What is Moral?

Parshat Veara

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Perek 22

1. List five moral questions about the commandment to “offer Isaac as a burnt offering” (v2)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| And it came to pass after these things, that God tested Abraham, and He said to him, "Abraham," and he said, "Here I am." |  | **א**וַיְהִ֗י אַחַר֙ הַדְּבָרִ֣ים הָאֵ֔לֶּה וְהָ֣אֱלֹקים נִסָּ֖ה אֶת־אַבְרָהָ֑ם וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֵלָ֔יו אַבְרָהָ֖ם וַיֹּ֥אמֶר הִנֵּֽנִי: |
| **[2](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=2)**And He said, "Please take your son, your only one, whom you love, yea, Isaac, and go away to the land of Moriah and bring him up there for a burnt offering on one of the mountains, of which I will tell you." |  | **ב**וַיֹּ֡אמֶר קַח־נָ֠א אֶת־בִּנְךָ֨ אֶת־יְחִֽידְךָ֤ אֲשֶׁר־אָהַ֨בְתָּ֙ אֶת־יִצְחָ֔ק וְלֶ֨ךְ־לְךָ֔ אֶל־אֶ֖רֶץ הַמֹּֽרִיָּ֑ה וְהַֽעֲלֵ֤הוּ שָׁם֙ לְעֹלָ֔ה עַ֚ל אַחַ֣ד הֶֽהָרִ֔ים אֲשֶׁ֖ר אֹמַ֥ר אֵלֶֽיךָ: |
| **[3](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=3)**And Abraham arose early in the morning, and he saddled his donkey, and he took his two young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for a burnt offering, and he arose and went to the place of which God had told him. |  | **ג**וַיַּשְׁכֵּ֨ם אַבְרָהָ֜ם בַּבֹּ֗קֶר וַיַּֽחֲבשׁ֙ אֶת־חֲמֹר֔וֹ וַיִּקַּ֞ח אֶת־שְׁנֵ֤י נְעָרָיו֙ אִתּ֔וֹ וְאֵ֖ת יִצְחָ֣ק בְּנ֑וֹ וַיְבַקַּע֙ עֲצֵ֣י עֹלָ֔ה וַיָּ֣קָם וַיֵּ֔לֶךְ אֶל־הַמָּק֖וֹם אֲשֶׁר־אָֽמַר־ל֥וֹ הָֽאֱלֹהִֽים: |
| **[4](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=4)**On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. |  | **ד**בַּיּ֣וֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁ֗י וַיִּשָּׂ֨א אַבְרָהָ֧ם אֶת־עֵינָ֛יו וַיַּ֥רְא אֶת־הַמָּק֖וֹם מֵֽרָחֹֽק: |
| **[5](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=5)**And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go yonder, and we will prostrate ourselves and return to you." |  | **ה**וַיֹּ֨אמֶר אַבְרָהָ֜ם אֶל־נְעָרָ֗יו שְׁבֽוּ־לָכֶ֥ם פֹּה֙ עִם־הַֽחֲמ֔וֹר וַֽאֲנִ֣י וְהַנַּ֔עַר נֵֽלְכָ֖ה עַד־כֹּ֑ה וְנִשְׁתַּֽחֲוֶ֖ה וְנָשׁ֥וּבָה אֲלֵיכֶֽם: |
| **[6](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=6)**And Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, and he placed [it] upon his son Isaac, and he took into his hand the fire and the knife, and they both went together. |  | **ו**וַיִּקַּ֨ח אַבְרָהָ֜ם אֶת־עֲצֵ֣י הָֽעֹלָ֗ה וַיָּ֨שֶׂם֙ עַל־יִצְחָ֣ק בְּנ֔וֹ וַיִּקַּ֣ח בְּיָד֔וֹ אֶת־הָאֵ֖שׁ וְאֶת־הַמַּֽאֲכֶ֑לֶת וַיֵּֽלְכ֥וּ שְׁנֵיהֶ֖ם יַחְדָּֽו: |
| **[7](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=7)**And Isaac spoke to Abraham his father, and he said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" |  | **ז**וַיֹּ֨אמֶר יִצְחָ֜ק אֶל־אַבְרָהָ֤ם אָבִיו֙ וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אָבִ֔י וַיֹּ֖אמֶר הִנֶּ֣נִּי בְנִ֑י וַיֹּ֗אמֶר הִנֵּ֤ה הָאֵשׁ֙ וְהָ֣עֵצִ֔ים וְאַיֵּ֥ה הַשֶּׂ֖ה לְעֹלָֽה: |
