a “lad”; of what age he was at this time, (see Gill on “~~Gen 22:2~~”); and he might be at the largest number of years there mentioned, and yet be so called, since Joshua the son of Nun has this appellation when he was fifty six years of age, (^{<2311>}Exodus 33:11):

and come again to you, both he and Isaac; this he said under a spirit of prophecy, as Jarchi thinks, or in the faith of Isaac’s resurrection from the dead, (^{<58119>}Hebrews 11:19).

Ver. 6. *And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering*, etc.] Which Josephus ^{f1271} says was laid upon the ass, and carried by that; and if so, he

took it from thence: but it is probable it was carried by his two servants, since it was not more than Isaac himself afterwards carried, as in the next clause:

and laid [it] upon Isaac his son: who was a grown man, and able to carry it: in this also he was a type of Christ, on whom the wood of his cross was laid, and which he bore when he went to be crucified, (^{f1271}John 19:17); and this wood may be also a figure of our sins laid on him by his Father, and which he bore in his body on the tree, (^{f1272}1 Peter 2:24); and which were like wood to fire, fuel for the wrath of God, which came down upon him for them:

and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; a vessel in one hand, in which fire was to kindle the wood with, and a knife in the other hand to slay the sacrifice with; the one to slay his son with, and the other to burn him with; and to carry these for such purposes must be very trying. This is the first time we read in Scripture of fire for use, or of a knife. Some say the first inventor of fire was Prometheus, ^{f1273}others Phoroneus ^{f1272}, from whence he seems to have his name; but according to Sanchoniatho ^{f1273}, the immediate posterity of Cain first invented it, whose names were light, fire, and flame; and these, he says, found out the way of generating fire, by rubbing pieces of wood against each other, and taught men the use of it. “Knife”, in the Hebrew language, has its name from eating and consuming, as Ben Melech observes; some render it a “sword” ^{f1274}, but wrongly, and which has led the painter into a mistake, to represent Abraham with a sword in his hand to slay his son:

and they went both of them together; from the place where they left the young men, to the place where the sacrifice was to be offered.

Ver. 7. *And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father,* etc.] As they were walking together:

and said, my father; a cutting word to Abraham, who knew what he was going to do with him, so contrary to the relation and affection of a parent:

and he said, here [am] I, my son; what hast thou to say to me? I am ready to answer thee; he owns the relation he stood in unto him, a sense of which he had not put off, and curbs his affections, which must be inwardly moving towards him, and showed great strength of faith to grapple with such a trying exercise:

and he said, behold the fire and the wood; the fire which his father had his hand, and the wood which was upon his own, shoulders:

but where [is] the lamb for a burnt offering? he perceived by the preparation made, by the fire and the wood, that it was to be a burnt offering which they were going to offer; but there being no creature provided for the sacrifice, he puts this question, by which it appears that as yet he was quite ignorant of the true design of this journey, and little thought that he was to be the sacrifice: however, from what he said, it plain he had been used to sacrifices, and had been trained up in them, and had seen them performed, and knew the nature of them, and what were requisite unto them.

Ver. 8. *And Abraham said, my son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering,* etc.] In which answer Abraham may have respect to the Messiah, the Lamb of God, (^{<4012>}John 1:29,36), whom he had provided in council and covenant before the world was; and who in promise, and type, and figure, was slain from the foundation of the world, (^{<6638>}Revelation 13:8); and whom in due time God would send into the world, (^{<4036>}John 10:36), and make him an offering for sin, (^{<2530>}Isaiah 53:10), and accept of him in the room and stead of his people: and this was a provision that could only be made by the Lord, and was the produce of his infinite wisdom, and the fruit of his grace, favour, and good will and of which Abraham had a clear sight and strong persuasion, (see ^{<4056>}John 8:56); though as the words may be considered as a more direct answer to Isaac's question, which related to the sacrifice now about to be offered, they may be regarded as a prophecy of Abraham's, and of his faith in it, that God would, as in fact he did, provide a lamb or ram in the room of that he was called to offer; or he may mean Isaac himself, whom he was bid to take and offer, and so was a lamb of God's providing; though he did not choose directly to say this, but puts him off with such an answer, suggesting that it was best for him to leave it with God, who, as he had called them to such service, would supply them with a proper sacrifice; and in speaking in this manner he might give room for Isaac to suspect what was intended, and so by degrees bring him to the knowledge of it. Some Jewish writers^{f1275} say, that Abraham to this answer added in express terms,

