

Abraham: The Narrative Art of Genesis 22

In this session, we will work in small groups to evaluate the narrative art of the Abraham and Isaac on Mt Moriah story. How is the writer communicating the account in order to move his readers? How can we effectively preach this story in our context?

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I. The Narrative Art of Scripture

- a. Recognising biblical narrative

- b. What to look for in biblical narrative: “ACTS”¹

II. Genesis 22:1-19

¹After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here am I.” ²He said, “Take 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.” ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. ⁵Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you.” ⁶And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. ⁷And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here am I, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” ⁸Abraham said, “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So, they went both of them together.

⁹When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said,

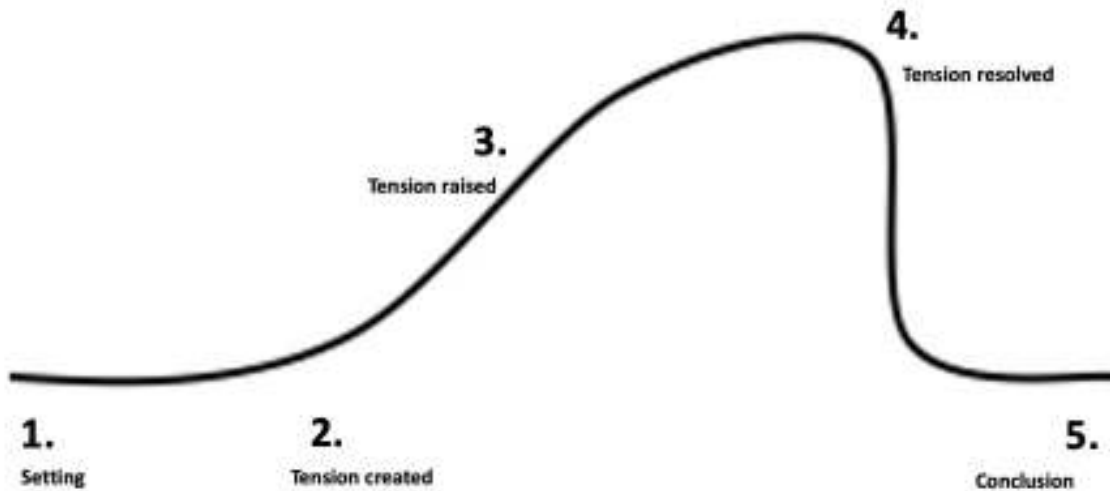
¹ Mathewson, Steven D. “The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative” (Second Edition)

“Here am I.” ¹²He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” ¹³And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴So Abraham called the name of that place, “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

¹⁵And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” ¹⁹So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham lived at Beersheba.

III. Group Discussion

Fill in the verses to shape the plot:



IV. Preaching the Narrative of Genesis 22

- a. Dangers

- b. Opportunities

V. Group Discussion

Suggested Readings:

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*.

Arthurs, Jeffery. *Preaching with Variety*.

Chappell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching*.

Mathewson, Steven D. *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative* (Second Edition).