

THE STORY

READ THE STORY. EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE.

AS YOU READ CHAPTER 2

Journal your answers to these questions as you read through the chapter this week. You may wish to read one day and journal the next, or spread the questions over the whole week. Bible readings that correspond with this week's reading can be found at www.hopewdm.org.

1. God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, for two reasons: First, to test his faith, and second, to point to the future sacrifice of the heavenly Father's only Son. Is there an area of your life that God is calling you to "sacrifice" or entrust to Him? Identify the next step you need to take.
2. God's chosen people are both faithful and flawed. List the "faithful" attributes of either Abraham or Sarah that you see. List the "flawed" attributes and mistakes of either Abraham or Sarah that you see. What ways do you see this same dynamic play out in your life, faithful and flawed? How have you seen God show up despite this in your own life?
3. When God does not deliver on his promise to provide offspring for Abraham, becomes impatient and starts to take matters into his own hands (p. 15-16). Despite his good intentions, this caused several complications for Abraham domestically. When have you tried to take things into your own hands, or force God into action? What was the result?
4. The maidservant Hagar fled from Sarah's harsh treatment. Alone, hurting and in despair, God saw her. But she also saw him and declared, "I have now seen the One who sees me." When have you seen God most vividly acting in your life when despair and pain were present?
5. Esau and Jacob are prime examples of sibling rivals. We learn from the Story (p. 21-22) that they were estranged for more than 20 years. What life lessons can be gleaned from observing each character throughout their reconciliation? What does this tell you about any estranged relationships you might have?
6. In the midst of a deep, personal crisis in Jacob's life, we read about a curious struggle in the wilderness (p. 23). In the end, Jacob's name was changed to Israel because he struggled with God and man and overcame. (In the ancient world, a name represented the character of a person.) Identify a crisis in your own life that entailed "wrestling" with God. If God was to change your name to represent the outcome, what do you suppose it would be?
7. Nearly everyone has experienced the playground process of "choosing teams." Compare the way God chooses his "team" with the way you choose your "team." Who in your life do you need to see from God's perspective?

PRAYER

God,
Thank you for the older people you have placed in our lives who have been a model of faith for us. You call each of us, at various times, to follow you in ways that are risky and demand faith. We confess we've missed opportunities in the past to step out in faith. When you call, help us to sense where you might be leading and to take a bold step of faith and follow you with confidence. We pray for your strength. Amen