“my son, thou art the lamb:”

so they went both of them together; they proceeded on in their journey until they came to the place they were directed to go. The Targum of Jonathan says,

“they went both of them with a perfect heart as one;”

the Jerusalem Targum is,

“with a quiet, easy, and composed mind or heart;”

and Jarchi,

“with a like heart;”

all intimating that Isaac was thoroughly acquainted with what was to be done, that he was to be the sacrifice, and that he heartily agreed to it, and that he and his father were of one mind in it, and that he went with the same will to be offered up, as his father did to offer him; and indeed the expression being repeated from (^{f1276}Genesis 22:6), seems to suggest something remarkable and worthy of attention.

Ver. 9. *And they came to the place which God had told him of*, etc.] Mount Moriah. Maimonides ^{f1276} says,

“it is a tradition in or by the hands of all, that this is the place where David and Solomon built an altar in the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, and where Abraham built an altar, and bound Isaac on it; and where Noah built one when he came out of the ark, and is the altar on which Cain and Abel offered; and where the first man offered when he was created, and from whence he was created.”

And so the Targum of Jonathan, and other Jewish writers ^{f1277}. The Mahometans say ^{f1278}, that Meena or Muna, a place about two or three miles from Mecca, is the place where Abraham went to offer up his son Isaac, and therefore in this place they sacrifice their sheep.

And Abraham built an altar there; of the earth, and turf upon it he found on the mount, erected an altar for sacrifice, even for the sacrifice of his own son: he had built many before, but none for such a purpose as this, and yet went about it readily, and finished it. But if there was one before, Abraham could not with any propriety be said to build it, at most only to repair it; but there is no doubt to be made of it that he built it anew, and perhaps there never was an altar here before:

and laid on the wood in order: for the sacrifice to be put upon it:

and bound Isaac his son: with his hands and feet behind him, as Jarchi says; not lest he should flee from him, and make his escape, as Aben Ezra suggests, but as it was the usual manner to bind sacrifices when offered; and especially this was so ordered, that Isaac might be a type of the Messiah, who was bound by the Jews, (⁴⁸¹²John 18:12 ⁴¹⁷²Matthew 27:2); as well as he was bound and fastened to the cross:

and laid him on the altar upon the wood; it is highly probable with his own consent; for if he was twenty five, and as some say thirty seven years of age, he was able to have resisted his father, and had he been reluctant could have cleared himself from the hands of his aged parent: but it is very likely, that previous to this Abraham opened the whole affair to him, urged the divine command, persuaded him to submit to it; and perhaps might suggest to him what he himself had faith in, that God would either revoke the precept, or prevent by some providence or another the fatal blow, or raise him again from the dead; however, that obedience to the will of God should be yielded, since disobedience might be attended with sad consequences to them both; and with such like things the mind of Isaac might be reconciled to this affair, and he willingly submitted to it; in which he also was a type of Christ, who acquiesced in the will of his Father, freely surrendered himself into the hands of justice, and meekly and willingly gave himself an offering for his people.

