

ABRAHAM'S RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SACRIFICE: HOW TO UNDERSTAND (AND TRANSLATE) GENESIS 15 AND 22¹

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The story of the patriarch Abraham as it is told in the book of Genesis certainly belongs to the most popular narratives of the Hebrew Bible. It has inspired Jewish and Christian commentators, artists, philosophers and biblical scholars through the centuries. There is especially one text that has intrigued or irritated commentators, that is the story of Abraham's sacrifice in Gen 22². Whereas Immanuel Kant in "The Conflict of the Faculties" used this narrative in order to demonstrate that God would never ask a human to slaughter his own child³, Søren Kierkegaard in "Fear and Trembling"⁴ understood the story as the best example what true faith is about, namely that Abraham suspended ethical requirements in order to fulfill what he regarded as his absolute duty to God. And until today Abraham's sacrifice is used in very different contexts as a symbol of religious fanaticism, but also in more ironical contexts.

Another famous text is Gen 15, which Christians have used throughout their history in the debate about the relation between faith and works. Paul quotes Gen 15,6 in Gal 3,10 in order to prove that Abraham's righteousness is the result of his faith: "Well then, does God

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² Filip Čapek, Philosophical discourse on Genesis 22 – Akedah reflected by Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, in: *Communio Viatorum* 52 (2010), 217–227.

³ Immanuel Kant, Mary J. Gregor (ed), *The Conflict of the Faculties*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992.

⁴ *Fear and Trembling* 1843 – Kierkegaard's Writings; 6 – copyright 1983 – Howard V. Hong.

supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard? Just as Abraham ‘believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,’ so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham” (Gal 3:5–7). On the other hand, James uses Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son in order to show that his righteousness was the result of his “works”: “Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,’ and he was called the friend of God” (James 2:21–23). When quoting Gen 15,6 Paul and James both cite the second half of the verse (“it was reckoned to him as righteousness”) in a passive voice according to the Septuagint, the Greek translation. The Hebrew text however uses the active voice, and it is unclear who is justifying whom. More generally, Genesis 15 is quite exceptional in the Abraham narrative since in this chapter Abraham becomes a prototype of almost all major figures in the Hebrew Bible. In the following presentation I would like to analyze some of the issues that are dealt with in both of these chapters⁵.

The structure of Genesis 22:

A v.1a **Introduction**

B v.1b–2 The god (*Ha-elohim*) speaks to Abraham (*hinneni*):

Order to *sacrifice*

Imperatif

C v. 3 Preparations for the departure and departure

D v. 4–5: Abraham speaks to the young men

D' v. 6–8 Abraham speaks to Isaac (*hinneni*)

C' v.9–10 Preparations for the *sacrifice*

B' v.11–14. 15–18 **Yhwh’s angel** speaks

to Abraham (*hinneni*): *sacrifice* *Prohibitif*

A' v.19 **Epilogue: Abraham’s return. Beersheba**

⁵ The paragraph on Gen 22 is summarizing an article published in French: Thomas Römer, Le “sacrifice d’Abraham”, un texte élohiste? Quelques observations à partir de Gn 22,14 et d’un fragment de Qumran, in: *Semitica* 54 (2012), 163–172.

The text displays a certain number of frequent roots. The most important is “to speak”. After that we have “to take” (2, 3, 6 [2×], 10, 13), “to go” (2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 13, 19), “to cause to rise/holocaust” (2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 13). These roots are typical of the content of a pilgrimage and one may ask whether Abraham is depicted here as the prototype of the pilgrim?

Genesis 22 and the question of human sacrifices

There is hardly any doubt that Genesis 22,1–19 has to do with the question of human sacrifices in ancient Israel and Judah. There is a rabbinic tradition adopted by Rashi and some contemporary commentators according to which God had asked Abraham merely to present his son to him and then to bring him down again⁶, and that Abraham in a way misunderstood the order. But this apologetic interpretation does not fit with the overall purpose of the narrative.

