

Preparation Study
Sunday, May 20, 2012

MONDAY STUDY

Read Genesis 22:1-3,7-10 and answer the following questions:

- *What can we learn about Abraham's faith in God by the way he responded to God?*
- *Would you have been tempted not to obey God? Aside from prompt obedience, how might you have responded? (Answers may include talking about it with someone else; taking time to pray and hope for a different interpretation; etc.)*
- *How old do you imagine Isaac was at this point? (Although Scripture does not specifically tell us, most scholars believe that Isaac was not a small child but a young man.)*
- *What would Isaac have assumed about the journey with his father up the mountain? At what point might he have realized what was going on?*
- *What do we learn about the clarity of God's instruction to Abraham in this passage? What does that reveal about the level of communication between Abraham and God?*
- *Does a close relationship with God negate any fears or feelings of doubt when we are called to exhibit great faith?*
- *What did Abraham do to Isaac before he laid him on the altar? (He bound him.) How must this have affected both father and son?*

TUESDAY STUDY

Read Genesis 22:11-14 and answer the following questions:

- *What had just happened before the word "But" in verse 11? (Abraham raised the knife to kill Isaac.)*
- *Do we always feel close to God during our testing? How does this passage prove that God is not far away from us when our faith is tested?*
- *What was God's instruction to Abraham in this passage? How does it contrast with His instructions in verse 2? How can we explain the change in God's direction for Abraham?*
- *How did Abraham respond to God's new instruction?*
- *How does the name Abraham gave to God in this passage reflect his response to God's faithfulness?*
- *In what ways has God provided for you in a situation where there seemed to be no help in sight? How did you respond to Him?*
- *How do you allow your children to see your struggles in life and dependence on God?*

Summary: Without the obedience exhibited by Abraham, we may never have known this story. But because he went up the mountain, prepared the altar, bound his son, and was ready to sacrifice him, God interceded with the presence of an angel speaking the words of God Almighty Himself. Abraham proved his faith not by sacrificing his son but by being willing to obey God and believing He would still fulfill His promises. And God was faithful to Abraham, not only in sparing the life of Isaac but in providing the ram in his place. It is when we depend on God in faith that we learn firsthand of His willingness to provide.

WEDNESDAY STUDY

Read Genesis 26:2-5 and answer the following questions:

- *Why might it have been easier to disobey and go to Egypt? Are there times in life when following God by faith is much more risky than our own plans?*
- *At the same time, how had God demonstrated that He could be trusted to Isaac, even outside of today's focal passages? (Direct learners to Gen. 24, the story of Isaac and Rebekah, if the passage is not volunteered.)*
- *How can you relate to Isaac's dilemma? Upon what memories and past experiences did God direct Isaac to reflect? On what memories and past experiences should we reflect when our faith is tested?*
- *How many statements contain the words "I will"? (Summarize that God would be the provider of practically everything in this passage.)*
- *What, according to verse 5, was the reason that God would provide all this? (The faith of Abraham)*
- *How does God's word to Isaac look back to the faith of his father? How does His word look ahead to the promises concerning his children?*
- *In what ways should we consider our past and our future when choosing whether or not to trust in God's provision?*
- *How did Isaac's past shape his faith? How has your past shaped yours?*
- *How does Romans 4:3 give us further insight into the importance of faith? Would Isaac have witnessed his father's faith if Abraham had not lived it out?*

Summary: Although Abraham had other sons, only Isaac was the child of God's covenant. Abraham had fathered another son, Ishmael, by Sarah's servant Hagar. He also remarried after Sarah's death and had six sons with her (Gen. 25:1-2). But Isaac was the son through whom God would keep His promise to Abraham. Surely Isaac never forgot that fateful day when he carried the wood to his own sacrifice, watched his father tie him and place him on the altar, and heard the angel call out to his father to stop his father's hand. It was probably years into the future (if ever) before Isaac could fully make sense of that day. Abraham's faith on that day alone would shape his son's faith forever.

THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY STUDY

Read the following articles contained in your study packet:

1. Isaac;
2. Moriah – Its Biblical & Historical Significance;