Ver. 10. *And Abraham stretched forth his hand*, etc.] All things being ready for execution, the altar built, the wood laid on it, the sacrifice bound and laid on that, nothing remained but to cut the throat of the sacrifice; and in order to that, the instrument for it laying by him, he put forth his hand, one would think in a trembling manner, for it is enough to make one tremble to think of it:

and took the knife to slay his son; with a full intention to do it, which was carrying his obedience to the divine will to the last extremity, and shows he was sincere in it, and really designed to complete it; and this was taken by the Lord as if it was actually done. He had his knife in his hand, and was near the throat of his son, and just ready to give the fatal thrust; in another moment, as it were, it would have been all over; but in the nick of time God appeared and prevented it, as follows:

Ver. 11. *And the Angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven,* etc.] Not a created angel, but the eternal one, the Son of God, who perhaps appeared in an human form, and spoke with an articulate voice, as he frequently did; for that this was a divine Person is clear from his swearing by himself, and renewing the promise unto Abraham, (⁰¹²¹⁶Genesis 22:16-18):

and said, Abraham, Abraham; the repeating his name denotes haste to prevent the slaughter of his son, which was just upon the point of doing, and in which Abraham was not dilatory, but ready to make quick dispatch; and therefore with the greater eagerness and vehemency the angel calls him by name, and doubles it, to raise a quick and immediate attention to him, which it did:

and he said, here [am] I: ready to hearken to what shall be said, and to obey what should be ordered, (see Gill on ⁰¹²¹⁷Genesis 22:1”).

Ver. 12. *And he said, lay not thine hand upon the lad,* etc.] Which he was just going to stretch out, with his knife in it, to slay him; and though the Lord had bid him take his son, and offer him for a burnt offering, to try his faith, fear, love, and obedience, yet he meant not that he should actually slay him, but would prevent it when it came to the crisis; for he approves not of, nor delights in human sacrifices; and that this might not be dawn into an example, it was prevented; though the Gentiles, under the influence of Satan, in imitation of this, have practised it:

neither do thou anything unto him; by lacerating his flesh, letting out any of his blood, or wounding him ever so slightly in any part:

for now I know that thou fearest God; with a truly childlike filial fear; with such a reverence of him that has fervent love, and strong affection, joined with it; with a fear that includes the whole of internal religious worship, awe of the divine Being, submission to his will, faith in him, and love to him, and obedience springing from thence. And this is said, not as though he was ignorant before how things would issue; for he knew from all eternity what Abraham would be, and what he would do, having determined to bestow that grace upon him, and work it in him, which would influence and enable him to act the part he did; he knew full well beforehand what would be the consequence of such a trial of him; but this is said after the manner of men, who know things with certainty when they come to pass, and appear plain and evident: or this may be understood of a

knowledge of approbation, that the Lord now knew, and approved of the faith, fear, love, and obedience of Abraham, which were so conspicuous in this affair, (see ^{<9006>}Psalm 1:6); Saadiah Gaon ^{f1279} interprets it, “I have made known”, that is, to others; God by trying Abraham made it manifest to others, to all the world, to all that should hear of or read this account of things, that he was a man that feared God, loved him, believed in him, and obeyed him, of which this instance is a full and convincing proof:

seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only [son] from me: but as soon as he had the order to offer him up, prepared for it, took a three days’ journey, and all things along with him for the sacrifice; when he came to the place, built an altar, laid the wood in order, bound his son, and laid him on it, took the knife, and was going to put it to his throat; so that the Lord looked upon the thing as if it was really done: it was a plain case that he did not, and would not have withheld his son, but would have freely offered him a sacrifice unto God at his command; and that he loved the Lord more than he did his son, and had a greater regard to the command of God than to the life of his son, and preferred the one to the other. And thus God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, (^{<4882>}Romans 8:32).

Ver. 13. *And Abraham lifted up his eyes,* etc.] They were before fixed upon his son lying upon the altar, and intent upon that part he was going to thrust his knife into; but hearing a voice from heaven above him, he lift up his eyes thitherward:

and looked, and, behold, behind [him] a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; the ram making a noise and rustling among the bushes behind the place where Abraham was, he turned himself, and looked and saw it: the Targum of Onkelos introduces the clause thus, “after these things”; and so the Arabic version: after Abraham had heard the voice of the angel, and had lift up his eyes to heaven, he was directed to look behind him; and both that and the Targum of Jonathan paraphrase it,

