

Jesus In Genesis-Week 2

Genesis 12:1-3

God made a promise to Abraham. He would be a great nation.

There's only one problem. Abraham had no children.

Abraham tried to force it himself and sinned and had a son named Ishmael, but not with his wife.

Then, when Abraham and his wife were old, he promised him a son. They thought God was crazy, so they laughed! Guess what? They had a baby and his name was Isaac (he laughs)!

He loved his son, and his son represented the fulfillment of God's promise.

Then something wild happens!

Gen. 22:1-2

Abraham obeys, believing God would give him his son back from the dead (Heb. 11:17-20)

Then right before he sacrifices his own son, God provides a sacrifice (Gen. 22:13)

So...

- Abraham has a son he loves
- The son is called to be sacrificed and the father obeyed
- They carry wood up a hill in Jerusalem
- God provides a substitute in place of his son
- The father believes his son will be raised from the dead

That was thousands of years before Jesus was born. Think about what happened in Jesus' life:

- He is loved by his father
- Jesus was called to be a sacrifice and the father obeyed
- A cross made out of wood was carried up a hill near Jerusalem
- There was no substitute for Jesus, he was THE substitute! For us
- He was raised from the dead

Here is another example where the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are hinted at in the Old Testament.

I want to focus in one aspect: The idea of sacrifice. God called Abraham to sacrifice his most prized possession. He was willing to do that, as painful as it was. God gave up his son, as painful as that was, out of love.

Following Jesus requires us to make a sacrifice. We probably will not need to sacrifice our life, although some Christ-followers around the world do. I don't know what your sacrifice will look like:

- Maybe you won't be as popular as you want
- Maybe you won't get such a high-paying job

- Maybe you won't be on the top sports team because you choose to spend your time in other ways
- Maybe you won't get the top spot or position because you're not willing to cheat the system
Maybe you will be seen as an outsider because you don't do the things your friends are doing

"Take up your cross daily."

It is difficult to do, but we can be encouraged because Jesus sacrificed his life for us, he showed us the way, and we can trust that, as we rely on his power, he will give us a more fulfilling life than what we could have imagined or done on our own!

God gave us Christ through sacrifice. Through sacrifice we can gain Christ's presence and power in our lives!