Several biblical texts mention the offering of human sacrifices to Molech (according to the Massoretic vocalization), as for instance in Lev 18.21: “You shall not give any of your children to devote them by fire to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.” There is strong debate about the meaning of *mlk*. Does it refer to a kind of sacrifice, or is it the name of a deity? I have suggested a somewhat provocative solution, arguing that an original *melech* (“king”) was transformed into *molech* (the vowels of “*boshet*”, meaning shame)⁷. *Melech* often appears as a title for Yhwh, and there were apparently human sacrifices that were offered, in extreme situations, to Yhwh-Melech.

There are hints to this in the Hebrew Bible. The end of the somewhat complicated text in Hos 13.2 could be read “those who sacrifice humans are kissing calves.” The interdiction of Lev 18.21 (see

⁶ “He [G-d] did say to him, ‘Slaughter him!’ because G-d did not wish him killed, but, only to be brought up the mountain to be made into an *Olah*-sacrifice. Once he brought him up He [G-d] said to him, ‘Bring him down.’” Anoted according to <http://www.mnemotrix.com/metsudah/b04r.html> (14. 10. 2012)

⁷ Thomas Römer, *Le sacrifice humain en Juda et Israël au premier millénaire avant notre ère*, in: *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 1 (1999), 16–26.

above) only makes sense if one understands that through the sacrifice to Molech, Yhwh's name is profaned, that means that offering sacrifices to him as Yhwh-Melech means profaning his name. We might also consider the astonishing oracle in Ezek 20.25–26: “Moreover I gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not have life; and I defiled them through their very gifts in making them offer by fire all their first-born, that I might horrify them; I did it that they might know that I am the LORD.” This is the only text in the Bible stating that Yhwh has given bad laws to Israel, and that such laws have to do with human sacrifice. Apparently there were people in Israel and/or Judah convinced of the premise that Yhwh desired human sacrifices. In order to counter that position the author of Ezek 20 asserts that Yhwh gave those orders as a punishment.

Genesis 22 arguably functions in a similar way: God only asked Abraham to sacrifice his son to test him, since the sacrifice turned out to be that of an animal. Ezek 20 and Gen 22 are texts from the late Babylonian or early Persian period that tried, in the context of nascent Judaism, to eradicate the idea that Yhwh would need child sacrifices.

A question arises from an attentive reading of the text as to which son was to be offered. Gen 22.2 relates that God asked Abraham to offer his only son (“Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Mori’ah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you”). But Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. The singling out of Isaac can be explained by the immediate literary context, that is, chapters 20–22.

Genesis 22 in its context (Gen 20–22)

Genesis 20 repeats a theme of Gen 12.10–20 in which Abraham, who is sojourning in the territory of a Philistine king, presents his wife as his sister. This sets up a situation in which the king may take her into his harem. But unlike Gen 12, God appears to the pagan king in a dream and tells him not to touch Sarah, so that her integrity is preserved. Following this threat, Gen 21.1–7 finally reports the birth story of Isaac, the son that God promised to Abraham from the very

beginning. Immediately after Isaac's birth, Abraham "loses" his first son Ishmael, as Sarah demands the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael. Thanks to divine intervention, the mother and her son are saved from death in the wilderness, but Abraham nevertheless loses his first son. Gen 21.8–20 can indeed be understood as a prologue to Gen 22. Both texts contain interesting parallels: the boy's life is threatened (in 21 by Sarah, in 22 by God); God gives an order and Abraham obeys it (21.12–14; 22.1–3); the boy is saved by a divine intervention from heaven (cf. שָׁמַיִם in 21.17 and 22.11,15); but this retrieval does not bring back the son to his father (21.12: Ishmael is living far away from Abraham; 22.19: Abraham comes back from the sacrifice without Isaac!).

Between the story of the loss of Ishmael and the sacrifice of Isaac we find another narrative which takes up the theme of Abraham's sojourn in the territory of the Philistine king Abimelech in chapter 20. Following a dispute over the use of water wells, Abraham becomes the "founder" of Beer-sheba (the "well of the oath", according to popular etymology), a place, to which he returns after the sacrifice in 22.19.

