

## INTERACTIVE TEACHING/LEARNING GUIDE

### Week 9

**SESSION TITLE: "Belief: Why God Demands Sacrifice"**

**FOCAL PASSAGE: (Genesis 22:1-19)**

**Central Teaching/Learning Aim:** To help the learner examine the obedience of Abraham and the provision of God and help him/her commit to faithful, sacrificial living.

#### I. Creating Interest in the Series (Hook)

A. **Display** the following question:

"How good are you at waiting?"

(Note: to add emphasis you could have your coordinator get the class started and then act like he/she is ready for you to begin. You could wait in the hallway and make your class wait a few minutes before you enter the room).

Ask for feedback from the question.

**State** – Could you imagine waiting 25-years for God's promise to be given. Abraham waited 25-years for the birth of Isaac.

**Read** – (Genesis 22:1-2)

**Ask** – How long must this night have been for Abraham? When have you had to wait for an answer that was potentially life altering?

**State** – Today we are going to discuss the obedience of Abraham and the provision of God when God called him to sacrifice and how we should practice this same obedience through sacrificial living.

B. **Optional Method – Display** the following statement:

"Freedom isn't Free"

**Ask** – What is your reaction to this statement?

**Next** share the following story:

Sgt. Rafael Peralta had a reputation for putting the interests of his fellow Marines ahead of his own. He demonstrated that for the last time on November 15, 2004, by making the ultimate sacrifice in a firefight during the battle of Fallujah.

Peralta regularly volunteered for duty on assault teams. As one of the first to enter a house occupied by insurgents, Peralta suffered a gunshot wound to the

face and fell to the floor. Within moments, a fragmentation grenade rolled into the room. Two other Marines tried to escape, pounding against a locked door. Still conscious, Peralta grabbed the grenade and cradled it into his body before it exploded. One Marine was badly wounded by shrapnel from the blast. But the Marines said more lives would have been lost if not for Peralta's selfless act.

Gordon Trowbridge, *Army Times*, reported in *USA Today* (11-22-04)

**State** – There are many untold stories of selfless sacrifices that have happened in the war. Almost 2000 soldiers have given their lives in battle to protect our freedom.

**Read** – (Genesis 22:1-2)

**Ask** – What must that night have been like for Abraham? How did he react?  
Read (v. 3), he got up early to obey God.

**State** – Today we are going to discuss the obedience of Abraham and the provision of God when God called him to sacrifice and how we should practice this same obedience through sacrificial living.

### C. Optional Method – Movie Clip “Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World”

**Start:** 00:49:23

**Stop:** 00:53:20

**Synopsis:** One man is overboard and the crew is working to save him in a fierce storm. They throw out anything that floats that is tied to the boat. The objects are acting as anchors and working to sink the boat. The captain decides to cut the objects loose sacrificing the one to save the whole crew.

**Read** – (Genesis 22:1-2)

**Ask** – What emotions must Abraham have felt in hearing the Lord’s command? Have you ever had to sacrifice personally for the good of a group?

**State** – Today we are going to discuss the obedience of Abraham and the provision of God when God called him to sacrifice and how we should practice this same obedience through sacrificial living.

## II. Book

A. Utilize the discussion guide to examine the Scripture passages.

### III. Look

- A. **Place** members into groups and have them complete the group assignments to discuss how Jesus provides for us.
- B. **Optional Method – Distribute** the handout "Living Sacrificially" and guide members to complete it. You could also have them discuss it in groups.

### IV. Took

- A. **Share** the following information:

In *World* magazine, interviewer Larry King said:

I can't make that leap that a lot of people around me have made into belief that there's some judge somewhere. I have a lot of respect for true people of faith.... I've done so many interviews on it. I've always searched. But as someone said, "Did you ever sit down and read the Bible cover to cover?" The answer's no, because I don't know who wrote it. I'm too in my head to be into faith. Faith is a wonderful thing. I envy people who have it. I just can't make the leap.

I remember as a kid, my father died when I was young, and that was unexplainable to me. The God of the Old Testament, I didn't like things he did. "Abraham, sacrifice your son." That always bothered me as a kid. I remember thinking, *Why would he do that to Abraham? As a test?* So I said to myself, *I don't know. I just don't know.* That's still true to this day.

Bob Jones, "It's Good to Be King," *World* (7-28-01), p. 22

**State** – Larry King is right where many non-believers are, focusing on the test not the provision. God provided a lamb for Abraham and He provides The Lamb for us. This week what do you need to sacrifice to follow God in obedience and point others to The Lamb. Work at reaching at least one person on your impact list.