“and he saw and beheld one ram;”

and so the Septuagint, Syriac and Samaritan versions, reading **dj a** instead of **rj a**. This ram was caught and held by his horns in a thicket of briars, brambles, and thorns, or in the thick branches of the shrubs or bushes which grew upon the mount; and the horns of a ram being crooked, are easily implicated in such thickets, but not easily loosed. From whence this

ram came is not known; it can hardly be thought to come from Abraham's fold, or to be his property, since he was three days' journey distant from home; very likely it had strayed from neighbouring flocks, and was by the providence of God directed hither at a seasonable time. The Jewish writers ^{f1280} say, it was from the creation of the world; and there is no absurdity or improbability to suppose it was immediately created by the power of God, and in an extraordinary manner provided; and was a type of our Lord Jesus, who was foreordained of God before the foundation of the world, and came into the world in an uncommon way, being born of a virgin, and that in the fulness of time, and seasonably, and in due time died for the sins of men. The ram has its name from "strength", in the Hebrew language, and was an emblem of a great personage, (²⁰⁸³Daniel 8:3); and may denote the strength and dignity of Christ as a divine Person; being caught in a thicket, may be an emblem of the decrees of God, in which he was appointed to be the Saviour; or the covenant agreement and transactions with his Father, in which he voluntarily involved himself, and by which he was held; or the sins of his people, which were laid upon him by imputation, were wreathed about him, and justice finding him implicated with them, required satisfaction, and had it; or the hands of wicked men, sons of Belial, comparable to thorns, by whom he was taken; or the sorrows of death and hell that encompassed him, and the curses of a righteous law which lay upon him; and perhaps he never more resembled this ram caught in a thicket, than when a platted crown of thorns was put upon his head, and he wore it;

and Abraham went and took the ram; without regarding whose property it was, since God, the owner and proprietor of all, had provided it for him, and brought it to him at a very seasonable time, and directed him to take it:

and offered him for a burnt offering in the stead of his son; in which also was a type of Christ, who was made an offering for sin, and a sacrifice to God of a sweet smelling savour; and its being a burnt offering denotes the sufferings of Christ, and the severity of them; and which were in the room and stead of his people, of God's Isaac, of spiritual seed of Abraham, of the children of God of the promise, of all his beloved ones; who therefore are let go, justice being satisfied with what Christ has done and suffered, it being all one as if they had suffered themselves; as here in the type, the ram having, its throat cut, its blood shed, its skin flayed, and the whole burnt to ashes, were as if Isaac himself had been thus dealt with, as Jarchi observes.

Alexander Polyhistor^{f1281}, an Heathen writer, has, in agreement with the sacred history, given a narrative of this affair in a few words,

“God (he says) commanded Abraham to offer up his son Isaac to him for a burnt offering, and taking the lad with him to a mountain, laid and kindled an heap of wood, and put Isaac upon it; and when he was about to slay him, was forbidden by an angel, who presented a ram to him for sacrifice, and then Abraham removed his son from the pile, and offered up the ram.”

Ver. 14. *And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh*, etc.] Which may be rendered either “the Lord hath seen”, as the Septuagint, or “has provided”, the future being put for the past, as Abendana observes, and so it is called, in answer to what Abraham had said, (^{<0218>}Genesis 22:8); “God will provide”: now he had provided, and, as a memorial of it, gives the place this name; or “he will see or provide”^{f1282}; as he has provided for me, so he will for all those that trust in him; as he has provided a ram in the room of Isaac, so he has provided, and will send his only Son in the fulness of time to be a sacrifice for the sins of his people:

as it is said [to] this day, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen; from this time to the times of Moses, and so on in after ages, even until now, it has been used as a proverbial saying, that as God appeared to Abraham, and for his son, in the mount, just as he was going to sacrifice him, and delivered him, so the Lord will appear for his people in all ages, in a time of difficulty and distress, and when at the utmost extremity, who call upon him, and trust in him. This may also refer to the presence of God in this mount, when the temple should be built on it, as it was, (^{<4018>}2 Chronicles 3:1); and to the appearance of Christ in it, who was often seen here: some choose to render the words, “in the mount the Lord shall be seen”^{f1283}; “God manifest in the flesh”, (^{<5016>}1 Timothy 3:16), the “Immanuel”, “God with us”, (^{<4023>}Matthew 1:23), who was frequently in the temple built on this mount, and often seen there in his state of humiliation on earth.

