

## Lesson 12 – 18 April 2010

### Abraham—the Triumph of Faith

**Lesson Scope:** [Genesis 22](#)

**Lesson Focus:**

Abraham lived by faith. He left Haran at the command of God without knowing his destination. God continued to lead him as Abraham responded. Each time his faith was tested, and he triumphed, his faith in God grew stronger. In today's lesson we see Abraham triumphing over a very difficult test.

God does not get satisfaction out of seeing His people suffer; He tests them for their good. God uses trials to see if we love Him with all our heart (Deuteronomy 10:12), to humble us, and to do us good (Deuteronomy 8:16). God uses trials to refine and purify us, so that, when He comes, we will be found faithful (1 Peter 1:7).

God never had in mind that testing of any kind should be negative. Keep that thought prominent while you study the lesson. It is likely not very helpful to try to determine whether a test comes from God as a test or as chastisement, or whether it comes from the devil to cause us to fall. Certainly the devil tempted Abraham to disobey God in his test, although the Bible does not mention it. This lesson is pointing out how the man of faith responds to trials.

Every man of faith will face tests of his commitment. A strong fear of God, however, produces confidence in God and obedience to Him that will lead to triumph.

**Lesson Aim:** To see expressions and rewards of a faith that triumphs under test.

**Theme Verse:** [1 Peter 1:7](#).

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

## Lesson Text:

### Abraham Said, "God Will Provide"

#### Genesis 22:1-10

And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am*. <sup>2</sup>And he said, Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

<sup>3</sup>And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. <sup>4</sup>Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. <sup>5</sup>And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you, <sup>6</sup>And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid *it* upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. <sup>7</sup>And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering? <sup>8</sup>And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. <sup>9</sup>And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. <sup>10</sup>And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

### The Lord Said, "I Will Bless Thee"

#### Genesis 22:11-19

And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I. <sup>12</sup>And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son* from me. <sup>13</sup>And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. <sup>14</sup>And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said *to* this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

<sup>15</sup>And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, <sup>16</sup>And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*:

<sup>17</sup>That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; <sup>18</sup>And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. <sup>19</sup>So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

### **Questions for Study.**

#### **Abraham Said, "God Will Provide"**

1. What in this passage shows Abraham's faith? Isaac's faith?
2. How was Abraham's faith prepared for this trial?
3. What is the relationship of faith to obedience?
4. What are some proper responses to trial? improper responses?

#### **The Lord Said, "I Will Bless Thee"**

5. How was Abraham's faith rewarded?
6. How can we discern if God is pleased with our faith?
7. What rewards of faith can we receive?

### **Analyzing the Passage.**

The word translated tempt (Gen.22:1) is often translated 'prove.' It is the same word used in Deuteronomy 8:2, where God said He proved Israel if to see if they would keep His commandments or not. This is referring to a test, because "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (James 1:13).

Abraham's words, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" show his faith in God. Hebrews 11:19 tells us that Abraham trusted God to raise Isaac from the dead.

The question that Abraham answered for God was, "Do you love me enough to sacrifice your dearest earthly possession" Are you willing to sacrifice him on whom all my promises and your hope of blessing depend?

Jehovah-jireh (Gen.22:14) means "Jehovah will see." This is the name Abraham gave to the place where he was asked to sacrifice Isaac. God saw his obedience and was satisfied.

### **Principles and Applications.**

#### **Abraham said, "God Will Provide"**

1. The testing of one's faith is a testimony to his possession of faith (Gen.22:1). God tempers the trial to the faith of the one He is testing. God

tests His children to strengthen their faith, to keep them from straying, and to prove Himself strong in their behalf. If the trial we must endure seems hard, we can be assured that God has provided the strength to be victorious and to benefit from it.

2. God tests the faithful to bring out the best (Gen.22:1-2). His purpose is not to destroy us or to discourage us but to refine us and make us more like Christ. Trials may result from temptation, from chastisement for our failures, or as special tests from God. He intends them all for our good. "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:3-4).

3. A triumphing faith obeys without hesitation or delay (Gen.22:3). Abraham rose up early and followed God's direction. He did not procrastinate or complain about the difficulty of the task. He did not argue with God, even though he could not understand. He knew that the only way to peace and rest was through full obedience. Are we as willing to obey God?

Do we procrastinate or make excuses when the task is difficult? When we know what God wants us to do, procrastination is disobedience.

4. Faith that triumphs focuses not on the test at hand but on the unfailing promises of God (Gen.22:5). Abraham encouraged himself and his son with the words, "God will provide." When tests seem overwhelming, remember God's promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." He has promised ample grace for whatever He allows to come our way.

5. The man of faith communicates and transmits his faith to his posterity (Gen.22:6-8). Because Abraham took time to lead his family in worship, Isaac was familiar with the procedure for offering sacrifices. In answer to Isaac's question, Abraham was willing to express faith and wait for God's answer.

Parents who take time to lead their children in worship may expect them to raise questions. By taking time to answer their children's questions and lead them to faith in God, they teach their children to worship. In times of trial, we can set an example of worship rather than of worry.