DISCUSSION GUIDE  
(Teacher's Copy)

1. God tested Abraham at his core, calling on him to sacrifice his only son, how has God tested you? (Gen. 22:1-2)
  
2. How did Abraham respond to God's command? (v. 3)
  - a. His faithful obedience evidenced itself immediately.
  - b. He was prepared for the ordeal of sacrifice.
  - c. He left for the place God had told him to go.
  
3. How is Abraham's trust in God displayed in the following verses?
  - a. (vs. 4-5) Abraham said he and Isaac would both return.
  - b. (vs. 6-8) Abraham knew God would provide a lamb.
  
4. How trusting are you when God calls you to act that He will provide?
  
  
5. In (vs. 9-11) we see an example of follow-through, Abraham was about to slay Isaac when the angel stopped him. What commands of God do you need to follow-through?
  
  
6. Abraham displayed an incredible respect (fear) of God, do you fear God, really? How has this affected your life?
  
  
7. The lamb in the thicket is a picture of God the provider (Jehovah-Jireh), how does God provide for You?
  
  
8. Read the following passages to identify how God is our provider Jehovah-Jireh.
  - a. (Ps. 104:24) The earth is full of His works and possessions.
  - b. (Matt. 7:7) God will provide if we will ask.
  - c. (Matt. 21:22) God answers prayer.
  - d. (Phil. 4:19) God will supply all of our needs.
  
9. How has Jehovah-Jireh met needs in your life?
  
  
10. When has God asked you to sacrifice to follow His will?

DISCUSSION GUIDE  
(Student's Copy)

1. God tested Abraham at his core, calling on him to sacrifice his only son, how has God tested you? (Gen. 22:1-2)

2. How did Abraham respond to God's command? (v. 3)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

3. How is Abraham's trust in God displayed in the following verses?

- a. (vs. 4-5) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. (vs. 6-8) \_\_\_\_\_

4. How trusting are you when God calls you to act that He will provide?

5. In (vs. 9-11) we see an example of follow-through, Abraham was about to slay Isaac when the angel stopped him. What commands of God do you need to follow-through?

6. Abraham displayed an incredible respect (fear) of God, do you fear god, really? How has this affected your life?

7. The lamb in the thicket is a picture of God the provider (Jehovah-Jireh), how does God provide for You?

8. Read the following passages to identify how God is our provider Jehovah-Jireh.

- a. (Ps. 104:24) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. (Matt. 7:7) \_\_\_\_\_
- c. (Matt. 21:22) \_\_\_\_\_
- d. (Phil. 4:19) \_\_\_\_\_

9. How has Jehovah-Jireh met needs in your life?

10. When has God asked you to sacrifice to follow His will?

GROUP 1

"A Miraculous Provision"

**Read** (John 6:1-13)

Why did the people follow Jesus? (vs.2)

What over whelming needs did they have?

Why did Jesus ask Phillip for a solution? (vs. 5-6)

What solution did the disciples offer?

What did Jesus do with the boy's little contribution?

How does this story demonstrate the obvious aspect of Jehovah-Jireh?

What is God trying to teach us?

What needs were met through God's provision?

Why is it important to come to Him with what we have?

GROUP 2

"Getting Past the Physical"

**Read** (John 6:14-15; 25-27)

What conclusions did the people make about Jesus after the miracle?

How did Jesus respond to their desires?

What aspect of God's character were the people focusing on?

Do you sometimes find yourself slipping into the same mindset, in which you look to God only for temporal provisions?

What are you working for and hoping to have in life?

How many of these things could be considered food that spoils?

**Read** (John 25-27)

Jesus understood the people and what they were searching for. What needs were they looking to have satisfied? What did Jesus want them to see about temporal needs and eternal needs?

GROUP 3

"Who is the Bread?"

**Read** (John 6:28-35)

Here the people question Jesus on what God requires of us in terms of the physical. How does Jesus answer them concerning our part of the work of God (vs. 29)?

Why do you think the people responded to Him by immediately asking for a sign?

Is the bread Jesus speaks of in (vs. 35) a temporary provision or a permanent one? Is Jesus your bread of life? What needs should you depend on Him to meet?

Think of a need you have right now. Now read (vs. 32-35) again. What needs will God supply?

What do you hunger for?

