

OT Narratives Bible Study Series
Genesis 16-18 & 21-22 - Abraham & the life of faith, Part 2

For Discussion:

-Has following God ever meant giving up something (or someone) that really meant a lot to you? How did you handle it?

For review: Read Genesis 12:1-9 and 15:1-6.

-What did God promise Abram? How did Abram respond?

Read Genesis 16:1-16; 17:1-27; 18:1-15; and 21:1-21

-Why might Sarai & Abram have decided to try to have children through Sarai's maidservant Hagar? What were the consequences?

-Why do you think God waited so long to bring Isaac into the picture?

-How do God's promises regarding Ishmael (16:10-12, 17:20) differ from His promises regarding Isaac (17:19-21), and why is this important? (**For further study:** What is the significance of these differences, according to Romans 9:6-9 & Galatians 4:21-31?)

Read Genesis 22:1-19

--Why did God command Abraham to sacrifice Isaac? Why might this command have been perplexing?

-How does this account of Abraham & Isaac foreshadow Jesus Christ?

-What do Abraham & Sarah's examples teach us about the life of faith? (consider also Hebrews 11:8-19) What are ways you can follow their examples in your life?

For further reflection

When God tested his faith, by faith Abraham offered his son Isaac as a sacrifice, even though God had said to him that it was through Isaac that his offspring would be reckoned. He believed God's promises and trusted that God would fulfill every single one, even if it meant having to raise Isaac from the dead (Hebrews 11:17-19), and so he obeyed God's command immediately and completely, and he continued on in an attitude of worship. In so doing, he received even greater assurance of the certainty of God's promises. More than that, in God's provision of a substitute for Isaac, he caught a glimpse of the coming glory of Jesus Christ. What God prevented Abraham from doing in sacrificing his son Isaac, God Himself would do, by providing His One and Only Son as the Lamb who would be sacrificed for the sins of the world.

When God brings trials into our lives for the testing of our faith, we ought to respond with the same faith and trust as Abraham did. If we respond in faith and obedience, such testing will refine our faith, producing perseverance and maturity that will bear fruit for the glory of Jesus Christ (James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 1:3-7). Not only that, but we will receive the crown of life that God has promised to all who love him (James 1:12). Spend some time reflecting this weekend on times in your life when God has used trials to test your faith. How did you respond? Resolve to respond in obedience and worship when next your faith is tested.

Additional Resources

CGYG/LIFE website: www.cgygfellowship.com (Resources section)

- Genesis Bible study series: http://www.cgygfellowship.com/BBS_Genesis.shtml
- OT Daily Devotional series

CGC website: OT Survey and Genesis adult Christian education materials: <http://www.cgctorenglish.chinesegospelchurch.ca> (Resources section)