



THE BEGINNINGS!

The Book of Genesis

Faith is tested!

Genesis 22:1-24

Message #24 of 50 – S924

Sermon given on December 6, 2020

@ Calvary Chapel French Valley, Murrieta, CA



Sunday Morning Service

First service in new facility!

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Faith is tested!

Genesis 22:1-24

Opening Comments

- Good morning – turn to **Genesis 22**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- In school, I had what was not a normal attitude toward tests
- I can remember my fellow students stressing out about tests
- And some exceptional smart students not doing well because tests stressed them out
- My attitude was: either I know the material, or I don't
- If I do – great – if not – I will deal with that when it comes
- After I got saved, I discovered that there are tests of faith
- And I have grown to understand that these tests have a purpose
- Not only do they have a purpose, but they are absolutely vital in our relationship with God
- Learning to take God's tests will transform your life and faith
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us to learn something new today
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Faith is tested!**
- In this chapter, we will see Abraham climb the highest peak of faith
- It also gives us a glimpse of the heart of God
- Things have been going well for Abraham
- It is hard to say how much time passes between chapters 21 and 22 – 27 between 21 and 23.
- Isaac growing into young man – probably late teens to early twenties
- Life is good! And then...
- **Genesis 22:1**
- Abraham has been doing very well lately
- He did well in his last test - Sending Ishmael away
- God decides it is time for the final exam

- At times life is really hard – anyone else notice that?
- Difficult things happen for no apparent reason
- Tests - Definition:

The means by which the presence, quality, or genuineness of anything is determined; a means of trial.

- God trying to determine presence, quality, or genuineness of something in Abraham - Gives him a test – a hard one

- **Genesis 22:2**

- God asks Abraham to do the unthinkable – sacrifice Isaac
- How could God be so cruel & heartless?
- Notice words used to describe Isaac
- ‘your son, your only son’ - Recognized special relationship
- ‘whom you love’ – first time word ‘love’ used in Bible
- God knew how Abraham felt **John 3:16**

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- If you can imagine what Abraham is thinking and feeling, then you are starting to understand what it meant for God to send Jesus to die for our sins
- God commands Abraham to do the unthinkable
- But look at how Abraham responded

- **Genesis 22:3-4**

- Abraham responded immediately
- Got up early, made preparations, and left
- One of the things that struck me about this account is that there is no mention of Sarah – does she know what Abraham is planning to do?
- Travel for three days – how hard do you think that was?
- Three days to think about what he was going to do
- ‘saw the place afar off’
- Place = Mount Moriah – future location of the Temple
- Built by Solomon in Jerusalem

- **Genesis 22:5-6**

- Leaves the men and donkey behind
- Tells them they are both coming back
- Isaac carried the wood for the sacrifice
- Abraham carried fire & knife

- Isaac speaks for the first time
- **Genesis 22:7**
- Seems like a logical question
- **Genesis 22:8**
- Abraham doesn't know what God has in store
- We know it is a test, but Abraham doesn't
- 'provide' = 'jireh' – see or see to it
- Abraham knows God is doing something just not what
- **Genesis 22:9-10**
- Abraham prepares to kill his son - His love, his future, his hope
- Everything is wrapped up in this boy
- What was going through his mind? - Turn to **Hebrews 11**
- Was Abraham questioning God? - Was he doubting the promises?
- Author of Hebrews tells us
- **Hebrews 11:17-19**
- Abraham believed that God could raise him from the dead
- Turn back to **Genesis 22**
- That is a remarkable thing, because there is no record of anyone being raised from the dead in the first 21 chapters of Genesis – faith-logic
- Things are starting to get exciting
- **Genesis 22:11-12**
- Angel of the LORD = Jesus
- Stops him – what a relief that must have been
- 'now I know that you fear God' **Bible Knowledge Commentary**
To fear God means to reverence Him as sovereign, trust Him implicitly, and obey Him without question.
- This is God's goal in testing - We call this faith
- Abraham gets an A+ on this test
- **Genesis 22:13-14**
- God supplies a substitute for the sacrifice
- Picture of Christ taking our place
- Our sins earned us death penalty – Christ took our place **1 John 4:10**
In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
- 'propitiation' – Jesus was the sacrifice made to appease God for our sins – God provided a sacrifice for our sins – His Son Jesus