Ver. 15. *And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time.*] The Angel having restrained him from slaying his son, and having provided another sacrifice, which he offered, calls to him again; having something more to say to him, which was to renew the covenant he had made with him, and confirm it by an oath.

Ver. 16. *And said, by myself have I sworn, saith the Lord,* etc.] Which Aben Ezra observes is a great oath, and abides for ever; for because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, his own nature, perfections, and life, (³⁰⁶³Hebrews 6:13); hence it appears, that the Angel that called to Abraham was a divine Person, the true Jehovah:

for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only [son]; that is, from the Lord, as in (⁰²²⁰Genesis 22:12); and is here repeated as being a most marvellous thing, a wonderful instance of faith in God, and fear of him, and of love and obedience to him; for, with respect to the will of Abraham, and as far as he was suffered to go, it was as much done as it was possible for him to do, and was looked upon as if actually done: yet this is not observed as meritorious of what follows; the promise of which had been made before, but is now repeated to show what notice God took of, and how well pleased he was with what had been done; and therefore renews the promise, which of his own grace and good will he had made, for the strengthening of Abraham's faith, and to encourage others to obey the Lord in whatsoever he commands them.

Ver. 17. *That in blessing I will bless thee,* etc.] With temporal and spiritual blessings; with the Spirit and all his graces; with Christ and redemption, justification, and salvation by him; and with eternal life, as the gift of God, through him:

and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which [is] upon the sea shore: both his natural seed, descending from him in the line of Isaac, and his spiritual seed, both among Jews and Gentiles, that tread in his steps; (see ⁰¹³⁵Genesis 13:15,16 15:5):

and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: "gate" for "gates", where courts of judicature were held, and which are the security of cities and put for them, and which also include the whole country round about: so that this phrase is expressive of an entire jurisdiction and dominion over them; and was literally fulfilled in the times of Joshua, David, and Solomon; and spiritually in Christ, Abraham's principal seed, when he destroyed Satan and his principalities and powers; overcame the world; made an end of sin and abolished death; and delivered his people out the hands of all their enemies; and in all Abraham's spiritual seed, who are made more than conquerors over them, through Christ that has loved them.

Ver. 18. *And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed,* etc.]

That is, in his one and principal seed, the Messiah, that should spring from him, (^{<RB6>}Galatians 3:16), in whom all the elect of God, of all nations under the heavens, are blessed with all spiritual blessings, with peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life, with grace here and glory hereafter; (see Gill on "^{<RB3>}Genesis 12:3"); or, "shall bless themselves"^{f1284} in him; or, "account themselves blessed"; apply to him for blessings, claim their interest in them, and glory in them, and make their boast of them:

because thou hast obeyed my voice; in taking his son and offering him up unto him, as much as he was permitted to do; and thus honouring God by his obedience to him, he of his grace and goodness honours him with the promise of being the father of multitudes, both in a literal and spiritual sense, and with being the ancestor of the Messiah, in whom all the blessings of grace and goodness meet.

Ver. 19. *So Abraham returned to his young men,* etc.] He had left at a certain place with the ass, while he and Isaac went to the mount to worship; and who stayed there till he came to them, according to his order, (^{<RB5>}Genesis 22:5); no mention is made of Isaac, but there is no doubt that he returned with Abraham, since we hear of him afterwards in his house; for as to what the Targum of Jonathan says, it cannot be depended on, that the angels took Isaac and brought him to the school of Shem the great, and there he was three years:

and they rose up, and went together to Beersheba; that is, when Abraham and Isaac came to the place where the young men were, they got up and proceeded on in their journey along with them to Beersheba, from whence Abraham came, and where he had for some time lived:

and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba; there he continued for some time afterwards, and but for a time, for in the next chapter we hear of him at Hebron, (^{<RB2>}Genesis 23:2).

