

Abraham Tested with Isaac

Genesis 21 - 22

PPT Title

Abraham Tested with Isaac

Main Point: Our faith makes us right with God.

PPT Verse

Key Verse: *Abram believed the Lord. The Lord accepted Abram because he believed. So his faith made him right with the Lord.* - Genesis 15:6

Props: A glass of iced tea or lemonade; packets of sugar substitute

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about Abram marrying a second wife, Hagar, because his wife, Sarai, was not able to have children. Abram and Sarai took matters into their own hands and tried to "help" God fulfill His promise to give Abram many descendants. This was a big mistake! God does not need anyone's help! God was doing everything in HIS timing. Abram was wrong to do things his own way and his sin caused trouble for everyone. Abram and Hagar had a son. **Ask:** Who remembers the name of their son? *Ishmael*

NEW NAMES, RENEWED PROMISE (Genesis 17)

Say: Thirteen years after Ishmael was born, God came to Abram.

When Abram was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to him. He said, "I am the Mighty God. Walk with me and live without any blame. I will now put into practice my covenant between me and you. I will greatly increase your numbers. You will not be called Abram anymore. Your name will be Abraham, because I have made you a father of many nations. I will give you many children. Nations will come from you. And kings will come from you." - Genesis 17:1-2, 5-6

The Lord changed Abram's name to Abraham which means *father of many, many people*. God also changed Sarai's name to Sarah which means *noble, or royal, woman*.

PPT Verse

*Then God said, "I will bless Ishmael. But your wife Sarah will have a son by you. And you will name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with **him**. It will be a covenant that lasts forever. It will be for Isaac and for his family after him."* - Genesis 17:19

God told Abraham that Sarah's son would be born by that time next year. Abraham listened to God and obeyed everything the Lord instructed him to do (Genesis 17:10, 23-27).

ISAAC (GENESIS 21:1-7)

Say: *The Lord kept his word and did for Sarah exactly what He had promised. She became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. This happened at just the time God had said it would.* - Genesis 21:1-2



Just as God had promised, Sarah had a son. Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 years old when the child was born. Wow! That is really old. The Bible says their

bodies were good as dead (Romans 4:19). It is very rare for someone to live to be 100 nowadays. Think about the oldest person you know. For some of you, that might be a great-grandparent. Can you imagine that person becoming a new mom or dad at their age?

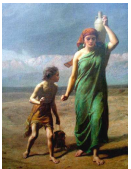
As God had instructed, Abraham and Sarah named their son Isaac. Isaac means *he laughs or laughter*.

Sarah said, "God has given laughter to me. Everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." - Genesis 21:6

HAGAR & ISHMAEL SENT AWAY (Genesis 21:8-20)



Say: Ishmael was thirteen years old when Isaac was born. As Isaac grew, there were problems with his big brother Ishmael. Ishmael teased Isaac. When Sarah saw this, she told Abraham to send Ishmael and his mother away. Sarah did not want her son to share his inheritance with his half-brother. Inheritance is the blessing of the father, and all the money and property passed down from a parent to a child. This upset Abraham, because Ishmael was his son and he loved him. But God told Abraham not to be upset. God told Abraham to do what Sarah said, because the wonderful promises He made were going to be fulfilled **through Isaac**. God promised that Ishmael would have many descendants, also.



The next morning, Abraham gave food and water to Hagar, and sent her and Ishmael into the desert. God provided for Hagar and Ishmael in the desert. God was with Ishmael as he continued to grow up. Ishmael became an archer. Later, Hagar found a wife for him in Egypt.

Application: Even though all the stories in the Bible actually happened, many of them are also pictures of spiritual truths. The New Testament book of Galatians helps to explain how we can see a spiritual truth in the true story of Ishmael and Isaac. Galatians tells us that Hagar's son is a picture of trying to do things our own way, while Sarah's son is a picture God doing things His way. When Abraham took Hagar as his wife, he was trying to achieve God's goal **by his own power**. When Sarah (who was as good as dead) had a baby, it was **by God's power** (Galatians 4:23). Hagar's child was sent away and would not receive Abraham's inheritance. Sarah's child was welcome and would receive Abraham's inheritance. In the same way, if we try to be accepted by God by working to do good things, we will not be accepted by Him. But, if we have faith in what God did when He sent His Son to die for us, then we will be accepted by God. When we try to earn our way to God, we are like Ishmael. When we TRUST and HAVE FAITH in Jesus, we are like Isaac (Galatians 4:30-31).

Ishmael	Isaac
- Hagar	- Sarah
- Abraham's power	- God's power
- sent away	- welcome
- no inheritance	- inheritance
- works, earning	- trust, faith
- accepted	- not accepted

ABRAHAM TESTED (Genesis 22)

Say: The next part of our story is very different from anything we have read before. It is an amazing story of Abraham's faith, and God's faithfulness.

Some time later God put Abraham to the test. He said to him, "Abraham!"

"Here I am," Abraham replied.



Then God said, "Take your son, your only son. He is the one you love. Take Isaac. Go to Moriah. Give him to me there as a burnt offering. Sacrifice him on one of the mountains I will tell you about." - Genesis 22:1-2

God told Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac. God had never asked anyone to do such a thing before that time, and never has since then. Abraham did not question 2

God. He simply obeyed. Just as before, God told Abraham to go, and Abraham went.



