

# Genesis 12-22

## Mount Moriah: Abraham and Isaac

Image Church // Mountains Week 2

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### Intro

We are in a series called **Mountains**, where we're looking at key mountaintop moments throughout the Bible...

We are on a journey that will lead us to Easter...

- **BTW you got a card when you came in** - grab it! I want to talk about it real quick!
  - Walk through card...
- One other exciting thing about Easter is that **WE'RE GOING TO BE ADDING A SERVICE on Easter Weekend!**
  - We're going to be doing a **9 and 10:45**
  - Can we celebrate that!!!
  - Then, **the week after Easter, we will go back to normal service time at 10 am.**
- Be present and prayed up and invite like crazy!!!

### Build the tension:

*Going deep sea fishing... My friend's dad...*

- Case of beer... 24
- Thirsty- get me a beer...
- He loved a him a beer...

*The thing is what he needed was a water...*

*My kids: they love candy and desserts...*

- Could eat it every meal as their meal...
  - The thing is what they need is fruit and veggies!

*What if the things you love in life are keeping you from the thing that you need in this life?*

**Genesis 12-22** Remember, I told you last week about a **narrative...** I want to hold up the story-show you what we need to see

### Genesis 12:2-3

*The Lord said to Abram...<sup>2</sup> I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.<sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*

God comes to a guy named Abram and says to him, I will bless you, and I will make you a great nation... And on top of that, I'm going I'm about to take you to a sprawl of land that I'm going to give to your offspring...

- Sounds great only problem is that Abram is **75 years old** (*Gen. 12:4*), and he has no kids...

**Fast forward**, you have a **Famine**, and Abram and his wife Sarai go to Egypt...

- They're about to walk in, and Abram is like, hey Sarai, listen, you're really fine, the Egyptians are going to see you, and they will kill me to get you... So please just say that you're my sister and it will go well for me...
- Bad idea... But Sarai goes along with it...
- Pharaoh takes notice of Sarai and has her brought to him...
- God shows up in the midst of the mess and provides a way out...
  - God strikes Pharaoh's house with severe plagues...
  - Pharaoh summons Abram and says why didn't you tell me she was your wife- take her and get out...

**Here's the thing we see:** Abram has a **trust** problem here. He doesn't trust the Lord to provide and protect- being faithful to his promise.

- And yet God sees him through... *This will be a pattern...*

## Genesis 15:1–6

<sup>1</sup> After these events, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield; your reward will be very great. <sup>2</sup> But Abram said, “Lord God, what can you give me, since I am childless and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” <sup>3</sup> Abram continued, “Look, you have given me no offspring, so a slave born in my house will be my heir.” <sup>4</sup> Now the word of the Lord came to him: “This one will not be your heir; instead, one who comes from your own body will be your heir.” <sup>5</sup> He took him outside and said, “Look at the sky and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “Your offspring will be that numerous.” <sup>6</sup> Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

And then God says, *and oh, by the way, I will give you the land you're standing on to your offspring...* And God makes a **covenant** with him that night...

*Pretty powerful movement...* And we see the faith of Abram- he believed the Lord...

- You would think that this would seal the deal...

But then we get to **Genesis 16: Abram Sarai and Hagar and Ishmael**

- *Explain...*
- Again, what we see here is a **trust** problem...

Abram and Sarai take things into their own hands... ***They try to earn God's blessing on their own instead of trusting God to do what they can't...***

- What we see is a works-based approach...

This is a picture of *religion*...

- Religion is about trying to achieve God's blessing...
- Your destiny is in your hands... Work hard, be good, do the right thing...

And what we see here is that God's blessing can't be achieved in your efforts...

- God's blessing comes through God's hand...

And yet again, what we're going to see is that in the midst of the mess, God shows up...

