

The Sacrifice Of Isaac – *God tests Abraham*

Purpose: To encourage the listeners to put God first above all else and to recognise that God is shaping us and allow Him to continue to do so.

I have two questions for you to consider today:

1. What are the 5 things that are most important for you right now?
2. What are the 3 most challenging things that you are facing right now?

What we are about to read in chapter 22 deals with what is probably the most significant event in the life of Abraham – the sacrifice of his son, Isaac. But before this we need to look again at the previous chapter.

In Chapter 21 we see that God is beginning to fulfil his promise to Abraham with the birth of Isaac and the treaty with Abimelech.. All these promises were concerning the birth of Isaac:

- I will make you a great nation – 12:2
- In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed – 12:3
- One who will come from your own body shall be your heir – 15:4
- She (Sarah) shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her - 17:16

We also see a promise of the blessing of Abraham in the treaty with Abimelech:

- I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you – 12:3

In chapter 22, Abraham was tested. Read verses 1-19

What does it mean when the scriptures say “God tested Abraham?”

It means to prove: Why do teachers give their students tests? In order for them to pass!

God never tempts with evil –

James 1:13, 14

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

*But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his **own desires** and **enticed**.*

...**Own desires** – that which is from within us

...**Enticed** – outside elements (the devil, the world, peers, etc.)

God may send you to school in order to note your progress and for you to eventually pass, but He will not put something in front of you to cause you to stumble.

What was the test?

Genesis 22:2

Then He said, "Take now 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."

Why was this a test for Abraham?

- Because Isaac was his only son –
 - The promised one!
 - The one that had taken many years to see!
- Because he loved his son

How did Abraham respond?

Hebrews 11:8-19

8 - By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

9 - By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

10 - for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11 - By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

12 - Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

13 - These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 - For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.

15 - And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.

16 - But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

17 - By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 - of whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR SEED SHALL BE CALLED,"

19 - concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

How was Abraham able to do this? He had learned to trust God:

- He failed when he went to Egypt and called Sarah his sister
- He learned by giving in to his nephew Lot
- He learned when he went to war and saved Lot
- He learned through family problems with Hagar and his son Ishmael
- He learned by observing the outcome of Sodom
- He learned by seeing the fear of God on the nations around him
- He learned by the birth of his son Isaac
- Now he was able to trust God – because he learned to trust Him!

What can we learn from Abraham?

What is your Isaac? What is the thing that you treasure the most?

Matthew 6:19-21

19 - "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;

20 - but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

21 - For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- Car
- House
- Job
- Wife/Husband
- Children
- God must be number one

Matthew 10:37-39

37 - He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

38 - And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

39 - He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

What is God trying to teach you right now?

James 1:2-8

2 - My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

3 - knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

4 - But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

5 - If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

6 - But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

7 - For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

8 - he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.