

**A HERMENEUTIC FOR THE *AQEDAH* TEST: A WAY BEYOND
JON LEVENSON'S AND TERENCE FRETHEIM'S MODELS**

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The works of Jon Levenson and Terence Fretheim highlight the problem of determining which interpretations of the biblical worlds of meaning around the text are congruent with the text of the *Aqedah* (also known as the Sacrifice of Isaac, Gen 22:1–19) and which should be disclaimed. A hermeneutical model is needed for Abraham's test that provides a text-based paradigm for sound interpretation of the narrative world (in the text), the historical world (behind the text), the theistic world (above the text), the cosmological world (below the text), and the present world (in front of the text). A tri-level (micro-meso-macro) spiral hermeneutical model was created that integrated the biblical text as the long central axis of the model and related the five biblical worlds of meaning to the text. The tri-level Axial Model reveals the *Aqedah* test narrative holds higher moral consistency and rational complexity than has been traditionally assumed. Most importantly, the Covenant Hypothesis demonstrates that the enigmatic *Aqedah* text is fully capable of unbinding itself by making sense of its own parts. In conclusion, the Axial Model appears to be a text-normed hermeneutical model that can unearth deeper understanding of biblical texts.