

# Influence Ministries

ALL IN

## LESSON 2

### TITLE: THIS IS ONLY A TEST.

Genesis 22:1-19 NKJV

*1 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."*

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

*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 the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.*

*4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.*

*5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad[a] and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."*

*6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.*

*7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"*

*8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.*

*9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.*

*10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.*

*11 But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am."*

*12 And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."*

*13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.*

*14 And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide;[b] as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided."*

*15 Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,*

*16 and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—*

# Influence Ministries

*17 blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.*

*18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”*

*19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.*

This is one of the most uncomfortable stories in all of Scripture.

There is a tremendous tension... how could a loving God even suggest what He is commanding Abraham?

But I have found that in the stories that contain tension, we often have the greatest revelations and God is trying to reveal something to us.

If you grew up between 1963 and 1997, there were moments when you heard this message.

“This is a test. For the next 60 seconds, this station will conduct a test of the Emergency Broadcasting System. This is only a test.”

It is very importance to notice at the front of this story, it says that God tested Abraham. **THIS IS ONLY A TEST.**

I don't believe that God intended for Abraham to sacrifice his son.

I understand that this was a culture where there were pagan religions surrounding the Israelites that practiced human sacrifice.

So in that culture, it was maybe a little bit more thinkable as hard as that is to imagine in our culture.

But God never intended for Abraham to sacrifice his son. In fact, I don't believe God would have allowed it.

But there are moments when God will test us.

This is not a story about God's character; it is a story about Abraham's character.

It is not God's character that is up for debate. It is not God's character in question; it is Abraham's character that is in question.

This is sort of the ultimate test, to determine whether or not Abraham was ALL IN.

I have found that there are moments when God will test us and will determine whether or not our lives are truly submitted to Him.

Those are difficult tests to take, but they will reveal whether God is still on the throne of our lives or whether He has been displaced by someone or something else.

I think God wanted to see if the gift that He had given to Abraham, (25 year promise in the making) and God finally delivered on that promise and gave them a little boy named Isaac. God was asking Abraham to put that gift on the altar.

# Influence Ministries

But if we aren't careful, the gifts that God gives us can become idols.

The blessings that God gives us can become more important than the God who gave them to us in the first place.

So, God blesses you financially with resources and with money and wealth, I believe that's a blessing from God, but if you aren't careful, that blessing can displace God and become more important than God Himself.

God blesses you with a job and He is the one who has given you the skill set and He is the one who has opened the door, that job may be a gift from God, but if you aren't careful, that gift can become an idol.

It can become more important to you than God Himself.

We exist to glorify God. But if you aren't careful, your relationship with God can become selfish in nature.

God can become the means to the things that you want.

So, instead of worshipping God, you begin to worship those gifts that He has given to you.

And in this moment, it becomes an **ALL IN** test.

God wants to see, 'Abraham, who is more important to you, the gift that I have given to you in your son Isaac.

There will be moments where God will test us to determine whether or not we are ALL IN.

I am doing what God has called me to do. But it traces back to one of those ALL IN moments.

I've got to ask the question – are you following Jesus or is Jesus following you?

I think that's the difference between being ALL IN or holding something back from God.

Why is it that sometimes we are not willing to go ALL IN?

Why is it that we aren't willing to put things on the altar?

I think one of the reasons is because we are scared.

Going ALL IN is saying to God, 'I'm willing to go wherever you want me to go and do whatever you want me to do.'

That's scary because there's a part of us that thinks God is going to tell us to go somewhere we don't want to go to do something we don't want to do.

I think there is this fear that somehow our lives are going to be the opposite of what we had dreamed for and hoped for.

God isn't about making your life miserable, He's about making it better.

# Influence Ministries

You talk about ALL IN... You want to know who else is overlooked in this story? Isaac.

Most scholars believe he was 25 years old. Some suggest he was the age of 37.

According to Jewish tradition, Isaac submitted to the sacrifice.

It is believed that he said to his father, 'Father, bind my hands and my feet for the urge to live is so willful that when I see the knife coming at me, I may flinch involuntarily. I beg you, bind me.'

This isn't just a story about Abraham going ALL IN. It is about Sarah going ALL IN and it is about Isaac going ALL IN.

We come to the moment when he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son,

Abraham called the place The Lord Will Provide or Jehovah Jireh, the God who provides.

Abraham knows that God is going to provide. Look what he says:

*Genesis 22:5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."*

It's not always that God wants to take those things away, but are you willing to give them up?

You may have to put certain things on the altar and die to them for God to give them back.

Is there something that you need to put on the altar before God?

Is there something that you need to be willing to sacrifice to God?

*Genesis 22:15-18 TLB*

*15 Then the Angel of God called again to Abraham from heaven.*

*16 "I, the Lord, have sworn by myself that because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your beloved son from me,*

*17 I will bless you with incredible blessings and multiply your descendants into countless thousands and millions, like the stars above you in the sky, and like the sands along the seashore. They will conquer their enemies,*

*18 and your offspring[a] will be a blessing to all the nations of the earth—all because you have obeyed me."*

When you go ALL IN, you never know how God is going to use your act of obedience.

God says you have not withheld. In other words, you are not holding out and you are not holding back.

Is there something you are holding back?

Is there something that has become more important to you than God?

# Influence Ministries

Would you have the courage to put that thing on the altar?

The truth is, if you are holding out, you are missing out. It is only when you put everything on the altar that you're ALL IN.

When you are holding back, then you do not allow yourself to be the full conduit of God's blessings, favor and power.

The things that He wants to do in you and through you, He can't do because you aren't fully on the altar.

You haven't placed yourself in that place where you are willing to give God anything and everything, then the question must be asked:

Are you ALL IN?