

## Faith, Tested And Crowned

Gen. 22:1

Genesis 22:1 - Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

### **Introduction:**

- A. If you have ever traveled east from Las Cruces, N.M. on highway 70 toward Alamogordo, you passed by the White Sands national monument. In addition to a national monument, the White Sands is also an active military installation. Along the highway are signs warning that the area is closed to the public. Often, they will even close the highway when transporting missiles. It is not an area in which you want to wonder too far from the prescribed route.
- B. The reason this facility exists is to test missiles before putting them into use. Most, if not all, the missiles fail miserably at first. But rather than giving up, they refine and test until the missile is perfected. Theory works well on paper, but only actual practice perfects.
- C. Just as the White Sands are the proving grounds for missile testing, we should understand that we live in a proving ground every day. A life of faith is a life of testing so we can win when the battles come. It is easy to deceive ourselves about the ruling motive of our lives, but our thoughts and actions reveal the true motive, so let us not cheat ourselves and God.

### **I. God Dispenses Tests**

- A. For our benefit - strengthen & equip us - Jas. 1:2-3; 1 Pet. 4:15-16

James 1:2-3 - Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

1 Peter 4:15-16 - Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

- 1. Need wisdom to see benefit of trials - Jas. 1:5

James 1:5 - But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

- 2. Steadfastness & completeness - Jas. 1:2-4

James 1:2-4 - Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

- 3. Expected of the righteous - 2 Tim. 3:12

2 Timothy 3:12 - Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

- B. Abraham already had some "conditioning"

- 1. Faith to leave Ur - Heb. 11:8

Hebrews 11:8 - By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

- 2. Famine leading to sojourn in Egypt
- 3. Long wait before Isaac's birth
- 4. Animosity between Sarah & Hagar

- C. The command to Abraham - Gen. 22:2

Genesis 22:2 - He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you."

1. A test of devotion - He loved Isaac (precious possession)
2. Love for God must be supreme - Matt. 10:37

**Matthew 10:37** - "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

- a. All must choose between earthly & heavenly love
- b. All must first crown God in our hearts

## II. *The Response Of Faith*

### A. Prompt obedience - Gen. 22:3

**Genesis 22:3** - So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

1. Readiness to yield to God & suppress "logic"
  - a. Dashed hopes held in Isaac
  - b. "Failed" promises of God
  - c. Trust beyond apparent "impossibilities"
2. The long journey requires steadfastness
  - a. Imagine three days of mental anguish
  - b. Assured our road not a "blind alley"

### B. Unshakable confidence

#### 1. We Will Return - Gen. 22:5

**Genesis 22:5** - Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you."

#### 2. Even if it required a miracle - Heb. 11:17-19

**Hebrews 11:17-19** - By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

### Undying trust in God's provisions - Gen. 22:8

**Genesis 22:8** - Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

#### 1. A lamb for sacrifice - Gen. 22:12-13

**Genesis 22:12-13** - He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son.

2. Strength equal to "impossible" tasks (tests)
  - a. All outward wants pale to doing God's Will
  - b. Richest treasure from His storehouse is NOT material

## III. *The Reward Of Faith*

### A. God's acceptance and approval

#### 1. Noblest aim = be well-pleasing - Gen. 22:12

**Genesis 22:12** - He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

#### 2. The promise of life - Jas. 1:12

**James 1:12** - Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

B. Deeper insight into God's will

1. God provided substitute sacrifice - Isa. 53:4-6

**Isaiah 53:4-6** - Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

2. All provisions are "In the mount" - Gen. 22:14

**Genesis 22:14** - Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the LORD it will be provided."

3. He never trifles with us, or acts arbitrarily

C. Multiplied blessings - Gen. 22:16-17; Matt. 19:29

**Genesis 22:16-17** - and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.

**Matthew 19:29** - "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.

### ***Conclusion:***

A. Are your reflections of the Mounts in Moriah focused up sufferings & heartaches OR blessings? Times of trial or deliverance?

B. Our resources may give out & strength vanish, BUT God WILL provide rich blessings for the needs & hungers of every soul.