

INTRODUCTION

Why do you think so many teenagers tend to rebel against their parents?

Have students work in small teams to list their top ten ways a dad shows he is someone you can trust. Then invite them to share their lists with the whole group.

When we know what other people are like, we can grow to trust them. That is why it is important that we study the Bible, because in the Bible we learn about what God is like. By studying God's character, we learn to trust His promises. Today's Bible passage is about a dad and his son whose incredible story teaches us about God and His promises.

DISCUSSION

> **HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GENESIS 22:1-19.**

God promised Abraham and Sarah a son, and then waited 25 years before giving them Isaac. So how would you expect Abraham to react to God's instructions in verse 2? Why didn't Abraham object?

What did God want from Abraham?

What do you learn about Abraham based on his prompt, obedient response?

Why would God wait until the last moment to intervene in order to prevent Abraham from killing Isaac?

Isaac was probably a strong and healthy teenager at this point in his life. What does his question in verse 7 tell you about his relationship with his dad?

What does the fact that Isaac didn't hop up off the altar and run away tell you about his trust in God?

What did Isaac learn about fatherhood that day?

What did Isaac learn about God?

GOING DEEPER

Read Romans 8:32. Describe how Genesis 22 foreshadows the sacrifice of Jesus.

Read Hebrews 11:17-19. How does the Abraham-Isaac story point not only to Jesus's sacrifice but also to His resurrection?

APPLICATION

Where would you say you struggle to surrender trust and control of your life? Why?

What can you learn about that struggle from Abraham and Isaac?

What is one step you might take this week to deepen your commitment to God?

PRAYER

Thank God for the father figures in our lives who show us what it means to really trust Jesus. Thank God that you can trust His promises and His character to always be faithful. Ask Him to help you do that, even when it's hard. Thank Him for His gracious provision of His only Son, Jesus, through whom blessing and salvation come to the world.

COMMENTARY

GENESIS 22

22:1-2. Abraham's ultimate test of obedience to God is described in 22:1-19. God used this event to affirm the sterling character of Abraham's faith by giving him the incredibly difficult task of sacrificing his son Isaac. Pagans in Canaan during the OT period regularly practiced child sacrifice by making them pass through the fire (2Ki 16:3) to give them as food to their gods (Ezek 23:37). With this command God was asking Abraham to demonstrate that he was as committed to the Lord God as pagans were to their gods.

22:3-4. Confirmation of Abraham's amazing trust in God is found first in the fact that he was up before sunrise (early in the morning) the next day to begin the journey. His diligence in going to the place God had told him about contrasts sharply with Jonah's actions (Jnh 1:3). Traveling from Beer-sheba, it was not until the third day that Abraham reached the Jerusalem area.

22:5-8. Evidence that Abraham believed God could raise Isaac from the dead (Heb 11:17-18) is found in his comment, we'll come back. Abraham carried the most dangerous elements of the sacrifice—the fire and the sacrificial knife—himself, perhaps as a sign of his protective love for Isaac. Ignorant of God's command and surprised that his father would forget the most important element in an animal sacrifice, Isaac asked Abraham where the lamb was. Abraham's faith-filled response was that God Himself would provide the lamb ("sheep").

22:9-14. Abraham followed the standard procedure for a burnt offering involving a living being. In describing his preparation, the Bible emphasizes only Abraham's systematic acts of obedience, omitting any mention of Abraham's or Isaac's feelings. Just before the knife was put to Isaac's neck, the Angel of the Lord spared him. The patriarch had passed the test, providing experiential evidence that he feared God more than he loved his only son. Exactly as Abraham had predicted (v. 8), God had miraculously provided a sheep—and the most prized variety, a ram. To memorialize the event Abraham named that place The Lord Will Provide.

22:15-18. As the Angel of the Lord who had the Lord's authority, the divine emissary delivered a second message (v. 12), this one in the first person. Because Abraham had passed the "priorities test" by obeying God and not withholding his only son, the Lord would indeed bless him with offspring, victory, land, and goodwill.