

A JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME

# LIFE OF FATHER ABRAHAM



SHEPHERDCHURCH

# Lesson 4: The Life of Abraham

## Welcome

Choose one of the following questions to answer:

- **What's the biggest step of faith you've ever taken in life so far?**
- **Share about one of the most fun trips that you've ever been on.**

The WELCOME section of each lesson is designed to be fun and bring lightheartedness to your Life Group. It's a great way to break the ice, ease your fellow Life Group members into the lesson, and set a tone of openness and reflection. So, please do not skip past this section of the lesson.

The WELCOME question and prompt have to do with taking a step of faith (like Abraham) and going on a trip (just as Abraham went on a trip).

## Worship

In **Genesis 22:14**, after God spares Isaac, He provides a ram to take his place. This moment captures the heart of Abraham's worship: trusting and obeying even when the outcome is unknown. Read **Genesis 22:1-14** and reflect silently on what God may be calling you to surrender or trust Him with right now. Then, discuss what "worship through trust" looks like in your own life.

So, Abraham's act in Genesis 22 is not just obedience—it's worship. True worship is not confined to singing or rituals but is shown in surrender, in aligning our will with God's, even when the path is unclear. Abraham models that worship involves:

- **Trust without knowing the outcome** – He climbs Mount Moriah not knowing how God will resolve the tension.
- **Obedience despite the cost** – He is willing to give up what he loves most.
- **Confidence in God's character** – He tells Isaac, "God Himself will provide the lamb" (v. 8), showing that he had faith that God would remain true to His promises.

The events in Genesis 22 points forward to the gospel where God provided His own Son as the substitute sacrifice for us (John 1:29; Romans 8:32). Though God stopped Abraham's hand, He didn't withhold His Son.



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*There are 10 questions/prompts in the WORD section. Your Life Group doesn't have to cover every question below. Life Group Leaders may select the ones that best fit your group. You can also use the remaining questions as personal reflection throughout the week.*

## Word

Please watch the video lesson and read [Genesis 12-25](#) before your Life Group meets.

Abraham is one of the most significant figures in the entire Bible—often called the father of our faith. His story begins in Genesis 12, when God calls him (then named Abram) to leave his homeland in Ur of the Chaldeans—modern-day Iraq—around 2000 B.C. God promises to bless Abraham, make his name great, give him descendants as numerous as the stars, and that he will be a blessing to all nations. Abraham obeys, stepping out in faith without knowing where he's going. His life is a journey of learning to trust God—through victories, failures, doubts, and delays.

Though Abraham and Sarah were old and childless, God kept His promise and gave them a son, Isaac, when Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90. Isaac married Rebekah who gave birth to twins: Jacob and Esau. While Esau was born first, God chose Jacob—the younger, less likely son—to carry on the covenant promise. In [Genesis 32:28](#), God changed Jacob's name to Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל), which means "struggles with God" or "God contends." He had twelve sons, each of whom became the father of one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Abraham's legacy is massive! Not only is he the physical ancestor of the Jewish people, but he is also a spiritual forefather for Christians ([Romans 4](#)) and even respected in Islam. His life shows what it means to walk by faith, even when the path and destination are unclear. Through Abraham's family, God began to unfold His redemptive plan for the world—one that would ultimately lead to Jesus Christ, the Savior promised to bless every nation.

**1. In [Genesis 12:1-4](#), what stands out to you about God's call & Abraham's response?**

In these verses, God's call to Abraham is remarkable because it comes with both a challenge and a promise. God tells Abraham to leave his country, his people, and his father's household... a call to walk away from everything familiar, including his security and identity. Historically, this was a big ask because in the ancient Near East, family and land were central to survival and honor. Yet, God promises to bless Abraham, make his name great, and through him bless all nations. What stands out is that God's call is rooted in His initiative and grace, not in Abraham's personal or professional accomplishments.

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Abraham's response in verse 4 is surprising: "So Abram went, as the Lord had told him." There is no record of delay, bargaining, or questioning—just obedience. Abraham didn't know all the details, but he trusted God enough to step out. This highlights a theme throughout Scripture:

- **Faith** = responding to God's Word with trust, even if the path is unclear

The author of Hebrews later celebrates this moment: "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out... not knowing where he was going" (Hebrews 11:8).

Give your Life Group time to answer this question, and if needed, encourage your Life Group to notice that God's call often requires:

- Leaving comfort zones
- Responding in faith often means moving forward without all the answers

If needed, you can restate the question or ask related questions like: When has God called you into something uncertain? What made it hard or easy to obey?