| **[8](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=8)**And Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And they both went together. |  | **ח**וַיֹּ֨אמֶר֙ אַבְרָהָ֔ם אֱלֹקים יִרְאֶה־לּ֥וֹ הַשֶּׂ֛ה לְעֹלָ֖ה בְּנִ֑י וַיֵּֽלְכ֥וּ שְׁנֵיהֶ֖ם יַחְדָּֽו: |
| **[9](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=9)**And they came to the place of which God had spoken to him, and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and he bound Isaac his son and placed him on the altar upon the wood. |  | **ט**וַיָּבֹ֗אוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם֘ אֲשֶׁ֣ר אָֽמַר־ל֣וֹ הָֽאֱלֹקים֒ וַיִּ֨בֶן שָׁ֤ם אַבְרָהָם֙ אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּ֔חַ וַיַּֽעֲרֹ֖ךְ אֶת־הָֽעֵצִ֑ים וַיַּֽעֲקֹד֙ אֶת־יִצְחָ֣ק בְּנ֔וֹ וַיָּ֤שֶׂם אֹתוֹ֙ עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּ֔חַ מִמַּ֖עַל לָֽעֵצִֽים: |
| **[10](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=10)**And Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife, to slaughter his son. |  | **י**וַיִּשְׁלַ֤ח אַבְרָהָם֙ אֶת־יָד֔וֹ וַיִּקַּ֖ח אֶת־הַמַּֽאֲכֶ֑לֶת לִשְׁחֹ֖ט אֶת־בְּנֽוֹ: |
| **[11](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=11)**And an angel of God called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham! Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." |  | **יא**וַיִּקְרָ֨א אֵלָ֜יו מַלְאַ֤ךְ ה֙' מִן־הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם וַיֹּ֖אמֶר אַבְרָהָ֣ם | אַבְרָהָ֑ם וַיֹּ֖אמֶר הִנֵּֽנִי: |
| **[12](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=12)**And he said, "Do not stretch forth your hand to the lad, nor do the slightest thing to him, for now I know that you are a God fearing man, and you did not withhold your son, your only one, from Me." |  | **יב**וַיֹּ֗אמֶר אַל־תִּשְׁלַ֤ח יָֽדְךָ֙ אֶל־הַנַּ֔עַר וְאַל־תַּ֥עַשׂ ל֖וֹ מְא֑וּמָה כִּ֣י | עַתָּ֣ה יָדַ֗עְתִּי כִּֽי־יְרֵ֤א אֱלֹקים֙ אַ֔תָּה וְלֹ֥א חָשַׂ֛כְתָּ אֶת־בִּנְךָ֥ אֶת־יְחִֽידְךָ֖ מִמֶּֽנִּי: |
| **[13](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=13)**And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and he saw, and lo! there was a ram, [and] after [that] it was caught in a tree by its horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. |  | **יג**וַיִּשָּׂ֨א אַבְרָהָ֜ם אֶת־עֵינָ֗יו וַיַּרְא֙ וְהִנֵּה־אַ֔יִל אַחַ֕ר נֶֽאֱחַ֥ז בַּסְּבַ֖ךְ בְּקַרְנָ֑יו וַיֵּ֤לֶךְ אַבְרָהָם֙ וַיִּקַּ֣ח אֶת־הָאַ֔יִל וַיַּֽעֲלֵ֥הוּ לְעֹלָ֖ה תַּ֥חַת בְּנֽוֹ: |
| **[14](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=14)**And Abraham named that place, The Lord will see, as it is said to this day: On the mountain, the Lord will be seen. |  | **יד**וַיִּקְרָ֧א אַבְרָהָ֛ם שֵֽׁם־הַמָּק֥וֹם הַה֖וּא ה | יִרְאֶ֑ה אֲשֶׁר֙ יֵֽאָמֵ֣ר הַיּ֔וֹם בְּהַ֥ר ה יֵֽרָאֶֽה: |
| **[15](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=15)**And an angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven. |  | **טו**וַיִּקְרָ֛א מַלְאַ֥ךְ ה אֶל־אַבְרָהָ֑ם שֵׁנִ֖ית מִן־הַשָּׁמָֽיִם: |
