

LIVING GODS WILL

Vessel of God

ISAAC



The Sacrifice of Isaac by Caravaggio

Born: 2065 BC – Negev

Died: 1885 BC – Hebron (180 years old)

Isaac was the son of **Abraham and Sarah**.

Abraham tried to **sacrifice Isaac** to **God**.

Isaac married **Rabekah** who was his **cousin**.

Isaac fathered twin sons **Jacob** and **Esau**

The name **Isaac**, which means “**he laughs**,” was derived from his parents’ reaction when **God** told **Abraham** that he, at **100 years old**, and his wife **Sarah**, at the **age of 90**, would have a son (**Genesis 17:17; 18:12**).

Isaac was Abraham’s second son; his first, **Ishmael**, was by Sarah’s maidservant, **Hagar**, as a result of Sarah’s impatience to give Abraham a family (**Genesis 16:1-2**). As soon as **Isaac** was weaned, Sarah insisted that Abraham send Hagar and her son away, ensuring the family inheritance would go to **Isaac** (**Genesis 21:3-12**).

Many years later, **Isaac** was taken by his father up a mountain where Abraham, in obedience to **God**, prepared to sacrifice him (**Genesis 22:1-14**). Abraham, **Isaac**, and two of Abraham’s servants loaded up donkeys and made a three-day journey to Mount Moriah. Leaving his servants behind, Abraham and **Isaac** carried up the wood, knife, and materials for the fire, saying they would worship and then return.

Curious, **Isaac** asked about the location of the lamb for the offering. Abraham told **Isaac** that **God** Himself would provide the lamb. Abraham proceeded to build the altar and tie up **Isaac** to lay atop it. The Bible gives no indication that **Isaac** resisted. As Abraham prepared to kill **Isaac**, an angel stopped him.

Abraham then saw a ram in a thicket and offered it instead. There is an interesting analogy in this account that mirrors **God** giving up His only Son, **Jesus**, to be sacrificed. **God** did indeed provide the Lamb—literally for Abraham and **Isaac** then and figuratively for all of humanity willing to accept the sacrifice of **Jesus** (**John 1:29; Hebrews 10**).

Sarah died when **Isaac** was in his late thirties. After her death, Abraham sent one of his servants to find a wife for **Isaac** from their clan, as Abraham was determined his son should not have a Canaanite for a wife (**Genesis 24:1-51**). Abraham’s servant prayed to have success in finding a suitable wife, and **God** directed his quest. When he was forty, **Isaac** married his cousin **Rebekah** (**Genesis 25:20**). The Bible tells us that “he loved her; and **Isaac** was comforted after his mother’s death” (**Genesis 24:67**).

At age sixty, **Isaac** became the father of twins—**Jacob and Esau**. While **Isaac** favored his elder son, Esau, Rebekah's favorite was Jacob. This caused great rivalry within the family and led to Jacob, the younger son, receiving the inheritance and his father's blessing that should have gone to Esau, the older son, after **Isaac** and Esau were deceived by Rebekah and Jacob.

Isaac became aware of the deceit but could not revoke his blessing on Jacob (**Genesis 27**). Rebekah learned of Esau's plan to kill Jacob after **Isaac's** death and convinced **Isaac** to send Jacob to her brother **Laban** to find a wife among her relatives. **Isaac** again blessed Jacob before sending him on his way, praying that **God** would give Jacob the blessing given to Abraham.

Abraham died when **Isaac** was about seventy-five and left everything to him (**Genesis 25:5**). Though Ishmael had been sent away when **Isaac** was weaned, both **Isaac** and Ishmael buried Abraham (**Genesis 25:9**). The Bible does not talk specifically about their relationship, and the descendants of Ishmael and those of **Isaac** have historically been enemies; animosity remains to this day. But it is interesting to note that the two men apparently united in mourning their father.

When there was a famine in the land, **God** appeared to **Isaac** and told him not to go to **Egypt** but to remain in the land. **God** promised to be with **Isaac** and bless him and give the land to **Isaac's** descendants. **God** reaffirmed the covenant He had made with Abraham, saying that He would make his descendants as numerous as the stars and bless all the nations of the earth through them (**Genesis 26:1-6**).

Isaac remained in the land of **Canaan**. But, similar to what his father had done years before his birth, in fear, **Isaac** presented Rebekah as his sister rather than his wife (**Genesis 26:7-11**). But, just as **God** had protected Sarah, He also protected Rebekah. **God** blessed **Isaac** with bountiful crops and wealth, so much so that the Philistines became jealous and stopped up the water wells Abraham had dug.

The Philistine king asked **Isaac** to move, and **Isaac** complied, moving from place to place digging new wells when his enemies quarreled with him over the water. The Philistine king soon recognized that **Isaac** had been blessed by **God** and made a treaty of peace between them (**Genesis 26:26-31**).

Isaac died at the age of 180 and was buried by both his sons. **God** affirmed His covenant with **Isaac's** son, Jacob, whom He renamed **Israel**.

Though much of **Isaac's** story is narrative without many readily applicable lessons to our lives, we do see in **Isaac** a heart surrendered to **God's** will. For example, he was obedient to Abraham and Sarah and apparently trusting of their guidance. He obeyed when **God** told him to remain in the land despite the famine and the attacks of his enemies.

When **Isaac** discovered that he had been deceived by his son Jacob, he accepted and submitted to what he recognized as **God's** will, in spite of it being completely

against the accepted tradition at the time. Just as **Isaac** discovered, we, too, must remember that **God's** ways are not our ways or His thoughts the same as ours (**Isaiah 55:8**).

Isaac's story also demonstrates **God's** faithfulness to His promises—He had made a covenant with Abraham and would continue to uphold it with **Isaac** and with **Isaac's** son Jacob.

Though there are no great achievements to speak of concerning **Isaac's** life, it was **Isaac** whom **God** chose to continue the covenant line, the same line that would produce the Messiah, **Jesus**. And for many generations the Jewish nation described their **God** as the **God of Abraham, Isaac**, and Jacob.

Indeed, there are several passages of Scripture where **God** describes Himself in the same manner (e.g., **Exodus 3:6**). **Isaac** is listed with the other patriarchs and has a place in **God's kingdom** (**Luke 13:28**). And there is no greater honor we can hope to achieve.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

Gen 17:21 But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year."

Gen 22:1 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." **2** Then He said, "Take now 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."

Gen 25:20 Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian.

Gen 26:6 So Isaac dwelt in Gerar. **7** And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, "She is my sister"; for he was afraid to say, "She is my wife," because he thought, "lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she is beautiful to behold."



Isaac Blessing Jacob by Govert Flinck