

*Someone made a comment online that Abraham killed Isaac and that Genesis 22 had been modified. "in Gen 22, verses 11-18 were late additions; verses 1-10, and verse 19 were the original text. Verses 1-10, and verse 19 referred to god as "YHWH". Verses 11-18 referred to god as "Elohim". Gen 22:19 Then Abraham returned to his servants, and they set off together for Beersheba. And Abraham stayed in Beersheba." When Abraham came down from the mountain, only he came down (Isaac never came down); only Abraham went home with the servants waiting at the bottom of the mountain." I've never heard this allegation before. Can you offer evidence either for or against these statements?*

Criswell College's computer assisted commentary states that the "story" of Abraham may be a "modified tale".<sup>1</sup>

James Sidlow Baxter said, "The biggest division between Christians is no longer between one denomination and another but between those who accept the Bible as the inspired word of God and those who do not."

In Genesis chapter 22 verses 11-18 we read:

Then He said, "Do not lay a hand on the boy or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your only son from Me." Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in the thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son. And Abraham named that place The LORD Will Provide, so today it is said: "It will be provided on the LORD's mountain."

Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, "By Myself I have sworn," this is the LORD's declaration: "Because you have done this thing and have not withheld your only son, I will indeed bless you and make your offspring as numerous as the stars of the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your offspring will possess the gates of their enemies."

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<sup>1</sup> According to the story, God directed Abraham to go to a mountain. The key events in Abraham's test actually occurred on that mountain. The fact that this is the only story in the Abraham cycle with such a "marked" setting possessing a positive connotation increases the conviction that Gen 22:1-19 is literally to be understood as the high point of the overall series. The fact that the mountain chosen for this event later became Jerusalem's temple mount (cf. 2 Chron 3:1) would have given added religious prominence, and therefore significance, to the site for later Israelite audiences....[8]

...[8]. The identification of Mount Moriah with the site of the Solomonic temple invites extended speculation concerning the date of composition and historical precision of the Pentateuch. A common technique in narrative composition is to use a location considered especially important by the intended audience as the setting of the most important event in a story. With the temple mount in Jerusalem surely being the most important site in monarchic and Judahistic Yahwism, a writer creating the composition...could conceivably have borrowed the prestige of the Jerusalem temple complex and retrojected it back into the Abraham narrative. If this were so, the narrator could then have either modified a tale originally associated with another site in Palestine, or simply created a new one. Though I have never read this line of reasoning in Genesis commentaries, I suspect it would find favor from many. Consistent with this suspicion is the fact that the majority of 20th-century commentators understand the story of Abraham's attempted sacrifice of his son to be primarily the product of the "Elohists," with minor additions (vv 15-18) coming from a "Jehovistic Redactor" (cf., e.g., Skinner, 327, 331, and Westermann, 363). Bergen, Robert and Criswell College. The Role of Genesis 22:1-19 In The Abraham Cycle: A Computer-Assisted Textual Interpretation. 1990, [biblicalelearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Bergen-Gen22-CTR.pdf](http://biblicalelearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Bergen-Gen22-CTR.pdf). Accessed 1 Feb. 2024.

And all the nations of the earth will be blessed by your offspring because you have obeyed My command (Ge 22:11-18, HCSB<sup>2</sup>).<sup>3</sup>

Abraham loved and trusted God; but, God asked him to sacrifice his son, Isaac.

Henry Morris wrote:

“But, Lord,” Abraham may have thought, “that doesn’t sound like you. You promised to make of Isaac a great nation, and he is not yet even married! True, the gods of the nations around us are sometimes worshiped by the sacrifice of sons and daughters [a fact abundantly verified by archaeological research], and I certainly love you as much as these people love their own false gods; but this class of thing surely is not pleasing to you. What will happen to all your promises if you make me do this thing? And what about Sarah? Why, this will literally bring her down to the grave with grief!”

Whether Abraham actually thought such things or not, Scripture does not say. All we are told is that he obeyed God, with no questions asked.<sup>4</sup>

Moriah, associated with Jerusalem, is where God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac (Ge 22:1–13) and it is where Solomon’s temple was built (2 Chr 3:1).

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<sup>2</sup> The second edition of the Holman Christian Standard Bible uses the Hebrew name (Yahweh) instead of the English translation LORD more. Gillis, John W. *The HCSB 2nd Edition and the Tetragrammaton – MaybeToday.org*. 1 Jan. 2009, [maybetoday.org/2009/01/the-hcsb-2nd-edition-and-the-tetragrammaton](http://maybetoday.org/2009/01/the-hcsb-2nd-edition-and-the-tetragrammaton).

<sup>3</sup> The Holy Bible: Holman Christian standard version. (Ge 22:11–18). (2009). Holman Bible Publishers.

<sup>4</sup> Morris, H. M. (1976). *The Genesis record: a scientific and devotional commentary on the book of beginnings* (pp. 373–374). Baker Books.