

# The Victory of Faith

## (Abraham Part 10)

March 25, 2018

### Outline of chapter

Abraham is quick to obey God's command (Gen 22:1-8)  
Isaac allows Abraham to bind him on the altar (Gen 22:9-10).  
God substitutes a ram instead of Isaac (Gen 22:11-13)  
Abraham calls that place "Yahweh Yir'eh" ("The LORD Will Provide") (Gen 22:14).  
God confirms His covenant with Abraham (Gen 22:15-19).  
The news concerning Abraham's family (Gen 22:20-24).

### The testing of God (Gen 22:1)

1. **God tested Abraham** "after these things, that God tested Abraham" (Gen 22:1)  
**Tested = "prove";** God was testing Abraham, to learn whether Abraham's faith and trust in God was genuine, to examine Abraham's faithfulness to Him.

#### God tests people to uncover their true character.

Dt 8:2 "You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. (Dt. 8:6)  
(See also Ex 15:25-26; 16:4; Jdg 2:22-23; 3:1-4; Ps 11:5; Zec 13:9)

### 2. Abraham's tests:

1. The "**family test**," - he had to leave his loved ones and go to a new land (Gen 11:27-12:5).
2. The "**famine test**," - he failed; doubting God and going to Egypt for help (Gen 12:10-13:4).
3. The "**fellowship test**" - he gave Lot first choice of pastureland (Gen 13:5-18).
4. The "**fight test**" - when he defeated the kings (Gen 14:1-16).
5. The "**fortune test**" - when he said no to Sodom's wealth (Gen 14:17-24).
6. The "**fatherhood test**" - he failed; he sought a child with Hagar (Gen 16).
7. The "**farewell test**" - he sends Ishmael away, though it broke his heart (Gen 21:14-21).
8. The "**final test**" - when he obeys God and sacrifices Isaac (Gen 22:1-14).

### 3. "Testing" clarification:

In languages in which a word for "test" or "try" carries the meaning that the one tested is expected to fail, or is equivalent to "tempt" or "entice," it may be necessary to adjust the expression by saying:

- "God wanted to see if Abraham trusted him,"
- "God wanted to examine Abraham to see if he would obey him."
- "God tried out Abraham's way of believing."

### 4. God tests His people:

1Pt 1:6-7 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7 so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; (see also Jn 6:5-6; Jas 1:2-3, 12)

#### God has reasons for sending tests:

- to purify our faith (1Pt 1:6-9)
- to perfect our character (Jas 1:1-4)
- to protect us from sin (2Cor 12:7-10)

When God sends a trial to us, our first response is usually, "Why, Lord?" and then, "Why me?" Right away, we want God to give us explanations; we fail to see how these things apply to us.

The fact that we ask our Father for explanations suggests that we may not know ourselves as we should or God as we should.

There are some trials in life that we must face alone. It is only then that we can see what our Father really can do for us!

**Not every difficult experience in life is necessarily a personal test from God.**

Sometimes our own disobedience causes the pain or disappointment, as when Abraham went to Egypt (Gen 12:10) and to Gerar (Gen 20).

Sometimes our hurts are simply a part of normal human life: As we grow older, friends and loved ones relocate or even die, life changes around us, and we must make painful adjustments.

**5. Distinctions between trials and temptations**

Temptations come from our desires within us (Jas 1:12-16)

Trials come from the Lord who has a special purpose to fulfill.

Temptations are used by the devil to bring out the worst in us,

Trials are used by the Holy Spirit to bring out the best in us (Jas 1:1-6).

Temptations seem logical,

Trials seem very unreasonable. Why would God give Abraham a son and then ask Abraham to kill him?

All believers face similar temptations to sin (1 Cor 10:13),

but not all believers experience the same trials of faith.

**6. The testing of God are unique, tailor-made for each child of God**

God never asked Lot to face the tests that Abraham faced. Why? Because Lot was being tempted by the world and the flesh and never grew to the place of maturity that Abraham reached.

In one sense, it is a compliment when God sends us a test; it shows God wants to “promote us” in the “School of Faith.”

**7. God never sends a test until He knows you are ready for it.**

“Life is difficult,” wrote psychiatrist M. Scott Peck. “Once we truly know that life is difficult—once we truly understand and accept it—then life is no longer difficult” (The Road Less Traveled, p. 15).

That is the first lesson we must learn: Expect trials from God, because the Christian life is not easy.

**Obedience: (Gen 22:3)**

**Abraham obeys, there was no hesitation**

“Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey” (Gen 22:3).

“your only son,” (Gen 22:2).

Since Isaac is not Abraham’s only son (he had Ishmael by Hagar, Gen 16:11–16), the Hebrew text here is referring to value, not number. Isaac is Abraham’s special son—through him the covenant promises with God will be passed on (17:21).

**Abraham overcomes doubt and fear**

We can’t know how Abraham felt on the three-day journey, or the doubts and fears that may have filled his heart and mind. But we do know that before he arrived, Abraham had worked it out.

“He (Abraham) considered (reasoned) that God is able to raise people from the dead (Heb 11:19).

Abraham knew that God had promised, "in Isaac your descendants shall be called" (Gen 21:12; Heb 11:18).

God would not go back on His stated word. If God chose to accept Isaac as a sacrifice, Abraham would give him, sure that the Lord would give the child back again.

"Stay here," Abraham told the servants who accompanied them. "I and the lad will go over there; we will worship and return to you." (Gen 22:5). Abraham did not know the means. But he did know that God would provide.

As Abraham was about to plunge the knife into the bound body of his son, the Lord stopped him and pointed out a ram whose horns had been caught in a thicket.

