

Sunday, July 19, 2026

The Journey to Fearing God: “both sides of the knife”

Genesis 22:9-12 **9** When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. **10** Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. **11** But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” **12** He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”

- ***What we believe about God is based on what we know about God, and what we know about God is informed not merely by what we are taught, but also by what we experience with God.*** And in our text of focus today, we are visiting a familiar passage of scripture where a father and his sons' belief about God was dramatically reshaped. Up until this point of the biblical narrative, one could make the firm assertion that Abraham certainly loved the Lord; however, when he was called to sacrifice the son of his old age, which he was promised by the Lord, his decision to obey the Lord was not based solely on his love for God. Abraham obeyed the Lord because he had a deep reverence for the awesome power and presence of God.
- ***In order to fear God, you have to experience God. And in the midst of those experiences, you must believe that God is as faithful and just as all the scripture presents him to be.***

- When we look at this sacrifice scenario, there are lessons we can learn from both sides of the knife.
- Abraham:
 - God is powerful enough to give me every desire of my heart, and even the things I did not know I needed.
 - God is so jealous that he will take anything that hinders or detracts from his glory.
 - God is so loving that he will make a self-directed sacrifice on my behalf so that I suffer no loss.
 - From then on, Abraham did not just know God as Yahweh (the covenant God), but he knew him personally as Jehovah-Jireh (The Lord who provides).



- Isaac
 - Worship is not just a song. It's a sacrifice we must willingly make.
 - Surrendering to God often looks like submitting to others.
 - When heaven speaks, revelation and solution ensue.
 - From that day on, Isaac did not just acknowledge God as Elohim (supreme creator); rather, he identified him as pǎ'·ḥǎḏ (the God that is to be feared).
 - **Genesis 31:41** These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. **42** If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and **the Fear of Isaac**, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night."...**53** The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us." So Jacob swore by **the Fear of his father** Isaac,
- From this passage, we learned that the experience that Isaac had on Mount Moriah not only reshaped his identity of God, but it also reshaped the way he lived his life and the way he taught his children about God, so much to the degree that it affected the way they lived their lives and how they communicated about God.