Is Gen 22 an "elohistic" text?

It is quite obvious that chapters 20, 21 and 22 are closely related as has been observed for a long time. In historical critical scholarship these chapters have often been attributed to the Elohist or the Elohistic document because of the clear preference for the use of "elohim" for God in chapters 20–22. Nowadays most scholars deny the existence of an elohistic source or document. And yet the preponderance of elohim in Gen 20–22 remains in need of an explanation.

First of all, what is the situation in Gen 22? At first glance, this story can hardly be labeled "elohistic" because the divine name Yhwh appears in verses 11, 14 and 15–16.

With respect to v. 15–16 it is generally accepted that these verses belong to a late addition to the text (v. 15–18). The second speech of the angel, a patchwork of divine promises, comes too late after the denouement. Moreover, its baroque language contrasts with the sober style of the previous narrative. The addition conspicuously reinterprets

the narrative in the light of the deuteronomistic theology: Abraham is rewarded because of his obedience.

Verse 11 is clearly part of the original narrative and the Massoretic reading “Yhwh” is clearly presupposed by the LXX with *kurios*. Papyrus 961 (Chester Beatty IV) does however in this verse probably presuppose an “angel of God” (elohim), as does the Syriac translation, the so-called Peshitta. Therefore, there may be some probability for an original “elohim” in this verse.

In the quite complicated verse 14, however, the Peshitta also contains the tetragrammaton: “And Abraham called the name of that place ‘Yhwh (will) see’: as it is said to this day, on the mount of Yhwh it shall be seen (or: on the mount ‘Yhwh shall be seen’).” We do however find one attestation for “elohim” in the first part of v. 14. A very small fragment from Qumran (4QGenExod^a) published by James Davila⁸ provides evidence that this manuscript contained *elohim* instead of *yhwh*. In this case verse 14a would match perfectly with Abraham’s statement in v. 8. When Isaac asks him about the victim for the holocaust, Abraham answers: “God will provide (see for) himself a lamb for a burnt offering” (אלהים יראה-לו השם לעלה).

Unfortunately, the Qumran fragment does not preserve the second half of this verse. Though Davila thinks the missing portion may have contained “elohim,” there is no indication in any manuscript for that solution.

Another possibility would be to argue that the second half of v. 14 did not belong to the original narrative. V. 14a is indeed, together with Abraham’s return in v. 19, a fitting conclusion that refers back to v. 8: “14 And Abraham called the name of the *place*, God-Will-Provide. 19 Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba”. And there is a kind of contradiction between the place (*maqôm*) in the first half of the verse and the “mountain” in the second half. The place is already mentioned in verses 3 and 4, and probably already alludes to the only place where sacrifices should be offered to Yhwh (Deut 12), which is Jerusalem according to the Judean reception. The book of Chronicles, which

⁸ James Davila, The Name of God at Moriah: An Unpublished Fragment from 4QGenExod^a, in: *JBL* 110 (1991), 577–582.

identifies Moriah with the temple mount (2 Chr 3.1), apparently shares the same opinion.

If the original narrative contained only the first half of verse 14 there would be some evidence that the original narrative of Abraham's sacrifice contained only the divine name "elohim", like the original narratives in chapters 20 and 21.

This of course raises the question of how one should explain this original use of "elohim". If there was no "Elohism" or elohistic document, the only explanation I can think of is that these chapters presuppose altogether the priestly texts of the books of Genesis and Exodus. The priestly authors clearly have the idea that the "real" name of the god of Israel has been revealed only since the time of the exodus, as stated in Exod 6.2–3: "God (elohim) spoke to Moses and said to him: 'I am Yhwh. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as El Shadday, but by my name 'Yhwh' I did not make myself known to them'. This hypothesis would confirm a late date for chapters 20–22, which is argued for other reasons as well.

Which deity asks Abraham to sacrifice his own son?