Abraham cut wood for the burnt offering, loaded up his donkey, took two servants along with Isaac, and set out toward the place God had told him. It took three days for them to get to the right place. Does anyone wonder what Abraham was thinking as they traveled? Was he really going to kill his own son? If Isaac was killed, how would God fulfill His promise for Abraham's family line to continue *through Isaac*? Another part of the Bible tells us what Abraham was thinking. Hebrews 11:19 says, "Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again." (NLT)

Abraham saw the place in the distance. Listen to how SURE Abraham was that God would keep His promise about Isaac:

*He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there and worship. **Then we'll come back to you.**"* - Genesis 22:5

We are not told exactly how old Isaac was at this time, but we are told he was old enough to carry the wood for the offering. And he was old enough to ask a very important question.

"The fire and wood are here," Isaac said. "But where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

Abraham answered, "God Himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." - Genesis 22:7b-8a

Abraham's answer showed that even though he did not know exactly how God would do it, He was CERTAIN God would provide what was needed, and God would keep all of His promises. When they reached the right place, Abraham built an altar and put the wood on it. He tied up Isaac and laid him on top of the wood. Then, just as he was about to kill Isaac, he heard a voice.

The angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven. He said, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Here I am," Abraham replied.

"Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you have respect for God. You have not held back from Me your son, your only son." - Genesis 22:11-12



God stopped Abraham just in time! When Abraham looked up, he saw a ram caught in bush by its horns. Because the ram was caught by its horns, it was not scratched or cut up by the bush. The Lord provided a perfect animal as a substitute sacrifice for Isaac. He went to get it and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of Isaac. Abraham named that mountain, "The Lord will provide."

PPT Verse

Notice what God said to Abraham. He said, "Now I know that you have respect for God. You have not held back from me your son, your only son." (Genesis 22:12b) Abraham's actions gave PROOF of His faith in God and the respect he had for God.



Let's "change gears" (pun intended) for just a minute to look at what this means. Let's say that three men went to a NASCAR race. Car racing is a very dangerous sport. The cars go up 200 miles per hour - that's three times faster than the highway speed limit. Cars crash almost every week, and sadly some people have even died in those crashes. As the three men compared the different drivers, they all decided that Jeff Gordon was the greatest driver of all time. Well, what if right before the race, Jeff Gordon pulled up next to the men and offered them the chance to hop in his car and run the race

with him? Of the three men, only one hopped in the car. **Ask:** All the men said he was the greatest driver, but which man gave PROOF that he really believed Jeff was the greatest driver? *The one who hopped in the car!*

Similarly, because Abraham was willing to obey God, even if that meant giving up the one thing most precious to him, he PROVED that He trusted and respected God above all things. The Bible says that Abraham was **fully persuaded** that God had the power to keep His promises (Romans 4:21). That means that Abraham knew that no matter what, no matter how, God could do and would do what He said He would do. Because Abraham proved his faith by obeying, God repeated His promises.

The angel of the Lord called out to Abraham from heaven a second time. He said, "I am taking an oath in My own name. I will bless you because of what you have done," announces the Lord. "You have not held back your son, your only son. Genesis 22:15-16

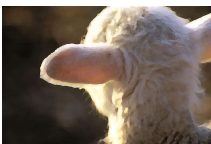
The word "only" used here means *begotten one, most dear, one that cannot be replaced.*

"So I will certainly bless you. I will make your children after you as many as the stars in the sky. I will make them as many as the grains of sand on the seashore. Your children will take over the cities of their enemies. All nations on earth will be blessed because of your children. All of that will happen because you have obeyed Me." - Genesis 22:17-18

Application: Again, this true story is a picture of a spiritual truth. God provided a **substitute sacrifice** for Isaac. And, at the just the right time, God provided a **substitute sacrifice** for us.



Hold up your iced tea (or lemonade). Look at this glass of iced tea (or lemonade). I love sweet iced tea made with sugar. But if I were on a diet, or if I was trying to stay away from sugar, I would use some of this stuff. **Pour in sugar substitute.** **Ask:** Who knows what this is called? (*Kids will most likely call out brand names.*) **Say:** It is known by the brand name, but it is a "sugar substitute." **It takes place of the sugar that should be there.** Similarly, when your teacher at school is sick for the day, who does the principle send in to teach? *A substitute teacher.* **Say:** A substitute comes in **to take the place of what should be there.** (*Be sure to use this wording.*)



Because of our sin, each of us deserves death (Romans 6:23). We deserve to be separated from God forever. But God provided a perfect, final **substitute sacrifice** for us - His Son Jesus. The Bible calls Jesus, "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) When we place our trust in Jesus, our substitute sacrifice, we are forgiven of our sins and we are accepted by God.

Abraham was accepted by God because of his faith (Romans 4:22). If you trust God and have placed your faith in Jesus, you, too, are accepted by God!

The words "God accepted Abraham's faith" were written not only for Abraham. They were written also for us. We believe in the God who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. So God will accept our faith and make us right with Himself. - Romans 4:23

PPT Main Point

Main Point: Our faith makes us right with God.