What does your soul hunger for?

What do you usually seek to meet these cravings?

Think of a time you pursued something you thought would satisfy you.

When you acquired it, did it bring the fulfillment you were seeking?

Was it the true bread of life?

GROUP 4

“It Comes From the Father”

Many times we compare our earthly fathers to our heavenly Father. Even the best of human fathers are limited and fall short, but we have a heavenly Father who has made provision to meet all of our needs-physical, emotional, and spiritual.

**Read** (John 6:36-40)

Why did Jesus come down from heaven (vs. 38)?

Who sent Him?

To what ends was God the Father willing to go to meet your needs?

What response does this knowledge provoke in you?

Have you been hurt by an earthly father who didn't care to meet any of your needs? Jehovah-Jireh has declared that He will provide.

Are you missing this loving provision?



GROUP 5

“Eternal Bread – Total Provision”

**Read** (John 6:41-51) about the eternal provision of God. What were the people grumbling about?

Why didn't they recognize Jesus as God's provision?

God looks not only at our temporary needs, but also to our ultimate need: salvation (vs. 50).

How can knowing that God has met your greatest need in Christ help you depend on Him to meet other needs as well?

What needs should you come to the Father with now?

Which physical needs are actually spiritual needs?

## LIVING SACRIFICIALLY

Complete the following to determine how you can make more of an impact for Christ through sacrificial obedience.

**S**uffering with Christ – What are ways I may have to suffer for Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A**ccepting the challenge – What obstacles could I encounter in living more openly for Christ?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C**ompassion for others – How can I show “real” compassion for others regardless of possible suffering? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**R**eaping what I sow – How can I sow good things even if I have to sacrifice? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**I**dentifying steps to take – What must I do to be a doer and not just a hearer?

Step 1 - \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2 - \_\_\_\_\_

Step 3 - \_\_\_\_\_

**F**ocusing on Christ’s will – Am I in Christ’s will in the following areas of my life?

Family - \_\_\_\_\_

Use of gifts - \_\_\_\_\_

Vocation - \_\_\_\_\_

Finances - \_\_\_\_\_

Relationships - \_\_\_\_\_

Leisure Activities - \_\_\_\_\_

Other - \_\_\_\_\_

**I**mpacting the lost – How can I reach those on my impact card? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C**onquering Satan – How can I identify the work of the evil one and avoid him? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**E**nduring difficulties – Knowing that trials will come, how can I grow through them? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

“...but if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God.” (1 Peter 4:16)



# THE Word For The Week

Blessing: What is of Lasting Value  
Genesis 25:20-34

## **Monday** - *Read Genesis 25:20-34*

- Recall the promises given to Abraham starting in Genesis 12.
- How old was Isaac when he married? How old was he when his children were born?
- Why are the accomplishments of God's promises or plans slower and sometimes contradictory?
- Is there any urgency to God's ways?
- PRAY Jeremiah 29:11-13

## **Tuesday** – *Read Genesis 25:20-34; Luke 18:1*

- Knowing God's plan, why do you think Sarah and Rebekah were barren?
- Though God promised to multiply Isaac's family he prayed for its increase.
- Why did Isaac have to pray for a son?
- What does Rebekah's inquiry tell us about God's providence in our lives before birth?
- PRAY Psalm 139

## **Wednesday** – *Read Genesis 25:20-34; Romans 9:13; Hebrews 12:16-17*

- How does our natural constitution determine our place in this world?
- Contrast the personalities of Jacob and Esau from the text.
- How is God's oracle about Jacob and Esau fulfilled in these verses?
- How are you like or unlike Esau? Jacob?
- PRAY Psalm 1

## **Thursday** – *Read Genesis 25:20-34*

- The birthright was Esau's by providence and Jacob's by promise.
- The birthright meant you would be the head of the house and the priest of the family.
- Why would Jacob pursue the birthright and Esau despise it?
- Are you seeking, coveting or desiring the best gifts?
- PRAY Matthew 7:7-11

## **Friday** – *Read Genesis 25:20-34*

- How did Jacob "speed up" God's sure promise?
- How often do we "take care of business" rather than wait on God?
- What had mastery over Esau?
- What do we forfeit in exchange for worldly pleasure?
- How have you forfeited God's blessings in your life?
- PRAY James 1:3-8; 17

