

Lesson 3: “God Tests Abraham’s Faith”

Genesis 21:1-21; 22:1-

14

Background

- The LORD himself and two angels appeared to Abraham when he was ninety-nine and promised him and his wife Sarah (89 yrs. old) they would have a Son within a year.
- God destroyed the hometown of Abraham’s nephew Lot with burning sulfur. Lot’s wife disobeyed God and looked back and became a pillar of salt.
- Abraham settled in a city called Gerar and lied to the king there, telling him Sarah was his sister (the same lie he told to Pharaoh in Egypt)

Read 21:1-7

1) In verse 1 it says, “The LORD was gracious to Sarah.” Grace is undeserved love. How had the LORD shown grace to Sarah?

2) How long had Abraham waited for the Lord to keep his promise?

3) How did Abraham show his thankfulness to God and love for him?

4) In praising God for his grace, how did Sarah play on her son’s name?

Read 21:8-10

1) God had forbidden polygamy at the Garden of Eden when he designed marriage saying, “the two shall become one flesh.” Yet Abraham had children through both Sarah and Hagar. What impact does polygamy usually have on a family? In what ways do you see that here?

Read 21:11-13

1) God gave Abraham the “green light” to agree to Sarah’s plan to send Hagar and Ishmael packing. This would benefit each member of the household in certain ways. Take a few minutes with the

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people around you to identify some of those ways. Also try to think of some ways, it would negatively impact family life.

Abraham—

Sarah—

Hagar—

Ishmael—

Isaac—

2) After looking at a list that contained both positive and negatives for the family, what can we conclude about breaking God’s rules for marriage?

Read 21:14

1) This is a verse that highlights a moment of Abraham’s rock solid faith. Why?

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Read 21:15-21

1) Some might say that it was unfair of God to let Abraham send Ishmael and Hagar away. Take a minute or two with the people sitting by you to list the reasons from these verses why God was not unfair to them.

Read 22:1-4

1) Again, take some time with the people sitting around you to describe the following things Abraham might have been. . .

Thinking—

Feeling—

Read 22:5

1) Once again another verse where Abraham demonstrates rock-solid faith. How so?

Read 22:6-8

1) True or False: Abraham was lying to his Son Isaac.

Read 22:9-10

1) How does Isaac show his faith as his dad prepares to offer him as a sacrifice?

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Read 22:11-12

1) When the angel of the LORD spoke to Abraham, he basically told him he had just passed a huge test on his faith. This test required three days of agonizing thoughts and emotions on Abraham’s part, yet if you were to put the content of God’s test into a one sentence, yes-or-no question, what would it be?

2) Martin Luther once said “to not know the strength of your faith is like having an unknown treasure buried in the backyard.” What did this test reveal to Abraham about his faith?

3) When going through a difficult time, have you ever been surprised at what your faith has prompted you to do? Take a minute to share a story with those around you about when you were surprised or amazed at how you responded to a difficult situation.

Read 22:13-14

1) How did the LORD immediately give Abraham a way to express his thanks for the LORD’s grace?

2) Worship question: What part of the service do we do basically the same thing? Why does it fall where it does in the service?