- New name for God – Jehovah-Jireh – God will Provide
- **Genesis 22:15-19**
- This is last time recorded that LORD speaks to Abraham
- Restates promise – but expands
- Ends with ‘because you have obeyed My voice’ (&begins)
- Direct connection between obedience and blessings
- Only those willing to obey should expect blessings from God
- Chapter ends with news from Mesopotamia
- **Genesis 22:20-24**
- Abraham’s brother has been very busy
- Introduces us to Rebekah, Isaac’s future bride
- Abraham was tested by God
- Prove it was real, complete, mature
- Untested faith is weak faith - God tests to strengthen
- Study of Abraham shows us how testing works
- **God Sends Tests**
- Know that they are coming from God - For His glory & our growth
- He knows what He is doing - Even when we don’t understand
- Abraham didn’t understand - sacrifice Isaac - why?
- God knew Abraham could pass the test **Jon Courson**
- God will never, ever give you a test He has not thoroughly and painstakingly prepared you to navigate successfully.**
- Everything in Abraham’s life prepared him for this
- Dirty rotten trick if He gave us a test we couldn’t pass
- That’s not the nature of God
- Every test that God sends can be passed successfully
- There is a part that we play
- **God Expects Obedience**
- To pass one of God’s tests, we must do something
- Abraham was told ‘Go, sacrifice’
- He had to do what God told him to do – raise knife
- And not just raise it – be prepared to follow through
- God expects the same from us **Luke 6:46**
- But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?**
- To pass God’s test we must obey

- God won't skip tests – must pass it to move on
 - Failed driver's test – twice! Couldn't get Driver's License
 - This is where it gets hard for most people
 - They don't know how to pass the tests - Turn to **Matthew 28**
 - This is the Great Commission
 - Christ giving final instructions to the church
 - This is why I feel discipleship so important
 - One of the reasons why I believe the church must gather
 - **Matthew 28:19-20**
 - 'teaching them to observe' – NLT 'obey'
 - Need to be taught to obey - Not natural – not intuitive
 - To pass God's tests we must be taught how to obey
 - God's Teaching Tools
 - Bible – read/study/memorize – Counseling – Discipleship - Small group Bible Study - Fellowship with other believers - Service to God
 - All are for teaching you to obey
 - There are no short-cuts, can't microwave obedience
 - Obedience will stretch us to the limits of our faith
 - Obedience led Abraham to raise the knife to kill Isaac
 - Obedience led Shadrach, Meshach, & Abed-Nego refuse to bow
 - Obedience led Peter to step out of boat
 - Obedience will lead us to scary places, painful places
 - With faith, the more it is exercised, the more it grows
 - Brings us to our third point
 - **God Expects us to Grow**
 - Has been said, God loves us just the way we are
 - But loves us so much that he won't leave us there
 - God will love you even if you don't change
 - But that is not His plan for your life **Romans 8:29**
- For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His son...**
- God's plan for His people – be like Christ
 - Some say that's too much trouble – I'll stay like I am
 - I'm saved – I believe in Jesus – going to heaven – enough
 - One little problem with that

- God commands us to change – be like Christ
- Not trying – being disobedient – God WILL spank
- Won't be angry – but will chastise you
- Test come from God, passed through obedience, result in growth
- As we pass God's tests – blesses us more and more
- Each test we pass brings more of God's blessings
- Tests Get us Ready for More Tests
- Each test also prepares us for the next test
- Yes – there will always be another test
- Maybe not right away – but it will come
- God's tests are good for you – learn to appreciate them
- If you can develop an attitude of faith regarding your tests – won't be any more fun – but they will be less stressful
- They remind us that God is at work in our lives
- Because He loves us – wants us to be more like His perfect Son
- Which will enable us to experience more of His perfect love
- When the tests come - Test come from God, passed through obedience, result in growth
- And then as James teaches us – **James 1:2-4**
My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.
- It is hard to imagine Abraham rejoicing as he climbed up Mount Moriah, but imagine the joy as they went back down together with a new understanding of God
- Let God's tests help you to know God better and better – **Amen?!**