**Ancient/Future - A Journey through Genesis**  
**"Belief: Why God Demands Sacrifice"**  
 Genesis 22:1-19

(Exegetical . . . What it meant to Israel back THEN)  
**GOD'S FINAL AND ULTIMATE TEST OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH**  
**REQUIRED THAT ABRAHAM SACRIFICE HIS ONLY SON ISAAC,**  
**A COMMAND THAT ABRAHAM FAITHFULLY OBEYED**  
**UNTIL GOD PROVIDED ANOTHER SACRIFICE,**  
**AFTER WHICH THE LORD AMPLIFIED THE "SEED, LAND, BLESSING" PROMISES**  
**BECAUSE OF ABRAHAM'S ULTIMATE OBEDIENCE.**

Note: Beginning in Genesis 12, when God first promised Abraham many descendents, a land, and blessing, Abraham's faith was tested. As James (James 1:2-4) and Peter (1 Peter 1:6-9) would say much later in their New Testament epistles, God's purpose in testing the faith of His "partners" was to refine and purify their faith.

The chart below traces Abraham's progress. He passed some tests of faith with high scores, but he failed some tests miserably. Chapter 22 told of the "final exam" God gave, demanding sacrificial obedience as proof of belief.

## THE GENESIS CLASSROOM OF FAITH

| TEST   | <i>Intensity</i><br>of faith | <i>Sufficiency</i><br>of faith | <i>Humility</i><br>of faith | <i>Courage</i><br>of faith | <i>Dignity</i><br>of faith | <i>Reward</i><br>of faith | <i>Patience</i><br>of faith | <i>Sign</i><br>of faith | <i>Compassion</i><br>of faith | <i>Security</i><br>of faith | <i>Fulfillment</i><br>of faith | <i>Obedience</i><br>of faith |
|--------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| TEXT   | 12:1-9                       | 12:10-30                       | 13:1-18                     | 14:1-14                    | 14:15-24                   | 15:1-6                    | 16:1-6                      | 17:1-27                 | 18-19                         | 20:1-7                      | 21:1-7                         | 22:1-19                      |
| NATURE | <i>Separation</i>            | <i>Famine</i>                  | <i>Contention</i>           | <i>Invasion</i>            | <i>Ambition</i>            | <i>Delay</i>              | <i>Impatience</i>           | <i>Confirmation</i>     | <i>Judgment</i>               | <i>Protection</i>           | <i>Reward</i>                  | <i>Sacrifice</i>             |
| RESULT | <del>Leaves</del>            | <del>Doubts</del>              | <del>gives</del>            | <del>fighters</del>        | <del>HONOR</del>           | <del>trusts</del>         | <del>sets</del>             | <del>trusts</del>       | <del>Prays</del>              | <del>Keeps</del>            | <del>Leaves</del>              | <del>spreads</del>           |

- I. After the seed and land promises appeared to have been sufficiently fulfilled and all seemed well in the Promised Land, God's final testing (see 12:1 with 20:2) of Abraham's faith began, (1a).
- II. God's testing of Abraham's faith, following Abraham's willing response to God's call, consisted of a command to get going to sacrifice his son, his only and beloved son, on one of the mountains that God would tell him, (1b-2).
  - A. God's calling of Abraham received an "At your service" response, (1b).
  - B. God's testing of Abraham's faith consisted of a command to "Get going" to sacrifice his son, his only son, Isaac, the one he loved (the promised seed) on one of the mountains that God would tell him, (2).
- III. Abraham's faithful obedience evidenced itself by his preparation for the ordeal, his setting out to journey to the mountain, his testimony of trust in God, and his sacrificing of Isaac upon the carefully prepared altar, (3-10).
  - A. Abraham's faithful obedience evidenced itself immediately, (3a).
  - B. Abraham's faithful obedience prepared him for the ordeal of sacrifice, (3b).
  - C. Abraham's faithful obedience set him out on the journey to the mountain, (3c).
  - D. Abraham's faithful obedience testified of his trust in God, (4-8).
    1. Abraham's faith anticipated that he and Isaac would both go up to worship God and both return from worshipping God, (4-5).
    2. Abraham's faith anticipated that God would see to it that the lamb for sacrifice would be provided, (6-8a).
  - E. Abraham's faithful obedience sacrificed the faithful Isaac on the carefully prepared altar, (8b-10).
- IV. As Abraham poised to sacrifice Isaac, the Lord's Angel's urgent call stopped him, (11).
  - A. As Abraham poised to sacrifice Isaac, the Lord's Angel's urgent call sounded from Heaven, (11a).
  - B. Abraham's "At your Service" response stopped him in the process of sacrificing Isaac, (11b).
- V. God's recognition of Abraham's ultimate faith caused Him to stop the sacrifice of Isaac, to provide an animal for sacrifice instead, and to amplify the Seed, Land, Blessing promise (see 12:1-3), because God acknowledged Abraham's faithful obedience, (12-18).
  - A. The reason God stopped Abraham from harming Isaac was because He recognized Abraham's ultimate faith (fear) in his willingness to sacrifice his only son, (12).
  - B. The reason Abraham named the place "The Lord will see to it and provide" was because God provided a ram as a substitute, which Abraham and Isaac sacrificed as a burnt offering, (13-14).
  - C. The reason God amplified the Seed, Land, Blessing promise of 12:1-3 was because of Abraham's ultimate act of faithful obedience in offering his only son, (15-18).
    1. The reason the Lord swore to Abraham on the honor of His own character was because Abraham had offered his only son, (15-16).
    2. The amplification of God's promise to Abraham included innumerable descendants, (17a).
    3. The amplification of God's promise to Abraham included the possession of his enemies' cities in the land, (17b).
    4. The amplification of God's promise to Abraham included the blessing of all nations through his offspring (through Isaac), (18a).