## Genesis 17:1–8

<sup>1</sup> When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him, saying, “I am God Almighty. Live in my presence and be blameless. <sup>2</sup> I will set up my covenant between me and you, and I will multiply you greatly.” <sup>3</sup> Then Abram fell facedown and God spoke with him: <sup>4</sup> “As for me, here is my covenant with you: You will become the father of many nations. <sup>5</sup> Your name will no longer be Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I will make you the father of many nations. <sup>6</sup> I will make you extremely fruitful and will make nations and kings come from you. <sup>7</sup> I will confirm my covenant that is between me and you and your future offspring throughout their generations. It is a permanent covenant to be your God and the God of your offspring after you. <sup>8</sup> And to you and your future offspring I will give the land where you are residing—all the land of Canaan—as a permanent possession, and I will be their God.”

## Genesis 17:15–16

<sup>15</sup> God said to Abraham, “As for your wife Sarai, do not call her Sarai, for Sarah will be her name. <sup>16</sup> I will bless her; indeed, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she will produce nations; kings of peoples will come from her.”

So in **Genesis 17**, God again reminds Abram of his covenant with him, and as a part of that- a reminder- God changes his name from Abram to Abraham, and God changes his wife's name from Sari to Sarah...

*But the thing to notice is that time continues to pass, and **no son**...*

***God has a plan that Abraham can't see...***

***God was refining Abraham...*** And in the process, he was preparing the way for a **provision** way bigger than a son for Abraham...

\*Here's what we need to see: ***God was doing something in Abraham before He was going to do something through Abraham...***

So often we're focused on our circumstances... And we want to see God work in our circumstances and we're focused on our circumstances, but what **God wants to work on is your heart**...

- Because when God refines your heart you can endure...

*Then after this, we get to:*

**Genesis 20:** Abraham would again lie about Sarah... Says she's his sister AGAIN!

*We see a trust issue... And at its' core is a desire to **control rather than trust**...*

*Let me ask you this, where do you turn when you're not in control?*

- **Do you look in or do you look out... Saying God I can't, but I trust that you can and will see me through...**

And yet again in the midst of the mess, God shows up and fixes the situation... Goes to the king in a dream and says you're about to die because of the woman you've taken... King lets them go...

### **Genesis 21:1–7**

<sup>1</sup> The Lord came to Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah what he had promised. <sup>2</sup> Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time God had told him. <sup>3</sup> Abraham named his son who was born to him—the one Sarah bore to him—Isaac. <sup>4</sup> When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God had commanded him. <sup>5</sup> Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. <sup>6</sup> Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, and everyone who hears will laugh with me." <sup>7</sup> She also said, "Who would have told Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne a son for him in his old age."

Finally!! Abraham and Sarah get their son... This is the beginning of the fulfillment of everything God's told them!

**One of the things we need to learn is that god doesn't operate on our timetable...**

God came to Abraham when he was **75** and told him what would go down...

- But God didn't follow through on it until **25** years later!

And what we see is a roller coaster of trust in the process...

- **BTW:** Some of yall are like if I saw what they saw in the bible, it would change things for me... Abram is proof that's not true...

### **Genesis 22:1–18**

<sup>1</sup> After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am," he answered. <sup>2</sup> "Take your son," he said, "your only son Isaac, whom you love, go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."

God stepped in to **test** Abraham...

- *This sounds strange, even cruel, but the reality is that it is a blessing...*
- *God wants to break something in Abraham and Isaac, and He wants to build something in them...*

*It would be easier for Abraham to give up himself, he was old...*

- *Many would sacrifice themselves for their son but never their own child...*

You have to understand how these words would have hit...

- It's his son...
- It's his future...
- It's his everything...

*And what about the promise from God?!? How would all that he had hoped for, all that he had dreamed about happen? This legacy he*

*waited so long for was about to be slain on an altar by none other than the father...<sup>1</sup>*

*And what does Abraham do? How does he respond? Verse 3:*

<sup>3</sup> So Abraham got up early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took with him two of his young men and his son Isaac.