Before addressing the question of why the original elohim-text was altered into a mixed text by the insertion of passages using the tetragrammata, we have to pay attention to a particularity of the elohistic text in Gen 22, which remains unacknowledged in most English translations and also in commentaries. Verse 1 is usually translated as "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham". The Hebrew, however, has "ha-elohim", literally "the God", and the same holds true for verses 3 and 9. This lexeme appears frequently in texts from the late Persian and early Hellenistic period, and especially in the book of Qoheleth. In this book *ha-elohim* is used to denote a god that dwells far away from humans and appears to be incomprehensible. The same may hold true for Gen 22. The term – used only by the narrator and not by Abraham – may deliberately denote what Luther called the *Deus absconditus* or the dark side(s) of God. I would therefore argue for a translation like "the deity" in order to distinguish "ha-elohim" from "elohim".

This subtle distinction was perhaps also the reason why later redactors inserted the tetragrammaton into the narrative. By doing so they constructed a scenario in which a deity asks that human sacrifice be offered to the god of Israel, who does not want this kind of offering. The god who asks Abraham to sacrifice his son (even if he only wants to “test” him) is called “ha-elohim” (the deity); Abraham first says that “elohim” will provide himself a victim (v. 8). Finally, the human sacrifice is stopped by the messenger of Yhwh (v. 11). After that the redactor of v. 14b affirms that Yhwh is the real name of the God that his audience should worship.

Gen 22 can thus be read as a transition from human to animal sacrifice, from ha-elohim to Yhwh.

Although the story ends with a “happy end” of a sort, it hints at the fact that Abraham has to separate from Isaac as he had separated from Ishmael. In verse 5, when leaving his servants with Isaac, he tells them: “Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then *we* will return to you.” But the narrator concludes the story in v. 19 with “So *Abraham* returned to his young men”. No word is said about Isaac. Does this mean that in the oldest tradition behind this text, Isaac had indeed been immolated, as some commentators have suggested⁹? This is probably not the case. The end of the story hints at the necessary separation between Abraham and Isaac. Henceforth Isaac apparently lives without his father, since in the chapters that follow Abraham and his sons never again appear together. Only on the occasion of their father’s funeral do both sons return to him.

As already mentioned, Gen 22 underwent a final revision by a redactor, who, by adding verses 15–18, insists on Abraham’s obedience that is rewarded by the divine promises. It is for this reason that the author of the epistle of James combines Gen 22 and Gen 15, in order to speak about Abraham’s faith and righteousness. As we are about to see, Gen 15 does indeed construct Abraham as the central figure of the Torah, but does it also highlight Abraham’s righteousness?

⁹ Recently Omri Boehm, *The Binding of Isaac. An Inner-Biblical Polemic on the Question of ‘Disobeying’ a Manifestly Illegal Order*, in: *VT* 52 (2002), 1–12.

Genesis 15 in the Context of the Redaction of the Pentateuch

Whereas recent Continental research tends to agree on the lateness of Gen 15, opinions vary over whether it basically comprises the work of one author, results from a complex history of redactions, or pre-or postdates the priestly account of Yhwh's covenant with Abraham in Gen 17. These questions cannot be addressed here. I consider Gen 15 as one of the latest texts of the Abraham narrative, which was except from glosses in v. 2–3 written by one author¹⁰.

Abraham, the First King

Gen 15 opens by presenting Abraham as a royal figure. In verse 1, Yhwh promises him great reward and presents himself as Abram's shield. The root *m-g-n* appears in the Pentateuch only in Gen 14.20 and in Deut 33.29, the latter also containing Moses' last words before his death. Yhwh's promise to Abram is fulfilled in his intervention for a "royal" Israel: "Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by Yhwh, the shield of your help, and the sword of your triumph! Your enemies shall submit themselves to you; and you shall tread upon their high places." Abram's royalty is reinforced by the divine exhortation: "do not be afraid", which parallels Assyrian and Babylonian *salvation oracles* given to the king.