## 2. According to [Genesis 15:1-6](#) and [Romans 4:13-16](#), why is it so important that faith (relationship) comes before the Law (rules). What are some dangerous outcomes when rules precede a relationship (e.g., resentment)?

Give your Life Group a chance to answer this question and share some of the following if needed:

- **Genesis 15:1-6**, Abraham was counted righteous because he believed God's promise—not because he had kept any law or performed any ritual. This is key: Abraham's covenant relationship with God was established on faith before the Law of Moses was ever given (which came centuries later).
- **Romans 4:13-16** builds on this truth, teaching that the promise comes "through the righteousness that comes by faith," not by keeping the Law. If inheritance depended on law-keeping, then faith would be meaningless and God's promise would collapse. Paul's point is that God's promises rest on grace, so that they can be certain and available to all who believe.

When relationship (**faith**) comes before rules, obedience flows out of love, trust, and gratitude toward God. But when rules come before relationship, faith can turn into a cold legalism. People may feel like they have to "earn" God's favor, which contradicts the gospel of grace. Historically, Israel struggled with this tension: the Law was given as a gift to guide God's covenant people, but when it was elevated above faith, it led to pride, hypocrisy, and exclusion.

The danger of rules preceding relationship is that it breeds:

- **Resentment** ("I have to do this or else")
- **Pride** ("I've earned God's love because I keep the rules")
- **Despair** ("I'll never measure up, so why try?")

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Rules can also create distance from God by making obedience about performance rather than trust. But when people encounter God's love and faithfulness first, obedience becomes a response of worship instead of a burden.

You can also explain the issue by writing out the following example for your Life Group:

## **What happens if rules or relationship come first:**

Rules -> Relationship = Obligation -> Resentment

Relationship -> Rules = Love -> Devotion

**3. In *Genesis 16:1-6*, what was the result of Abraham and Sarah trying to "help" God achieve an outcome instead of patiently waiting on Him? With your Life Group, create a list of what happens when you wait patiently on God vs. what happens when you are impatient with God.**

### **WAITING PATIENTLY ON GOD**

### **BEING IMPATIENT WITH GOD**

In Genesis 16:1-6, Abraham and Sarah grew were tired of waiting for God's promise to give them a child. Sarah suggested Abraham have a child with her servant Hagar. While this practice was culturally acceptable in the ancient Near East, it was still outside of God's plan. As you know, Abraham slept with Hagar, had a child with her, and the result was conflict, jealousy, and broken relationships (e.g., Sarah mistreated Hagar, Abraham avoided responsibility, the family was torn apart etc.). Theologically, this shows what happens when we try to manufacture or force God's promises rather than just trust His timing. Instead of peace and blessing, impatience created division and pain. Such peace and blessing were later seen in the birth of Isaac, the child of promise. So, remind your group that God is never late because His timing is purposeful, and waiting is an act of worship and trust.

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Then, if your Life Group members haven't already, helped them to fill in the above chart, and ask Life Group members to share what they wrote in the chart. Below are some examples of what they could write to fill in the blanks of the chart:

## **When You Wait Patiently on God**

- Experience peace and trust in His character
- Strengthened faith (James 1:3-4)
- Deeper intimacy with God in prayer and dependence
- Outcomes that align with God's perfect plan
- A testimony that encourages others in their faith
- Joy when His promise is fulfilled

## **When You Are Impatient with God**

- Anxiety, stress, and frustration
- Rash decisions that create long-term consequences
- Strained relationships with others (like Sarah and Hagar)
- Regret and blame-shifting
- Distance from God due to lack of trust
- Short-term fixes that fail to bring lasting blessing

## **4. God promised Abraham that everyone in the world would be blessed because of him ([Genesis 12:3](#); [17:5-7](#)). According to [Romans 4:11-12](#); [Galatians 3:26-29](#); and [1 John 2:1-2](#), how are the peoples of the world blessed through Abraham?**

Ask different Life Group members to reach each of the passages that are listed. When leading your Life Group through this question, it's important to tie together the Old Testament promise to Abraham with its New Testament fulfillment in Christ.