#### **The Lord Said, "I Will Bless Thee"**

6. Hearing from God in the moment of crisis rewards one's faith (Gen.22:11-12). Trusting God in times of trial and proving Him faithful is the blessing. We do not know how God will help us in the moment of crisis, but He has promised to see us through. Perhaps He brings to our mind

a promise from the Scriptures that exactly meets our need in the immediate circumstance.

7. The man of faith finds respite from life's tests (Gen.22:12-13). God finally delivers His children from trial. The three Hebrews attested to this fact when they said they did not know whether God would deliver them from the fire, but he certainly would deliver them from the king (Daniel 3:16-18). The time of testing comes to an end. If we remain faithful, we are rewarded, our faith is strengthened, and we can be at peace because we were obedient to God.

8. The man of faith establishes monuments to God's faithfulness (Gen.22:14). Abraham named the place of this trial in remembrance of the victory won there. Remembering past victories strengthens our faith and prepares us for future trials.

9. The reward of the faithful is sure (Gen.22:15-16). The present blessing of faithfulness is that we maintain our relationship with God. The future blessing is to inherit a home in heaven as we continue on faithfully. Abraham's faith led to a blessing (Christ) being available for all the nations of the earth. We do not expect our faithfulness to affect that many people, but we might influence more than we think. Do others see by our obedience to God that we fear Him?

10. A triumphing faith procures God's benediction. (Gen.22:15-18) Finally we want God's approval on our life, that He might be able to say of us, "Now I know that thou fearest God." When God says of my life, In blessing I will bless thee," nothing else will matter. How hard the trials were or how long we struggled will not matter. Just to have the benediction of God, that will he everything.

### **Important Teachings.**

1. The testing of one's faith is a testimony to his possession of faith (Gen.22:1).

2. God tests the faithful to bring out the best (Gen.22:1-2).

3. A triumphing faith obeys without hesitation or delay (Gen.22:3).

4. Faith that triumphs focuses not on the test at hand but on the unfailing promises of God (Gen.22:5).

5. The man of faith communicates and transmits his faith to his posterity (Gen.22:6-8).

6. Hearing from God in the moment of crisis rewards one's faith

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7. The man of faith finds respite from life's tests (Gen.22:12-13).

8. The man of faith establishes monuments to God's faithfulness (Gen.22:14).

9. The reward of the faithful is sure (Gen.22:15-16).

10. A triumphing faith procures God's benediction (Gen.22:15-18).

### **Answers to Questions.**

1. What in this passage shows Abraham's faith? Isaac's faith?

Abraham's faith is evident in his prompt obedience. His faith is also displayed in his response to Isaac's question and in his instructions to his servants when he left them behind.

Isaac manifested his faith by how he accepted his father's answer that the Lord would provide a lamb. He submitted to being bound and placed on the altar, although he was likely stronger than his father.

2. How was Abraham's faith prepared for this trial?

God led Abraham one step at a time. His faith was tested earlier when he was asked to leave Haran, when Lot took all the good land, and when he did not have a son until he was old. Each time God was faithful and saw him through.

3. What is the relationship of faith to obedience?

Faith motivates obedience. Faith without obedience is not faith. See James 2:14-26.

4. What are some proper responses to trial? improper responses?

Obedience to God, trust in God, along with worship and thanksgiving are always proper responses. We should allow God to search us and lead us in the way of everlasting life.

Allowing trials to make us bitter and unthankful or to cause us to question God are improper responses.

5. How was Abraham's faith rewarded?

Abraham received his son as from the dead. God renewed His great promises for future blessing. Abraham was justified, approved of God, and strengthened in his faith.

6. How can we discern if God is pleased with our faith?

We can prove ourselves (Galatians 6:4) by comparing our lives with the Scriptures and allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to us. This is not a once in a lifetime experience; it is a daily task. We need to ask God to search us.

When we find something that is not pleasing to God, we must humble ourselves and surrender to His will.

7. What rewards of faith can we receive?

Peace and assurance reward our faith in the time of uncertainty. The right response of faith helps faith to grow. Our faith is rewarded with patient endurance (James 1:3). In trial, our faith is rewarded with refining (1 Peter 1:7). The ultimate reward of faith is eternal life (1 Peter 1:9).

### **Summarizing the Lesson.**

Tempted and tried we're oft made to wonder  
Why it should be thus all the day long,  
While there are others living about us,  
Never molested though in the wrong  
When death has come and taken our loved ones,  
It leaves our home so lonely and drear;  
Then do we wonder why others prosper,  
Living so wicked year after year.  
Faithful till death said our loving Master,  
A few more days to labor and wait,  
Toils of the road will then seem as nothing,  
As we sweep through the beautiful gate.  
When we see Jesus coming in glory,  
When He comes from His home in the sky,  
Then we shall meet him in that bright mansion,  
We'll understand it all by and by.

*W. B. Stevens*

### **Research Guide.**

1. Study Hebrews 12:1-13 (chastisement) and James 1:2-4, 12-15 along with 1 Peter 1:5-7 (temptation to evil) for inspiration on the different kinds of trials.
2. Look in Name's Topical Bible under "Faith - Trial Of" to broaden your understanding of this subject.
3. You can also find inspiration by looking in 6 under the entry "Temptation - a Test."