Abraham also appears as the "first David"¹¹. Yhwh's unconditional promise to Abraham anticipates his conditional promise to David in 2 Sam 7¹²:

¹⁰ For more details Jan Christian Gertz, Abraham, Mose und der Exodus. Beobachtungen zur Redaktionsgeschichte von Genesis 15, in: Jan Christian Gertz, Konrad Schmid and Markus Witte (eds), *Abschied vom Jahwisten. Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion*, BZAW 315, Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 2002, 63–81. Thomas Römer, Abraham and the Law and the Prophets, in: Pernille Carstens and Niels Peter Lemche (eds), *The Reception and Remembrance of Abraham*, Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and its Contexts 13, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2011, 103–118.

¹¹ Bernard Gosse, Abraham and David, in: *JSOT* 34 (2009), 25–31.

¹² Besides 2 Sam 6.11, Gen 15 and 2 Sam 7 are the only biblical texts that speak about a son coming out of his father's entrails.

Gen 15.4 The one who shall come forth out of your entrails
(אשר יצא ממעיך) shall be your heir.

2 Sam 7.12 I will set up your seed after you, that shall come
forth out of your entrails (אשר יצא ממעיך).

The transfer of royal ideology to Abraham, which occurs also in Gen 12.1–4¹³ and in Gen. 17¹⁴, probably reflects a kind of democratization of royal ideology. The Torah agrees with the idea that Israel does not need a king since it has Moses, and, it appears, Abraham.

Abraham's faith and whose righteousness?

Commentators often point to Abraham also being presented as an anti-Ahaz. The emphasis on his faith (v. 6) is the opposite of king Ahaz, whom the prophet Isaiah accuses of lacking faith (Isa. 7.9).

Isa 7.9 אם לא תאמינו כי לא תאמנו If you do not stand firm
in faith, you shall not
stand at all.

Gen15. 6 והאמן ביהוה ויחשבה לו צדקה He had faith in Yhwh and
he reckoned it to him as
righteousness.

Contrary to Ahaz, Abraham trusts the divine promises. He also surpasses Moses according to this statement. Moses and Aaron are indeed accused in Numbers 20 of lacking faith: “And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron: Because you did not believe in me

¹³ Jean-Louis Ska, *The Call of Abraham and Israel's Birth-certificate* (Gen 12:1–4a), in: *The Exegesis of the Pentateuch*, FAT 66, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009, 46–66, 62–63.

¹⁴ In Gen 17 Abram receives a new name like a king when he is enthroned. He also becomes the “father” of all coming kings (v. 19).

(יֵעַן לֵא-הָאֲמִנְתֶּם בִּי), to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them” (Numb 20.12). In contrast, Abraham’s faith not only surpasses Ahaz’ faith but also the faith of Moses and Aaron. He appears in this chapter indeed as the “father of faith”.

Less clear however is the second half of Gen 15.6¹⁵. Many translations understand this text as follows: “And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness” (NRSV), “Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD considered his response of faith as proof of genuine loyalty (NET)”. The LXX renders the sentence in the passive voice, a rendering that appears in the New Testament quotations of Gen 15.6: “And Abram believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness”.¹⁶ The Hebrew text however remains rather ambiguous, and the KJV’s rendering is in this case commendable: “And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness”. In the Hebrew text it is not clear who is the subject of the second phrase of v.6, Abraham or Yhwh. Since the subject of the new phrase is not explicitly mentioned it would be logical to think that the subject is Abraham, as in the foregoing sentence. The meaning would then be that Abraham counted Yhwh’s promises as an act of divine justice or righteousness. This understanding is presupposed in the historical summary of Neh 9. The summary about Abraham clearly takes up Gen 15, as shown by verses 7–8: “You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham; and you found his heart faithful before you, and made with him a covenant to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and

