

Living by Faith

Lesson 2

Genesis 22:1-20, Hebrews 11:17-19

May 31, 2020

Faith Tested

Introduction

Abraham learned to listen to God and believed what God was telling him. On faith, Abraham took his barren wife, his nephew, Lot, and their households, and set out for Canaan on the promise that God would make him a great nation. Abraham believed God when God told him that he would have a son by Sarah. But then, God asked Abraham to do the unthinkable: sacrifice his son. Abraham did what God asked him to do because Abraham had learned to trust God through many mistakes. He didn't always understand God's promise, but he still obeyed God's command.

It's too easy to put God's promise ahead of God and feel like we are the ones who need to carry out the promise, instead of allowing God to—even if that means disobeying God. We make excuses, ask questions, want to know the big picture, stall. But we need to look to Abraham as an example. He trusted God. He didn't question God's command in this instance. He followed God even when the command seemed like the most significant act of faith in history. Abraham teaches us that when God tests our faith, we should surrender to Him and count on Him to keep His promises.

Memory verse: "By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son."—Hebrews 11:17

Read Genesis 22:1-20, Hebrews 11:17-19. What questions or observations do you have about these passages?

What do the passages say?

1. What direction did God give to Abraham? (Genesis 22:2)
2. What did Abraham do in response? (Genesis 22:3, 6, 9-10)
3. What did Isaac ask Abraham? What was Abraham's answer? (Genesis 22:7-8)
4. What did God call out to Abraham? (Genesis 22:12)
5. What did God provide for Abraham to sacrifice? (Genesis 22:13)
6. What did God swear to Abraham? (Genesis 22:16-18)
7. How did God test Abraham? (Hebrews 11:17)
8. What was Abraham's reasoning? (Hebrews 11:19)

What do the passages mean?

1. In what ways does the sacrifice of Isaac foreshadow Jesus' death and resurrection? (Genesis 22:6; John 19:17; Hebrews 11:19; 1 Corinthians 15:4)

2. Reread Genesis 22:1. God tested Abraham. According to the Oxford dictionary, test means "to check the quality, performance, or reliability of something." Why does God test the faith of His followers? (Psalm 26:2-3; 2 Corinthians 13:5-6; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:7)

3. Isaac was a very precious gift from God, given to Abraham and Sarah at a time when they thought having a child would be impossible. Yet Abraham was willing to give up his son, his most precious gift, for God. How should we view God in comparison to our most precious gifts? (Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 6:33, 10:37; Luke 14:26; Colossians 3:1-2)

4. Abraham obeyed God, despite what was being asked. God knew that Abraham's faith was genuine because his obedience was genuine. How does our obedience show our love for God? (Colossians 3:22; James 2:21-23; 2 John 6)

5. Abraham was blessed greatly for obeying God and being willing to sacrifice his son. How do we become great in God's kingdom? (Matthew 20:26-27; Mark 9:35; 1 Peter 4:10-11)

Applying the passages

1. When Abraham obeyed God's request to sacrifice Isaac, God spared Isaac and greatly blessed Abraham. When have you obeyed God? How did He bless you? If you haven't, what kept you from doing what God was asking?

