

---

GROWTH GROUP WINTER 2020  
GOSPEL GLIMPSES: JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT  
WEEK 2 – JANUARY 19, 2020 - GENESIS 22:1-14

### GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

- 1) Share about a time in your life when you stepped out in faith and waited on God to provide, and he did.

### SETTING THE CONTEXT

This week we take up the story of Abram/Abraham. God had promised Abram that he would be blessed and that he would also be a blessing to others. However, in order for that blessing to happen Abram would have to leave his home and family behind. Genesis 15 tells the story of the covenant God makes with Abraham. God's promise is that Abraham's descendants will be as numerous as the stars. The problem that is discovered over time, though, is that Abraham's wife, Sarah, is barren, and unable to have children.

In Genesis 17, God gives Abram - which means "exalted father" the name Abraham, which means "father of many." This name change comes as God reminds Abraham that his descendants will dwell in the land of Canaan, as free people, and that God will be their God. This happens when Abraham is 99 years old and he and Sarah have still not had a child.

Abraham cannot handle all that he is hearing from God and he laughs. Later on, his wife Sarah laughs when she hears that she is going to have a child at the age of 90. The irony in all of this is that God tells Abraham and Sarah to name their son Isaac, which means laughter. The promise would be fulfilled. Isaac was the son of the promise and was living evidence of God's faithfulness.

However, the testing of Abraham was not yet done. God commands him to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice. This seems not only overwhelming, but just completely unfair and unkind. How could a merciful God ask for such a thing? Wasn't this command of God a complete contrast to the promise of God? God promised life and was now demanding death.



In Genesis and Exodus, we see where God makes it clear that He has a claim on the firstborn son of any Jewish family. The Levites functioned in this role for the nation (Numbers 3:11-13), yet there was still a price of five shekels that had to be paid by Jewish families to redeem their firstborn sons. The point is that the first-born male child belonged to God, including the son of Abraham and Sarah.

Abraham trusted that God had a plan and would provide. Verse 5 seems to make it clear that Abraham expected to return with Isaac. He trusted that God would provide a lamb for the offering. In the Hebrew language Abraham is literally saying that God will “see” the lamb or “see” to a lamb for the offering. Abraham names this place – Jehovah Jireh – which literally means, “in the mountain of the Lord it shall be “seen” or “provided.”

## EXPLORING THE TEXT

### Read Genesis 22:1-14

*<sup>1</sup> Sometime later, God tested Abraham's faith. "Abraham!" God called. "Yes," he replied. "Here I am." <sup>2</sup> "Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you." <sup>3</sup> The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son, Isaac. Then he chopped wood for a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had told him about. <sup>4</sup> On the third day of their journey, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. <sup>5</sup> "Stay here with the donkey," Abraham told the servants. "The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back." <sup>6</sup> So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them walked on together, <sup>7</sup> Isaac turned to Abraham and said, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "We have the fire and the wood," the boy said, "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" <sup>8</sup> "God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together. <sup>9</sup> When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. <sup>10</sup> And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. <sup>11</sup> At that moment the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Yes," Abraham replied. "Here I am!" <sup>12</sup> "Don't lay a hand on the boy!" the angel said. "Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son." <sup>13</sup> Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son. <sup>14</sup> Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means "the LORD will provide"). To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."*

- 2) In V3 Abraham sets out with Isaac to obey God's command. Abraham and Sarah had waited all their lives for the Lord to give them Isaac. What do you think was going through Abraham's mind as he started out on this journey? What would you be feeling?
- 3) Isaac asks his father, in V7, where the sheep is for the burnt offering. What does Abraham tell him? Where do you see God's provision in your life?
- 4) In V10 Abraham had the knife ready to kill his son. Do you think he would have followed through if the angel had not stopped him? Why or Why not?

- 5) There are many similarities between this story and that of Jesus. Discuss those and how this helps us understand God's sacrifice of his son.
- 6) Hebrews 11:17-19 provides some commentary on this story: "17 It was by faith that Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice when God was testing him. Abraham, who had received God's promises, was ready to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, 18 even though God had told him, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted." [a] 19 Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again. And in a sense, Abraham did receive his son back from the dead (NIV)." What further insight do you gain into the Genesis passage, by reading the commentary in Hebrews?
- 7) Abraham put his love of God above his love for his son. His relationship with God was most important to him. Do you value your family relationships before your relationship with God? What do you value most?

## BRINGING IT HOME

- 8) Is there something you are asking God to provide for you right now? Share with the group something you are praying for God to move, change, or complete in your life.