¹⁵ For different opinions on Gen 15.6 see Manfred Oeming, *Ist Genesis 15,6 ein Beleg für die Anrechnung des Glaubens zur Gerechtigkeit?*, in: *ZAW* 95 (1983), 182–197; Robert W.L. Moberly, *Abraham’s righteousness (Genesis xv 6)*, in: J. A. Emerton (ed), *Studies in the Pentateuch*, SVT 41 (1990), 103–130; Dirk U. Rottzoll, *Gen 15,6–Ein Beleg für den Glauben als Werkgerechtigkeit*, in: *ZAW* 106 (1994), 21–27; Ina Willi-Plein, *Zu A. Behrens, Gen 15,6 und das Vorverständnis des Paulus*, in: *ZAW* 112 (2000), 396–397; Sascha Flüchter, and Lars Schnor, *Die Anrechnung des Glaubens zur Gerechtigkeit. Ein rezeptionsgeschichtlicher Versuch zum Verständnis von Gen 15,6 MT*, in: *BN* 109 (2001), 27–44; Bernard Gosse, « Abraham crut en Yahvé, qui le lui compta comme justice », in: *ETR* 85 (2010), 457–466.

¹⁶ Quoted according to Lloyd Gaston, *Abraham and the Righteousness of God*, *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 2 (1980), 39–68, 42–43.

the Girgashite; and you have fulfilled your promise, for you are righteous (כִּי צְדִיק אַתָּה).” According to the understanding of the author of this text, likely written shortly after Gen 15, it is Yhwh’s behaviour towards Abraham that is considered to be righteous. This is also the sense proposed by Jewish commentators such as Ramban who declares: “What would be correct in my judgment is that it is said (or, is to be interpreted as follows): ‘that he believed in the LORD and thought [i.e., counted] that [it represents] the righteousness of the Holy One.’” Yhwh’s justice and righteousness is very frequently mentioned in the Psalms and other poetic texts (see for instance: Ps 5.8: “Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness”, or Ps 22.32: “they will proclaim his righteousness to a people still unborn”, etc.). If this understanding is right, Gen 15.6 has nothing to do with “justification by faith”; Abraham is simply noting Yhwh’s righteousness because God has given him a promise of offspring.

One must however notice that the following verse 15.7, which while beginning with an undefined subject, clearly refers to Yhwh: “He said to him, ‘I am the LORD who brought you up from Ur of the Chaldeans...’”. But here change of subject is not a problem because the identity of the speaker appears immediately through his *Selbstvorstellung*. Therefore the probability that Gen 15.6 referred not to Abraham’s but to Yhwh’s righteousness is in my view somewhat stronger. Translations should in any case respect the ambiguity of the verse.

Conclusion

Genesis 22 and Genesis 15 highlight Abraham’s faith in different and intriguing ways. It is quite possible that the author of Genesis 15 already presupposes Gen 22 when he writes his famous statement in Gen 15.6. Gen 22 in its original version was perhaps an “*elohistic*” text avoiding the divine name Yhwh. One however finds a difference in the Hebrew text between the use of *ha-elohim* and *elohim* that the translations rarely reflect but which nonetheless bears a specific meaning in the Hebrew text, namely that *ha-elohim* refers to the “*deus absconditus*” and should therefore be rendered as such. In its final form Gen 22

offers a subtle word-play with divine names, showing that Yhwh is the god, who wants no part of human sacrifice. As the latest text of the Abraham narrative, Gen 15 tries to highlight the importance of Abraham for nascent Judaism. The author sets forth the notion that Israel does not need any more kings since the Davidic promises are democratized in Abraham. According to Gen 15 Israel's first and "ecumenical" ancestor is as important as Moses, and in some aspects surpasses him. Like Moses, Abraham is informed about the identity of Israel's God, but contrary to Moses, the land that is promised to him does not need to be conquered by annihilating the nations. Abraham's faith surpasses that of Moses, and with Gen 15.6 Abraham's brilliant career in later Christianity and in Islam is inaugurated. This career does not, however, necessarily comprise the Christian idea of justification by faith.

Summary: *In this article the story of the "Binding of Isaac" in Gen 22 is analyzed with regard to its changing divine actor (yhwh or elohim), its possible belonging to an "Elohistic source", and to the way it could elucidate our understanding of the enigmatic sentence on "believing" and "counting for justice" in Gen 15:6.*

Keywords: Abraham; binding of Isaac; names of God; Bible – literary criticism; Christian reading of the OT.



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