5. The reason the Lord promised to bless all nations through Abraham's offspring was because of Abraham's ultimate act of faithful obedience, (18b).
- VI. Abraham's return journey to Beersheba, accompanied by his young men servants, eventuated in his sojourning there, (19).

(Theological . . . What it means to believers ALWAYS)

**OBEDIENT FAITH  
REVEALED THROUGH THE TEST OF SACRIFICE  
TRUSTS GOD TO PROVIDE BLESSING.**

- I. God's testing of his follower's trust demands the surrender of their best, (1-2).
  - A. God's testing continues through a lifetime, (1a).
  - B. God's testing demands the surrender of his follower's foremost hopes and dreams, (1b-2).
- II. Faithful followers surrender their best to the God they trust to provide, (3-10).
  - A. Faithful followers willingly surrender their foremost hopes and dreams to God, (3).
  - B. Faithful followers trust God to provide all that is necessary to obey, (4-10).
- III. God's provision meets every demand of obedient surrender, (11-14).
  - A. God's acknowledgment of his followers' trust follows their obedience, (11-12).
  - B. God's provision meets every demand of obedient surrender, (13-14).
- IV. Faithful followers who obediently surrender their best enjoy God's assurance of blessing, (15-19).

(Pedagogical . . . What it means to us NOW)

**WORSHIP GOD THROUGH YOUR SACRIFICIAL TEST.**

(God's overwhelming grace [see 20:1-21:2] seeks  
sacrificial obedience refined through tests of faith.)

- I. God will continue to test (refine) your faith, (1a).
  - A. God tested Abraham to refine/mature/prove his faith.
  - B. God tests you to refine/mature your faith.  
(James 1:2-12; 1 Peter 1:6-9 - Maturing is THE point of the Christian life.)
  - C. God will keep testing your faith throughout your lifetime.
- II. God will demand that you surrender what you cherish most, (1b-2).
  - A. God demanded that Abraham sacrifice what he cherished most.
  - B. God will ask you to release to him that which you cherish most.
    1. . . . your mate.
    2. . . . your child.
    3. . . . your health.
    4. . . . your wealth, etc.
  - C. God will keep asking you to release the different things you cherish over a lifetime.
- III. Trust God in your times of testing, (3-10).
  - A. Obedient faith is not easy, reasonable, passive.  
(Faith demands trusting what you cannot sense - Heb 11:1f)
  - B. Obedient faith demands ultimate trust in God to provide.
    1. You may think, "I can't do it . . ."
    2. You may think, "I've never seen it done before . . ."

3. You may think, "Nobody else has been asked to do this . . ."
4. You may think, "Life's over, I can Never be HAPPY now . . ."
5. But, you CAN think, "Somehow God will work this out to His glory and my good."

C. Abraham trusted God as he passed his test of faith.

D. You can trust God in your test of faith (because He is faithful).

IV. [Open your heart and your hands . . . to worship the God who provides all the blessings you need, (11-19).]

A. God encouraged Abraham with a renewed promise.

B. God encourages us with His promises today.

(The Lord has provided in Jesus Christ.)

C. Open your hearts and your hands to worship Him.