The ram was slain; the boy was freed. God Himself had provided a substitute. The test was complete.

## **Faith (Gen 22:5)**

The main point of Genesis 22:9-14 is portraying an obedient servant worshiping God in faith at a great cost, and in the end receiving God's provision.

**Abraham tells his servants** that not only would he and Isaac go and worship but, both of them would return.

"Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you." (Gen 22:5)

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; 18 it was he to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." 19 He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type. (Heb 11:17-19)

### **Abraham did not withhold his son.**

"You have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." (Gen 22:12)

"He (God) who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Rom 8:32)

### **Abraham believed and obeyed God when:**

he did not know where (Heb 11:8),  
when he did not know when (Heb 11:9-10, 13-16),  
when he did not know how (Heb 11:11-12),  
when he did not know why (Heb 11:17-19).

## **What is there in this story for us?**

### **The call of faith**

The life of faith that God calls us to is not an easy one. Like Abraham you and I may well be called to make some heart rending decisions; like Abraham, we can fix our confidence securely in God.

### **A reasoned faith**

Faith is not opposed to reason. The man who relies on God simply takes more into account than the man who does not believe. Often an appeal to "reason" means no more than an insistence we consider only what a person can see and touch and feel. We all face this danger. In the decisions you and I make, do we look only at factors we can see? Or do we reason that God is able to alter circumstances to fit His will? Abraham reasoned that God's will is the ultimate reality and that His expressed purposes are sure. It was this kind of reasoning - that takes God into account - that was part of Abraham's faith. And must become a part of ours.

### **An unhesitant faith.**

Abraham did not wait. He rose up early to obey God. An overt response to God's Word is still an integral part of what it means to have "faith." Often our feelings and desires struggle against our intention to respond to God. But trust in God as a Person not only frees us to respond; our actions give evidence of the reality of our trust.

## **Sacrifice and Worship (Gen 22:3, 6-12)**

Human sacrifice is not part of God's will for his people.

A burnt offering was a common type of sacrifice, in which the whole victim was burnt upon the altar (Lev 1).

Abraham's sacrifice of the ram foreshadowed the subsequent animal sacrifices in the temple.

In the New Testament God substituted His only Son for the animal, and the perfect Sacrifice was made. John had this in mind when he introduced Jesus as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29)

A ram (not a lamb, Gen 22:8) caught ... its horns in a thorn bush;

It was provided by God's grace as a substitute for Isaac in the offering (Gen 22:13).

### **Lessons about worship:**

1. Faith completely obeys the Word of God.
2. Faith holds nothing back, surrendering the best to God.
3. Faith waits on the Lord to provide all of one's needs.
4. True worship is costly.

This was always so for Israel when they brought sacrifices. Those offerings were supposed to be given in faith, so God would provide all the needs of each willing worshiper.

5. God does not provide until personal sacrifice has been made.
6. Worship involves accepting God's sacrificial substitute.

## **The LORD Will Provide = Jehovah Jireh**

Gen 22:14 Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the LORD it will be provided."

**Moriah** means The LORD Will Provide (Gen 22:8, 14).

The name of the place where his son was to die would prove to be the place of God's provision.

Mount Moriah is where God appeared to David on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, and it is where Solomon built the temple (2Chr 3:1)

**"Jehovah-jireh"** - can be translated "The Lord will see to it" or "The Lord will be seen."

**"In the mount of the Lord it shall be provided"** helps us understand some truths about the provision of the Lord.

**Where does the Lord provide our needs?** - In the place of His assignment.

Abraham was at the right place, so God could meet his needs. We have no right to expect the provision of God if we are not in the will of God.

**When does God meet our needs?** - Just when we have the need and not a minute before.

When you bring your requests to the throne of grace, God answers with mercy and grace "in time of need" (Heb 4:16). Sometimes it looks like God waits until the last minute to send help, but that is only from our human point of view. God is never late.

**How does God provide for us?** - In ways that are usually quite natural.

God did not send an angel with a sacrifice; He simply allowed a ram to get caught in a bush at a time when Abraham needed it and, in a place, where Abraham could get his hands on it. All Abraham needed was one animal, so God did not send a whole flock of sheep.

**To whom does God give His provision?** - To those who trust Him and obey His instructions.

When we are doing the will of God, we have the right to expect the provision of God. "When God's work is done in God's way, it will not lack God's support." God is not obligated to bless my ideas or projects, but He is obligated to support His work if it is done in His way.

**Why does God provide our every need?** - For the glory of His name!

"Hallowed be Thy name" is the first petition in the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:9-13), and it governs all the other requests. God was glorified on Mount Moriah because Abraham and Isaac did the will of the Lord and glorified Jesus Christ. We must pause to consider this important truth.

### **Covenant Provision:**

God again confirmed His covenant with Abraham (Gen 15:5, 18-21; 17:3-8).

His descendants would be numerous like the stars (Gen 15:5; 26:4)

like the sand on the seashore (Gen 32:12)

"like the dust of the earth" (Gen 13:16; 28:14)

God then added another element:

Abraham's descendants would be victorious over the "gates" of their enemies. This was done by Joshua in the Conquest.

### **Summary:**

"God will provide a lamb, my son" (Gen 22:8).

This one sentence summarizes the Bible's central message - that God would give his own Son as the atonement for sin:

"Where is the lamb?" (Gen 22:7)

"Look! There is the Lamb of God." (Jn 1:29)

"The Lamb is worthy." (Rev 5:12)

### **References used in this study:**

The Outline Bible  
Handbook on Genesis  
Faith Life Study Bible  
The Bible Knowledge Commentary  
The teacher's commentary  
New Bible Commentary  
Be Obedient (by WW Wiersbe)