- In Genesis 12:3, God told Abraham that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." This covenant promise was not limited to Abraham's physical descendants, but looked forward to a spiritual family that would extend to all nations. By the time of Paul's letters, the early church wrestled with how Gentiles (non-Jews) were included in God's covenant.
- Romans 4:11-12 explains that Abraham is the "father" not just of the circumcised (Jews), but also of all who have faith in God. The blessing comes through faith, not ethnicity or law-keeping.
- Galatians 3:26-29 takes this even further as Paul reminds the church that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female. All who belong to Christ are Abraham's offspring and heirs according to the promise. This means that the blessing of Abraham is fulfilled in Jesus, the true offspring of Abraham (Galatians 3:16). The blessing is also extended to anyone who puts their trust in Him. The global family of God is the direct fulfillment of God's promise that all peoples would be blessed.
- 1 John 2:1-2 clarifies how this blessing is experienced: through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus. John says Christ is the *hilasmos* ("atoning sacrifice" or "propitiation") not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world. This universal scope fulfills God's covenant intention from the very beginning: the blessing of Abraham culminates in salvation offered to every nation, tribe, and tongue through Jesus Christ.

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## 5. Read **Genesis 18:10-15**. Why do you think Sarah laughed? How do you typically respond when God's promises feel unbelievable?

Point out that Sarah's laughter in Genesis 18:12 comes from a mix of disbelief and human limitation. At this point, Sarah is about 90 years old, well past childbearing years, and Abraham is nearly 100. The text emphasizes their advanced age to show the impossibility from a human perspective. The Hebrew word for, laughed, (*tsachaq*) can convey "amusement, skepticism, or incredulity." Far from being joy, Sarah's laugh was doubt mixed with the absurdity of the situation. She even denies laughing when confronted (v. 15), revealing her fear and reluctance to admit her unbelief.

This moment reveals how we often respond when God's promises feel unbelievable. Like Sarah, we may laugh inwardly, dismissing the possibility that God could or would intervene in such a miraculous way. Yet, the Lord responds with a rhetorical question that cuts to the heart: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (v. 14). The Hebrew word for "hard" (*pala*) also means "wonderful, extraordinary" reminding us that God delights in doing what seems impossible to us.

Encourage your Life Group to be honest about struggles with faith, and then remind them that God's faithfulness is not limited by our weakness or doubt—He is the God of the impossible.

## 6. In **Genesis 22**, while Isaac could have easily run away or overpowered Abraham, he chose to trust his father (Abraham was over 100 years old and Isaac was between 15-25 years old). What does this teach you about surrender both from Abraham's perspective and from Isaac's perspective?

Please emphasize both Abraham's and Isaac's posture of surrender. And tell your Life Group that historically, Abraham is likely well over 110 years old, while Isaac is a strong young man (he's a teen or in his early 20s). Abraham bound Isaac and laid him on the altar (Genesis 22:9). Given the age difference, Isaac could have resisted or fled. Instead, he trusted his father's obedience to God. Such details teach us not just about Abraham's surrender to God's will, but also Isaac's surrender to his father's leadership and to God's larger plan.

- From Abraham's perspective, surrender meant yielding what was most precious to him—the son of promise. He trusted in God's character and promises more than his own impulses.
- From Isaac's perspective, surrender meant submitting even when he may not have understood, choosing trust over self-preservation.

Together, their actions illustrate that surrender is not weakness but faith in God's wisdom and goodness. You can connect this to the New Testament where Jesus also submitted to His Father's will, trusting God even unto death (Luke 22:42; Philippians 2:8).

If the discussion is going well, you can ask questions like:

- What makes surrender to God most difficult for you?
- Do you relate more to Abraham—giving up what you treasure—or to Isaac—trusting when you don't understand?

Hopefully, this helps the group personalize the lesson and see surrender as an act of worship rooted in trust.

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## 7. What in **Genesis 22** reminds you of Jesus? \*\*\*HINT: There can be multiple words in and aspects of Genesis 22 that remind you of Jesus!

Genesis 22 is one of the most profound passages in Scripture. God tests Abraham by asking him to sacrifice Isaac—the son of promise, the one through whom God had said His covenant would continue. Abraham obeys without hesitation, showing complete trust in God even though the command seems to contradict God's own promises (Hebrews 11:19 says that Abraham believed that God could raise Isaac from the dead). At the last moment, God intervenes, sparing Isaac's life and providing a ram instead. Abraham names the place *Yahweh Yireh* ("The Lord Will Provide"), capturing the truth that God both tests faith and provides what is needed.