| **[16](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=16)**And he said, "By Myself have I sworn, says the Lord, that because you have done this thing and you did not withhold your son, your only one, |  | **טז**וַיֹּ֕אמֶר בִּ֥י נִשְׁבַּ֖עְתִּי נְאֻם־ה כִּ֗י יַ֚עַן אֲשֶׁ֤ר עָשִׂ֨יתָ֙ אֶת־הַדָּבָ֣ר הַזֶּ֔ה וְלֹ֥א חָשַׂ֖כְתָּ אֶת־בִּנְךָ֥ אֶת־יְחִידֶֽךָ: |
| **[17](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=17)**That I will surely bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand that is on the seashore, and your descendants will inherit the cities of their enemies. |  | **יז**כִּֽי־בָרֵ֣ךְ אֲבָֽרֶכְךָ֗ וְהַרְבָּ֨ה אַרְבֶּ֤ה אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ֙ כְּכֽוֹכְבֵ֣י הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם וְכַח֕וֹל אֲשֶׁ֖ר עַל־שְׂפַ֣ת הַיָּ֑ם וְיִרַ֣שׁ זַרְעֲךָ֔ אֵ֖ת שַׁ֥עַר אֹֽיְבָֽיו: |
| **[18](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=18)**And through your children shall be blessed all the nations of the world, because you hearkened to My voice." |  | **יח**וְהִתְבָּֽרֲכ֣וּ בְזַרְעֲךָ֔ כֹּ֖ל גּוֹיֵ֣י הָאָ֑רֶץ עֵ֕קֶב אֲשֶׁ֥ר שָׁמַ֖עְתָּ בְּקֹלִֽי: |
| **[19](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=19)**And Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beer sheba; and Abraham remained in Beer sheba. |  | **יט**וַיָּ֤שָׁב אַבְרָהָם֙ אֶל־נְעָרָ֔יו וַיָּקֻ֛מוּ וַיֵּֽלְכ֥וּ יַחְדָּ֖ו אֶל־בְּאֵ֣ר שָׁ֑בַע וַיֵּ֥שֶׁב אַבְרָהָ֖ם בִּבְאֵ֥ר שָֽׁבַע: |
| **[20](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=20)**And it came to pass after these matters, that it was told to Abraham saying: "Behold Milcah, she also bore sons to Nahor your brother. |  | **כ**וַיְהִ֗י אַֽחֲרֵי֙ הַדְּבָרִ֣ים הָאֵ֔לֶּה וַיֻּגַּ֥ד לְאַבְרָהָ֖ם לֵאמֹ֑ר הִ֠נֵּ֠ה יָֽלְדָ֨ה מִלְכָּ֥ה גַם־הִ֛וא בָּנִ֖ים לְנָח֥וֹר אָחִֽיךָ: |
| **[21](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=21)**Uz, his first born, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel, the father of Aram. |  | **כא**אֶת־ע֥וּץ בְּכֹר֖וֹ וְאֶת־בּ֣וּז אָחִ֑יו וְאֶת־קְמוּאֵ֖ל אֲבִ֥י אֲרָֽם: |
| **[22](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=22)**And Kesed and Hazo and Pildash and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. |  | **כב**וְאֶת־כֶּ֣שֶׂד וְאֶת־חֲז֔וֹ וְאֶת־פִּלְדָּ֖שׁ וְאֶת־יִדְלָ֑ף וְאֵ֖ת בְּתוּאֵֽל: |
| **[23](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=23)**And Bethuel begot Rebecca." These eight did Milcah bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother. |  | **כג**וּבְתוּאֵ֖ל יָלַ֣ד אֶת־רִבְקָ֑ה שְׁמֹנָ֥ה אֵ֨לֶּה֙ יָֽלְדָ֣ה מִלְכָּ֔ה לְנָח֖וֹר אֲחִ֥י אַבְרָהָֽם: |
| **[24](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8217" \l "v=24)**And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, had also given birth to Tebah and Gaham and Tahash and Maacah. |  | **כד**וּפִֽילַגְשׁ֖וֹ וּשְׁמָ֣הּ רְאוּמָ֑ה וַתֵּ֤לֶד גַּם־הִוא֙ אֶת־טֶ֣בַח וְאֶת־גַּ֔חַם וְאֶת־תַּ֖חַשׁ וְאֶת־מַֽעֲכָֽה |

