

Genesis 21:1-7; 22:1-19



**Big Idea:**

Testing reveals progress and sheds light on needed growth. Testing also prepares us for the blessing that is to come.

**Thought Exercise:**

- When is the last time you remember being anxious about a test or challenge?
- What is the difference between something bad occurring and a test of faith?

**Items for discussion:**

**Progress Revealed**

- After God's promise is fulfilled (Genesis 21:1-7), what is the purpose of this test given to Abraham?
- What is the difference in testing and temptation?
- It is important for us to understand how much we have changed.

**Growth Needed**

- A test in a classroom not only reveals what you know, but also what you don't know.
- Just as it is important to know where we have grown, our areas that continue to need work are important to identify.

**A Blessing Prepared**

- What are some of the ways God blesses his people?
- What are some ways in which a blessing could actually be a curse or burden?
- Sometimes the blessing is immediately received. (Genesis 22:26-27)
- Sometimes that blessing is seen from afar. (Hebrews 11:26-40)

**Our Response**

- The love question: Who/what occupies the highest place in your heart? (Genesis 22:2; Luke 14:26)
- The obedience question: Will you obey even when you don't understand? (Genesis 22:3)
- The worship question: Will you offer God your very best? (Genesis 22:5)
- The faith question: Will you trust God with your future? (Genesis 22:5, 8, 14)

God has created and brought to order and function to the earth, the rebellion of humanity against divine authority, and God's plan to restore mankind to his original purpose through grace and faith.

