

even if...

faith in the midst of life's "what if" moments

SACRIFICE:

*:: an act of offering to a deity something precious
:: destruction or surrender of something for the sake of something else*

Genesis 22:6-10

⁶ So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As

the two of them walked on together, ⁷ Isaac turned to Abraham and said, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied.

"We have the fire and the wood," the boy said, "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?"

⁸ "God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together.

⁹ When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice.

SACRIFICE is always required in covenant relationship.

Genesis 22:11-17a

¹¹ At that moment the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Yes," Abraham replied. "Here I am!"

¹² "Don't lay a hand on the boy!" the angel said. "Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son."

¹³ Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son. ¹⁴ Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means "the Lord will provide").

To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: "On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided."

¹⁵ Then the angel of the Lord called again to Abraham from heaven. ¹⁶ "This is what the Lord says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that ¹⁷ I will certainly bless you.

Living an "Even if..." faith means not WITHHOLDING.

Hebrews 11:17-19

¹⁷ It was by faith that Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice when God was testing him. Abraham, who had received God's promises, was ready to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, ¹⁸ even though God had told him, "Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted." ¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again. And in a sense, Abraham did receive his son back from the dead.

SO WHAT?

:: Identify your ISAAC.

:: Offer your SACRIFICE.

:: Live in the COVENANT.

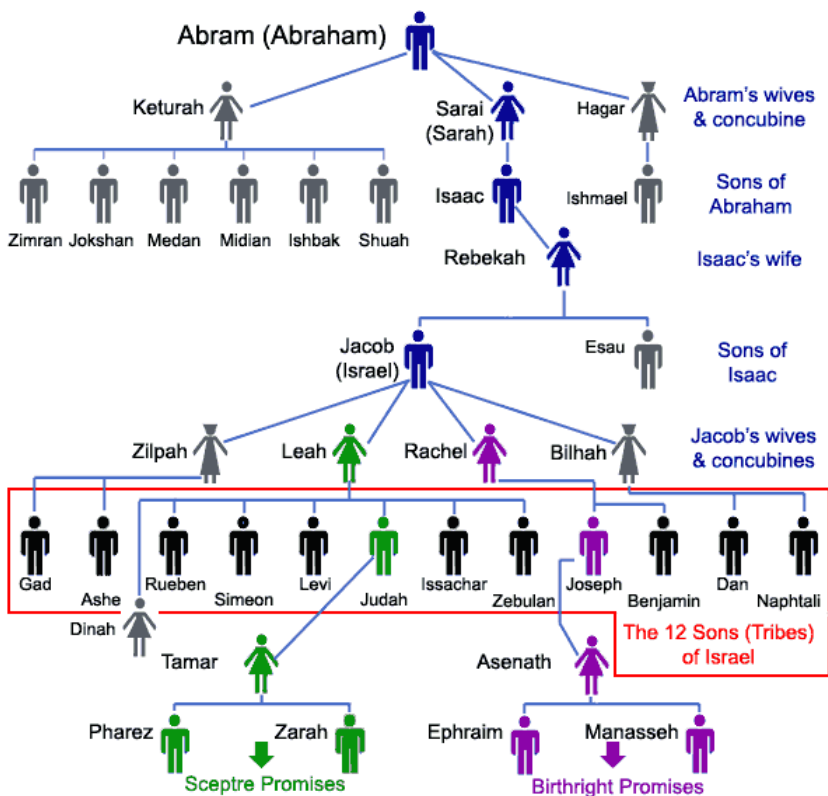
"Faith is unseen but felt, faith is strength when we feel we have none, faith is hope when all seems lost."

- Catherine Pulsifer

Mark 14:22-24

²² As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take it, for this is my body."

²³ And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And he said to them, "This is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice for many."



NOTES:



How to start a relationship with God:

- 1) Admitting that you, like everyone else, are in need of rescue.
- 2) Asking God to forgive your sins.
- 3) Saying YES to God by trusting Jesus as Savior & Lord.

You can do that right now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

***Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I receive you as my Savior; and I put my faith in you as my LORD. Help me to look to you and follow you all the days of my life.
In Your name, Amen.***

For Further Reflection:

:: *Identify/Share one thing God has been teaching or re-teaching you through the “Even if...” series to this point.*

:: *Sacrifice is often a difficult concept for us to accept. Why do you think this is a struggle?*

:: *The ultimate sacrifice of Christ marks the beginning of the New Covenant. As you read Hebrews 9:24-28, what jumps out to you about Christ’s relationship with us?*

:: *What are obstacles for us as we seek to move from a “What If” posture to an “Even If...” faith? How can you intentionally strengthen your faith?*

:: *Read Hebrews 11:8-12, 17-19, as a summary of the Even If journey we have been on with Abraham. What encourages you about this journey? What is challenging for you?*

:: *The invitation “to lay our Isaac down” requires us to be honest, bold, and desperate for God. What do you sense Holy Spirit inviting you into as you reflect on this invitation?*

:: *Identify someone that can walk with you and pray for you as you step into this ‘deeper still’ space of “Even If...” with your loving Heavenly Father.*

Unless otherwise noted, today’s Scripture is from the New Living Translation [NLT].
Beth Cossin (@bethcossin) – January 26 & 27, 2019

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