**1)בראשית רבה נה:ד**

בא לו סמאל אצל אבינו אברהם אמר ליה: סבא סבא! אובדת לבך, בן שניתן לך לק' שנה, אתה הולך לשחטו?!   
אמר לו: על מנת כן!   
אמר לו: ואם מנסה אותך יותר מיכן, את יכול לעמוד?! (איוב ד) הנסה דבר אליך תלאה!  
אמר לו: ויתר על דין!   
אמר לו: למחר אומר לך שופך דם, את חייב ששפכת דמו של בנך?!   
אמר לו: על מנת כן!

Samael first turns against what is possibly the weakest point in Abraham’s personal moral armor, his old age, his presumptive senility. “Old man,” says the Devil to Abraham, “are you out of your senses already? Are you going to slaughter a son born to you at the age of a hundred?” This argument failing, he ridicules the pious obedience of the patriarch in another way by saying to him: Would you do, perhaps, even more for God than murder your son? “Canst thou stand even more?” And only after this argument fails does the Devil advance his most devastating piece of skepticism and his most dangerous temptation by asking Abraham: “Will not God say to thee tomorrow that thou art a bloodshedder? Thou hast murdered thy son! Thou art guilty!”

**2)K. Shapira, Esh Kodesh, Jerusalem, 1960, 68**

The nations of the world, even the best of them, think that the truth is a thing in itself, and that God commanded truth because the truth is intrinsically True…. Not so Israel, who say "You God are truth"… and we have no truth beside Him, and all the truth found in the world is there only because God wished it and commanded it…Stealing is forbidden because the God of truth has commanded it… When God ordered Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, it was true to sacrifice him and, had God not said later "neither do anything to him" it would have been true to slaughter him.

**3הרב שלמה אבינר**

"הצו האלוקי לעקוד את יצחק ממוטט את כל אשר ידע אברהם בחייו ואת כל אשר לימד אחרים... העקדה היא עקדת המוסר האנושי והצבת הצו האלוקי במקומו...

ללמדך בצורה הדרסטית ביותר, שאת מצוות ה' איננו מקיימים מפני שכך טוב לנו, מפני שאנו מבינים אותה, או מפני שאנו מרגישים נועם בקיומה, אלא מפני שהיא מצוות ה'...

הצו 'לא תרצח' כהוראה מוסרית אנושית - מת, והוא קם לתחייה כצו אלוקי שיונק את תוקפו ואמיתותו לא מהבנות והרגשות מתחלפות של האדם, אלא מהאלוקות שמעל לאדם

**4שמות כב:כט-ל**

**כח** מְלֵאָתְךָ וְדִמְעֲךָ לֹא תְאַחֵר בְּכוֹר בָּנֶיךָ תִּתֶּן-לִי:   
**כט** כֵּן-תַּעֲשֶׂה לְשֹׁרְךָ לְצֹאנֶךָ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים יִהְיֶה עִם-אִמּוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי תִּתְּנוֹ-לִי:

The first-born of your sons you shall give to me. You shall do likewise with your oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me"

**5)S. A. Kierkegaard**, “The Knight of Faith and the Knight of Infinite Resignation,” in R. Bretall (ed.), *A Kierkegaard Anthology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947), pp. 118-134.

“What ordinarily tempts a man is that which would keep him from doing his duty. But in this case,” paradoxically, “the ethical, the doing of one’s duty, is itself the temptation.”

“there must be a teleological suspension of the ethical. Avraham suspended his obligation to the universal to fulfill his higher duty to G-d.”

