



Genesis: The Book That Started It All

Weekly Devotionals | November 9

OPEN with prayer.

Find a quiet place where you can set aside distractions. Ask the Lord to meet you in His Word.

In Genesis 22, we read about how the Lord tests Abraham. In Hebrew, this scene is referred to as the *Akedah* (which means “binding” and is a reference to the binding of Isaac in this chapter).

READ Genesis 22.

- The call from God for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac is shocking to our modern ears. As sole heir to the promise (see Genesis 12), it would have been shocking to Abraham too. What textual clues exist in Genesis 22:1 that convey to the readers of this story that God did not actually intend for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac?
- How does Genesis 22:2 describe Isaac in the eyes of Abraham? How do these descriptions highlight the costliness of what God is testing Abraham with?
- Despite the intense test from God, what do you notice about Abraham’s response in this passage to what God commands of him?
- In your own words, describe the course of events that take place after Abraham begins to obey what God has asked of him. What happens?
- According to Genesis 22:12, what was the purpose of this testing?
- Re-read Genesis 22:14. What does Abraham learn about God from this experience?
- What is the result of Abraham’s faithfulness according to Genesis 22:15-19?

REFLECT

- One of the lessons from this story is that biblical faith results in unflinching loyalty to the commands of God. Early in Abraham's story, he didn't follow God's command so truly (e.g. when he left his home of Ur, he took Lot with him, thus denying the full scope of what God required of him). But here, there is no complaint, no argument. Abraham obeys.

How would you describe your obedience to God? Are you more like Abraham at the beginning of his story (halfway obedient?) or would you characterize yourself more like Abraham in Genesis 22, willing to do whatever God asks? Or maybe it depends? Explain.

- As a result of this testing in Genesis 22, verse 12 says, "Now I know that you fear God." This indicates that what God is seeking is not just outward obedience, but a heart that obeys as well. In your life, would you characterize yourself as having a heart posture that seeks to obey God? Why or why not? What about in this current season?
- Are there any current areas of your life where obedience is lacking? Either outwardly or inwardly or both? Where? Why do you think there is an obedience gap?
- What challenges or stirrings or discomfort are you feeling from your engagement with this story?

PRAY

Spend a few moments in prayer. Consider Abraham's obedience and faithfulness to God. If there are any aspects of this story that make you feel uncomfortable, feel free to bring those things to God in prayer. Also, be sure to think through your answers to the above reflection questions. If you notice areas of disobedience or a wandering heart posture, take those noticings to God in prayer. Ask for his help in obeying His Word.