He split wood for a burnt offering and set out to go to the place God had told him about. <sup>4</sup> On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. <sup>5</sup> Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go over there to worship; then we'll come back to you." <sup>6</sup> Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac. In his hand he took the fire and the knife, and the two of them walked on together. <sup>7</sup> Then Isaac spoke to his father Abraham and said, "My father." And he replied, "Here I am, my son." Isaac said, "The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" <sup>8</sup> Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."

Notice the faith Abraham has in God... He's come a long way... He went from struggling with faith to now walking in it...

- This is what the journey of sanctification looks like...
- **Sanctification:** the change that God brings in you through faith...
- Abram had messed up a lot, but he continued in faith...

**Verse 8:**

Then the two of them walked on together. <sup>9</sup> When they arrived at the place that God had told him about, Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood. He bound his son Isaac and placed him on the altar on top of the wood. <sup>10</sup> Then Abraham reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son.

*A dramatic picture of the **surrendered life**...*

God asked for the thing that Abraham loved the most...

What is it that you love the most???

For some of you your job is the one thing- your kids- your money- your degree- your sport-

- your holding onto it...
- scared to let go and trust God with it...

For some of you, God asking if you love him more than everything...

**NT Crossreference:** *Whosoever will lose will find...*

**Verse 11:**

<sup>11</sup> But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" He replied, "Here I am." <sup>12</sup> Then he said, "Do not lay a hand on the boy or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your only son from me." <sup>13</sup> Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in the thicket by its horns.

*God let Abraham Go through to the point where there would be no retreat...*

- *God steps in... I never intended for you to kill your son... I just wanted to remove him from the throne of your heart so that I might reign there unchallenged...*

*Heaven opened...*

- *You have not withheld your son, you only son, I will be faithful to you...*
- *Abraham was fully surrendered...*
- **He had given up everything. He possessed nothing... And in this, he had everything...**

*We have a hard time handing over what's the most valuable... It's a trust issue...*

<sup>1</sup> Thoughts in this section accredited to AW Tozer, Pursuit of God, *The blessedness of possessing nothing*

- *And there is no safer place to put our most valuable things than in the hands of God!*<sup>2</sup>

### Verse 13:

So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son.<sup>14</sup> And Abraham named that place The Lord Will Provide, so today it is said, "It will be provided on the Lord's mountain."<sup>15</sup> Then the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven<sup>16</sup> and said, "By myself I have sworn," this is the Lord's declaration: "Because you have done this thing and have not withheld your only son,<sup>17</sup> I will indeed bless you and make your offspring as numerous as the stars of the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your offspring will possess the city gates of their enemies.<sup>18</sup> And all the nations of the earth will be blessed by your offspring because you have obeyed my command."

God would use what happened with Abraham here to point to an incredible picture...

- Of what we need and what would come...

See there would be a Father that would sacrifice His son...

- Carry the wood...
- Would be unblemished...

A picture of Jesus... John 3:16

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***We will never respond with open hands if we don't see how God has responded to us...***

- Abraham saw God's continued faithful response to him even in the midst of the mess...
- God said even though you were not faithful, I will be...
- It led him to the moment where he saw the culmination of God's hand on the top of the mountain...
- Where God would point to

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

And it's that moment on the mountain that is a picture for us of what God did for us!

## Conclusion [VAMP]

Here's what you're going to see... ***Your faithlessness in a moment doesn't negate God's faithfulness over your life.***<sup>3</sup>

One of the things that we see is that God didn't choose Abram because he was good. He chose him just because... And chose to use him in spite of his

**Hebrews 11:8-9** Abraham walked by faith...

**Example** I have used before: **Proverbs 24:16**, *a righteous man falls seven times but will rise again...* The Christian life isn't characterized by not falling. It's characterized by what you do when you fall...

- The goal is to get up in faith... What makes you righteous is not what you do but who you are looking at!

<sup>3</sup>Thought adapted from Joby Martin, *Abraham and Isacc.*