**6)Rambam Guide of the Perplexed III:24**

**רמב"ם מורה נבוכים ג' כ"ד:**

... דע, כי כל נסיון שבא בתורה אין כונתו וענינו, אלא כדי שידעו בני אדם שצריך להם לעשותו... וכאלו עניין הנסיון, שיעשה מעשה, אין הכונה גוף המעשה ההוא, אבל הכונה שיהיה משל, שילמדו ממנו וילכו אחריו כאמרו (דברים י"ג ד') "לדעת הישכם אוהבים את ה'" ואין פירושו, שידע ה', כי הוא כבר ידעון וכן (שמות ל"א י"ג) "כי אות היא ביני וביניכם לדורותיכם לדעת, כי אני ה' מקדשכם" אשר פרושו: שידעו האומות... ואמנם עניין אברהם אבינו בעקדה כלל שני ענינים גדולים, הם פנות התורה. העניין האחר להודיע אותנו גבול אהבת ה' ויראתו, עד היכן היא מגעת והוא: שיהיה איש עקר בתכלית הכסף לילד ובעל עשר גדול ואיש נכבד ונבחר שישאר מזרעו אומה ונולד לו בן אחר היאוש, איך יהיה חשקו בו ואהבתו אותו! אבל ליראתו את ה' יתברך ולאהבתו לקיים מצותו בולד האהוב, הניח כל מה שקוה בו והסכים לשחוט אותו אחרי מהלך ג' ימים. כי אלו היה רוצה לעשותו לשעתו בבוא המצוה אליו, היה פעולת בהלה בלתי הסתכלות; ואמנם עשותו זה אחר ימים מעת בוא המצוה אליו, היה המעשה במחשבה ובהסתכלות אמתי ובחינת חק מצותו ואהבתו ויראתו... וכדי שיתפרסם לבני אדם, מה ראוי לעשות בשביל אהבת ה' יתברך ויראתו, לא לתקות גמול ולא לפחד ענש... ומאר המלאך לו (י"ב) "כי עתה ידעתי כי ירא אלוקים אתה" רצונו לומר, שבזה המעשה אשר בו תקרא ירא אלוקים גמור ידעו כל בני אדם גבול יראת ה' מהו. – ודע, שכבר חזק זה העניין בתורה ובארו ואמר, שתכלית התורה כולה וכל מה שכללה אותו ממצות עשה וממצות לא תעשה ומיעודים ומספורים אמנם הוא דבר אחד והוא: יראת ה' יתברך, והוא אומרו (דברים כ"ח נ"ח) "אם לא תשמור לעשות את כל דברי התורה הזאת הכתובים בספר הזה לירא השם הנכבד והנורא..." – זה אחד משני הענינים המכוונים בעקדה....

The fact that Abraham obeyed God demonstrates his absolute certainty that he had received true prophecy. Otherwise, he never would have proceeded: [Abraham] hastened to slaughter, as he had been commanded, his son, his only son, whom he loved…. For if a dream of prophecy had been obscure for the prophets, or if they had doubts or incertitude concerning what they apprehended in a vision of prophecy, they would not have hastened to do that which is repugnant to nature, and [Abraham’s] soul would not have consented to accomplish an act of so great an importance if there had been a doubt about it

**7)Sanhedrin 89b**

For should you not admit this, how could Isaac listen to Abraham at Mount Moriah, or the people hearken to Elijah at Mount Carmel and sacrifice without [the Temple]? Hence the case, where the prophet is well established is different.

**8)Rabbi Sacks (Rabbi sacks.com)**

What God was doing when he asked Abraham to offer up his son was not requesting a child sacrifice but something quite different. He wanted Abraham to renounce ownership of his son. He wanted to establish as a non-negotiable principle of Jewish law that children are not the property of their parents.

**9)Jeremiah 19:5**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| And they built the high places of Baal to burn their children with fire as burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command, neither did I speak nor did it enter My mind. |  | **ה**וּבָנ֞וּ אֶת־בָּמ֣וֹת הַבַּ֗עַל לִשְׂרֹ֧ף אֶת־בְּנֵיהֶ֛ם בָּאֵ֖שׁ עֹל֣וֹת לַבָּ֑עַל אֲשֶׁ֚ר לֹֽא־צִוִּ֙יתִי֙ וְלֹ֣א דִבַּ֔רְתִּי וְלֹ֥א עָֽלְתָ֖ה עַל־לִבִּֽי: |

**Jeremiah 7:31**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| nd they have built the high places of Topheth which are in the valley of Ben- Hinnom, to burn their sons and daughters with fire, which I did not ordain, neither did it enter My mind. |  | **לא**וּבָנ֞וּ בָּמ֣וֹת הַתֹּ֗פֶת אֲשֶׁר֙ בְּגֵ֣יא בֶן־הִנֹּ֔ם לִשְׂרֹ֛ף אֶת־בְּנֵיהֶ֥ם וְאֶת־בְּנֹֽתֵיהֶ֖ם בָּאֵ֑שׁ אֲשֶׁר֙ לֹ֣א צִוִּ֔יתִי וְלֹ֥א עָֽלְתָ֖ה עַל־לִבִּֽי: |

**10)Rashi**

**which I did not ordain:**with commandments that they offer up their children as sacrifices, and I did not speak to any of the prophets, and when I did speak to Abraham to slaughter his son, it did not enter My mind that he slaughter, but only to make his righteousness known.