Ask your Life Group what details from Genesis 22 reminds them of Jesus and His life on earth. You don't need to list any of the following examples unless you want to, but here are some ways that we see Jesus in Genesis 22:

- God tells Abraham, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love" (Genesis 22:2).
  - This echoes God's description of Jesus: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17; John 3:16).
- The sacrifice was to take place in the region of Moriah (Genesis 22:2).
  - Centuries later, the Temple in Jerusalem was built on Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1). Calvary, where Jesus was crucified, is part of that same ridge—God provided salvation in the very same region.
- Abraham traveled for three days before reaching the place of sacrifice (Genesis 22:4). For three days, Isaac was as good as dead in Abraham's mind—yet God gave him back alive.
  - Jesus was dead for three days and rose again to life (1 Corinthians 15:4).
- Isaac carries the wood for his own sacrifice up Mount Moriah (Genesis 22: 6).
  - Jesus carried the wooden cross up Calvary (John 19:17).
- Isaac asks, "Where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" (Genesis 22:7). Abraham responds, "God Himself will provide the lamb" (v. 8).
  - This looks forward to John the Baptist's words: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
- Isaac does not resist when bound by Abraham (Genesis 22:9). He willingly submits.
  - Jesus, too, was led like a lamb to the slaughter, silent before His accusers (Isaiah 53:7).
- God provides a ram caught in a thicket to die in Isaac's place (Genesis 22:13).
  - On the cross, Jesus died as our substitute—taking our place (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24).
- Abraham names the mountain *Yahweh Yireh* ("The Lord Will Provide") (Genesis 22:14).
  - The ultimate provision is fulfilled in Christ: God did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all (Romans 8:32).



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**8. Read *Hebrews 11:17-19*. What does verse 19 say Abraham believed God could do? What does this tell you about Abraham's faith and view of God's power and character?**

When you guide your group through Hebrews 11:17-19, it's helpful to slow down on verse 19: "Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead..." The Greek word translated "reasoned" (*logizomai* in the original Greek) carries the sense of carefully considering, calculating, or concluding based on trust in God's nature. Abraham believed that if God had promised descendants through Isaac (Genesis 21:12), then even if Isaac died, God had the power to raise him from the dead. This is remarkable because, up to that point in biblical history, there had been no recorded resurrection. Instead of blind optimism, Abraham's faith was grounded in the conviction that God's character is faithful and His power unlimited.

Try to highlight how Hebrews 11:17-19 deepens the Genesis 22 story. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac wasn't because he didn't care about his son, but because he trusted God's promises more than he trusted what he could see. Based on that truth, the author of Hebrews connects Abraham's faith to resurrection power, which foreshadows Christ's resurrection (how Abraham's faith pointed forward to the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus).

If needed, you can reword the question or ask a follow-up question like: What does it look like in your life to trust God's power and promises, even when you can't see how it will work out?

Encourage them to reflect on how their view of God's character (e.g., faithful, powerful, trustworthy, etc.) shapes their response in times of testing. Doing so will probably help your Life Group to apply the theological truth to their everyday faith walk.

**9. *Genesis 22:14* says, "So Abraham called that place 'The LORD Will Provide,'" which in Hebrew literally means "The LORD will see to it." (הָאֵל יִרְאֶה). How are *seeing* and *providing* connected when it comes to God? What does it mean to you that God sees your situation?**

**10. In the video lesson, Michael said, "Worship begins with a 'yes.'" Finish the sentence below, share it with your Life Group, share why you believe God wants you to say, "Yes," to that particular calling, task, etc.**

**I BELIEVE GOD IS ASKING ME TO SAY, "YES," TO:**

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This is a very subjective part of the lesson, and also crucial, as it ties up all of the previous questions/prompts. So, please try not to skip this question and give your Life Group a good amount of time to answer it.

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## Witness

**God didn't just bless Abraham for Abraham's sake—He said, "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Abraham's life teaches us that faith isn't meant to be kept private; it's meant to bless others. As Abraham was a stranger in a new land, extend hospitality RIGHT NOW by asking the following question to someone near your group and pray for them on the spot: "How can we pray for you?"**

This prompt is designed to help your Life Group move from Bible study into active obedience. In Genesis 12:2-3, God makes clear that His blessing of Abraham was both personal and global (so that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you"). That same principle carries into the life of every believer: faith is not only personal but also missional. Abraham's example reminds us that God's people are always meant to be a channel of blessing to others.

The activity of extending hospitality in the moment puts this truth into practice. In the ancient Near East, hospitality was a high value, and Abraham himself modeled this in Genesis 18 when he welcomed strangers and served them generously. By pushing your Life Group to step outside their comfort zone and ask this question, you are helping them embody the same spirit of Abraham's faith: trusting God enough to bless others right where they are.