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, after these things,* etc.] Abraham's taking his son Isaac to the land of Moriah, building an altar on one of the mountains there, and laying him on it with an intention to sacrifice him, and offering of a ram in his stead, and the return of them both to Beersheba:

that it was told Abraham; by some person very probably who was lately come from those parts where the following persons lived; though Jarchi suggests this was told him by the Lord himself, and while he was thinking

of taking a wife for Isaac of the daughters at Aner, or Eshcol, or Mamre; and to prevent which the following narration was given him:

saying, behold Milcah, she hath also borne children unto thy brother Nahor; as Sarah, supposed to be the same with Iscah, a daughter of Haran, had borne a son to him, and whom he had received again as from the dead; so Milcah, another daughter of Harsh, had borne children to his brother Nahor, whom he had left in Ur of the Chaldees, when he departed from thence, and who afterwards came and dwelt in Haran of Mesopotamia; (see ^{<0112>}Genesis 11:27,29).

Ver. 21. *Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother*, etc.] The first of these gave name to the land of Uz, where Job dwelt, and who seems to be a descendant of this man, (^{<R000>}Job 1:1); and from whom sprung the Ausitae of Ptolemy ^{f1285}, who dwelt near Babylon and by the Euphrates. The latter, was the father of the Buzites, of which family Elihu was, that interposed between Job and his friends, (^{<R010>}Job 32:2):

and Kemuel the father of Aram; not that Aram from whom the Syrians are denominated Arameans, he was the son of Shem, (^{<0112>}Genesis 10:22), but one who perhaps was so called from dwelling among them, as Jacob is, called a Syrian, (^{<0105>}Deuteronomy 26:5), or he had this name given him in memory and honour of the more ancient Aram: from this Kemuel might come the Camelites, of which there were two sorts mentioned by Strabo ^{f1286}, and who dwelt to the right of the river Euphrates, about three days' journey from it.

Ver. 22. *And Chesed*, etc.] From whom it is generally thought sprung the Chaldees, who are commonly called Chasdim; but mention is made of the Chaldees before this man was born, unless they are called so by anticipation; (see Gill on "^{<0112>}Genesis 10:22"):

and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel; of these men and their posterity we hear no more, excepting: the last, for whose sake the rest are mentioned. Hazo or Chazo settled in Elymais, a country belonging to Persia, where is now a city called Chuz after his name, and from whence the whole country is called Chuzistan; and the inhabitants of it are by the Assyrians called Huzoye or Huzaeans ^{f1287}; the same which Strabo ^{f1288} makes mention of under the name of Cossaeans, who are described as a warlike people, inhabiting a barren and mountainous country, and given to spoil and robbery; and are mentioned by him along with Elymaeans,

Medes, and Persians. Some Arabic writers say the Persians are from Pars, the son of Pahla; and Dr. Hyde^{f1289} queries whether Pahla is not the same with Paldas, that is, Pildash, another of the sons of Nahor.

Ver. 23. *And Bethuel begat Rebekah*, etc.] Who was to be and was the wife of Isaac; and, for the sake of her genealogy, the above account is given, as Aben Ezra observes, and so Jarchi; and this is observed to pave the way for the history of the chapter; for no notice is taken of any other of Bethuel's children but her, not even of Laban her brother:

these eight Milcah did bear, to Nahor, Abraham's brother; this is observed, and the exact number given, as well as their names, to distinguish them from other children of Nahor he had by another woman, as follows:

Ver. 24. *And his concubine, whose name [was] Reumah*, etc.] Not an harlot, but a secondary wife, who was under the proper and lawful wife, and a sort of a head servant in the family, and chiefly kept for the procreation of children; which was not thought either unlawful or dishonourable in those times such as was Hagar in Abraham's family:

she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah, of whom we have no account elsewhere; only it may be observed, that here Maachah is the name of a man, which sometimes is given to a woman, (~~1153~~1 Kings 15:13).