**11)Taanit 4a**

וכתיב ([ירמיהו יט, ה](https://www.sefaria.org.il/Jeremiah.19.5)) אשר לא צויתי ולא דברתי ולא עלתה על לבי אשר לא צויתי זה בנו של מישע מלך מואב שנאמר ([מלכים ב ג, כז](https://www.sefaria.org.il/II_Kings.3.27)) ויקח את בנו הבכור אשר ימלך תחתיו ויעלהו עולה ולא דברתי זה יפתח ולא עלתה על לבי זה יצחק בן אברהם

**11)Devarim Rabbah (Parashat Shoftim, 148)**

There are those who interpret the verse (Jer 19:5) thusly: “Which I never commanded” – this refers to Yiftach [who sacrificed his daughter]. “Never decreed” – this refers to Mesha king of Moab [who sacrificed his son]. “And which never came to My mind” – that Avraham should sacrifice his son upon an altar.[4]–

**12)Genesis Rabbah 56:8**

Recently Thou didst tell me (Genesis 21:12): “In Isaac shall seed be called to thee,” and later Thou didst say (Genesis 22:5): “Take now thy son.” And now Thou tellest me to stay my hand!’ God is made to reply in the words of Psalm 79 verse 35: ‘My covenant will I not profane, nor alter that which is gone out of My lips.’ ‘When I told thee: “Take thy son,” I was not altering that which went out from My lips [i.e., the promise that Abraham would have descendants through Isaac]. I did not tell thee: “Slay him” but bring him up [i.e., take him to the mountain and make him ready to be sacrificed]. Thou didst bring him up. Now take him down again.’

**13)Rashbam 21:**

[God said to Abraham:] You became proud of your son that I gave you and made a covenant with them [= the Philistines], now go and make him a burnt-offering, and let’s see what will happen with the covenant.

**14)Pirkie avot 5:6**

Ten things were created at twilight of Shabbat eve. These are: the mouth of the earth [that swallowed Korach]; the mouth of [Miriam's] well; the mouth of [Balaam's] donkey; the rainbow; the manna; [Moses'] staff; the *shamir*; the writing, the inscription and the tablets [of the Ten Commandments]. Some say also the burial place of Moses and the ram of our father Abraham. And some say also the spirits of destruction as well as the original tongs, for tongs are made with tongs.

**15)Sanhedrin 89b**

**(**R. Yochanan): "Achar ha'Devarim ha'Eleh" - (Hash-m commanded Avraham about the Akeidah) after the Satan complained:

1.You gave Avraham a son at the age of 100, and Avraham did not offer even a bird to You at the feast he made when he weaned him!2.Hash-m: The feast was due to his son. If I would ask him to offer his son, he would do so immediately!(b)(R. Shimon bar Aba): "Kach Na" denotes a request;1.A parable explains this. A king was beset by many wars, and a valiant warrior of his triumphed in all of them;2.Later, a fierce war erupted. The king told him 'please win this war, lest people say that the previous wars were trivial.'3.Likewise, Hash-m told Avraham 'I tested you many times, and you passed every test. Please pass this test, lest people say that the previous tests were trivial.''

**16) Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer 30.**

R. Hanina ben Dosa said: The ram that was created at twilight on the sixth day of creation—not a part of it was without purpose. The ram’s ash was the foundation for the altar within the Temple Hall; its sinews provided the ten strings for the harp David played on; its hide became the leather girdle on the loins of Elijah, ever remembered on good occasions; its two horns were made into shofars—the left horn is the one the Holy One blew on Mount Sinai; and the right horn, larger than the left one, the Holy One will blow in the time-to-come, as is said, “And it shall come to pass on that day, that a large horn shall be blown” (Isa. 27:13).[[1]](#footnote-1)

**17)Rosh hashana 16a**

"Why do we blow on a ram's horn? The Holy One, blessed be He, said: 'Sound before Me a ram's horn so that I may remember on your behalf the binding of Isaac the son of Abraham, and account it to you as if you had bound yourselves before Me.

1. Translation from Bialik and Ravnitzky, p. 391. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)