

Nine Tests Every Christian Must Face

Lesson 2:

The Time Test (or Patience Test)

Genesis 12:1-2 (NIV)

The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

[2] "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

Genesis 12:3-4 (NIV)

I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

[4] So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

Genesis 12:5-6 (NIV)

He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

[6] Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land.

Genesis 12:7-8 (NIV)

The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

[8] From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.

Genesis 12:9-10 (NIV)

Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.

[10] Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe.

We love to focus upon the PROMISES...

- I will make you a great nation
- I will bless you
- I will make your name great
- You will be a blessing
- I will bless those that bless you
- I will curse those that curse you
- All of the people of the earth will be blessed through you

The Promise entailed for Abraham:

- Personal blessings from God
 - Personal protection from enemies
 - Personal purpose to live out
- Abraham was 75 years old when the promise was given. Abraham was 86 when Ishmael was born. Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born.
 - And Abraham STILL lived in tents up until his death.
 - Before the fulfillment of the promises—comes the TESTING OF TIME.

The promises are not fulfilled IMMEDIATELY

- To know what is in your heart TO SEE IF YOU WOULD KEEP HIS COMMANDS OR NOT.
- To humble you TO TEACH YOU THAT MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT COMES FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LORD.

The Reason for the TIME TEST is to:

- Force the Believer to TRUST GOD in all things.
- Force the Believer to trust God TO FULFILL HIS WORD
- Force the Believer to trust God to fulfill His Word IN HIS OWN TIME AND IN HIS OWN WAY.
- To Teach the Believer to Believe that God is God and Will Be God despite what I see or experience.
- To expose personal shortcomings of impatience

The Time Test gives the believer the opportunity for:

- Faith to Grow
- Faith to ENCOURAGE OTHERS
- Purifying his MOTIVES and ATTITUDE
- Development of MATURITY
- Development of PATIENCE
- Development of DISCIPLINE
- Development of PURPOSE

The Time Test will reveal:

- Man's Plans can only FAIL
- That God alone will get the GLORY
- That God is a MIRACLE WORKING GOD
- That God is FAITHFUL TO HIS WORD
- That God's Power is Greater than the LAWS OF SCIENCE.

Abraham's Time Test reveals:

- Being chosen does not exempt us from testing
- There is grace even in failure
- Grace does not negate the price of failure

Signs you are failing the TIME TEST

- You express doubt rather than faith
- You work to substitute YOUR WAY for God's Way
- You become distracted
- You murmur and complain
- You quit in your responsibilities

Five things to do to pass the TIME TEST.

- Do things that require FAITH
- Never stop attending Church
- Never stop worshipping God
- Learn to serve OTHERS
- Rejoice in the Promise EVERYDAY.

Isa 40:31 *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

- There is not a promise given by God that will not come to pass. He causes us to wait in order that we may develop maturity.

2Pe 3:9 *(GW) The Lord isn't slow to do what he promised, as some people think. Rather, he is patient for your sake. He doesn't want to destroy anyone but wants all people to have an opportunity to turn to him and change the way they think and act.*

- In order to receive the promises, we must pass the Time Test