

**Read: Genesis 22:1-18**

## Tests

### **Genesis 22:1**

Some time later God tested Abraham.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Tests come in all shapes and sizes. Some are short, little pop quizzes; others take hours to finish. Some tests are easy; others make your palms sweat.

Most people don't enjoy taking tests. When a teacher at school announces a test is coming, the kids in the class usually groan. Tests aren't fun.

Abraham's test wasn't fun. Abraham had waited his whole life to have a child. For years, God had been promising him that he would have a son, but Abraham didn't have his son Isaac until he was 100 years old.

Time passed and Isaac grew. But then one night God appeared to Abraham in a dream. He told him to go to a mountain and sacrifice his son—his only son Isaac—to God. In other words, God told Abraham to kill Isaac.

We know that God wasn't going to make Abraham kill Isaac, but Abraham didn't. Abraham didn't understand. Why would God ask him to kill his son?

God was testing Abraham to see if he loved God even more than his precious son Isaac. Abraham passed God's test. Even though it was the hardest thing he would ever do, Abraham was willing to give up his son if God asked him to. He trusted God. He loved God even more than his own son.

God tests us every day. He lets the devil tempt us to do things we know are wrong. He allows problems to come into our lives that we don't fully understand. He lets us get sick or hurt.

When he does, he's testing us to see if we will trust him. He's testing us to see if we will love him more than anything or anybody else.

Sometimes we pass the tests God sends, but sometimes we fail. Sometimes we do the bad things we aren't supposed to. Sometimes we doubt God and worry. Sometimes we complain about the hard things in our lives.

Thankfully, we have a God who sacrificed his own Son for us. God the Father let his Son, Jesus, die on the cross to show us how much he loves us. Because Jesus passed the test, God forgives us for every test we have ever failed.

Are you having a test of faith? Don't worry! He gives them to bring us closer to him. He provides the answers for them in his Word. Like Abraham, let's pass God's tests.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Can you give an example of a test God gives you? (*Hint: obedience, trust*)
- When God tests you, what can you do to help you pass the test?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- God's test for Abraham was hard because he loved his son Isaac so much. Name things in your life that you are tempted to love more than God.
- Why does God deserve to be loved more than anything or anyone else?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Abraham was really old at this time, and his son Isaac was a young man. Isaac could have probably fought back when his dad tied him up. What would you have done? Why do you think Isaac didn't fight his father? (*Hint: Isaac trusted God and his promises just like his dad.*)
- As we get older, the tests in our lives change (and often get harder). Discuss a couple of tests you know you will face as a young adult. How can you begin to prepare now to face them?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear God, I am sorry for the times I have failed the tests you have given me. Thank you for sacrificing your Son so I can be forgiven. Help me to do better. Amen.