

## WHEN GOD SEEMS DISTANT

### Abraham our Father of Faith

The deepest level of worship is praising God in spite of pain, thanking God during a trial, and trusting Him when tempted.

Every Christian goes through testing and maturing at least once but usually several times in their life. It is painful and disconcerting, but it is absolutely vital for the development of your faith.

*“So people receive God’s promise by having faith. This happens so the promise can be a free gift. Then all of Abraham’s children can have that promise. It is not only for those who live under the law of Moses but for anyone who lives with faith like that of **Abraham, who is the father of us all**” Romans 4:16.(NCV)*

Abraham didn’t lead a perfect life, but he \_\_\_\_\_ to believe God for the many promises made to him. Two things symbolize Abraham’s life: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

- He was continually on the move, obeying God’s calls and commands **(the tent)**, and he made a practice of worshiping God wherever he went **(the altar)**.
- Abraham was a pilgrim and a stranger in this world; he had his sights set on a city whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:10).

*“Even though Jesus was the Son of God, he learned obedience by what he suffered. And because his obedience was perfect, he was able to give eternal salvation to all who obey him “ (Hebrews 5:8–9)*

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” Heb 12:1–2.*

## THE TEST

### Abraham’s \_\_\_\_\_ (Genesis 22:1-4)

Abraham’s biggest test begins in Genesis 22:1. “Why did God test Abraham?” Satan will lay a trap for us, he will test us, in hopes of bringing out the very worst in us. But God wants to bring out the faith in us; He wants to show us our strengths in Him. Not our own strengths, but our strength when we rely upon Him.

The test God arranged for Abraham was a test of his entire being: will, intellect, and emotion.

### Abraham’s \_\_\_\_\_ (Genesis 22:2)

Here was the test: Abraham was to take his only son, Isaac, whom he loved, and offer him as a sacrifice to God .

This is not unusual in the faith life, is it? Aren't we often asked by God to say "Yes" even when we don't understand the thing He is asking us to do?

- The response of the psalmist should be our response: "I hurried and did not wait to obey your commands" Ps 119:60 (NCV)
- When God communicates His will clearly to us we may as well start immediately to obey it. Abraham, the friend of God, submitted his will to the will of God.

### **Abraham's \_\_\_\_\_ (Hebrews 11:17-19)**

From the beginning of God's call on his life, Abraham had been told he would be the father of a great number of descendants (Genesis 12:2). Naturally speaking, the likelihood of them having children was not good. On an intellectual level, the whole thing seemed to fall apart.

After the birth of Isaac everything started to make sense to Abraham. But then, on an intellectual level, the whole thing seemed to fall apart. After years of Abraham grooming the son who would be the one to continue the line of promise, God stepped in and said to offer him instead as a sacrifice.

### **Abraham's \_\_\_\_\_**

God wasn't after Isaac. He didn't want Isaac to die. God was after Abraham, whom He wanted to learn to live by faith. God wanted all of Abraham's heart, all of his soul, mind, and strength.

## **THE TRIAL OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH (GENESIS 22:4-9)**

### ***The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Trial***

Sometimes it's not the test itself that is such a trial as the waiting, the anticipation of the test.

### ***The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Trial (Genesis 22:5-6)***

Many times, in the midst of a trial, there is no one to unburden your heart to.

Abraham had not told Sarah, his servants, nor Isaac. Only God is able to understand our deepest fears and longings. (2 Corinthians 1:3,4; Psalm 55:20)

### ***The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Trial (Genesis 22:5, 7, 9)***

Our faith only grows stronger when tested by trials. Trusting God through our trials pushes us toward the Christ-like maturity of trusting God more, and more deeply, and with greater endurance.

As Abraham approached the top of the mountain, he approached God to worship with a sacrifice that meant more to him than anything in the world. That is the exact picture we need to have in mind when we worship God as well. By faith, we must give God the best we have to offer.

## **Key**

learned

**A tent and an altar.**

**FAITH**

***Will***

***Intellect***

***Emotion***

***Length***

***Loneliness***

***Loftiness***