

# Thine Only Son

Genesis 22:1-2



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**FOCAL Read Responsively** Genesis 22:1-2 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. {2} **And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.**

What a wondrous thing is God's salvation! When God reaches out to save, He always reaches out to the least first. The Bible tells us that **“He hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise” (1 Corinthians 1:26-29)**. He reaches out in love to the least, to those who are most fallen – **“that none might boast in His sight”**. The Infinite reaches out to the finite, the Immortal to the mortal, the Eternal and All Powerful to we who are but dust (**Psalm 103:14**). In the words of the old spiritual, **“What wondrous Love is this, Oh my soul!”**

When God reached out and offered salvation amongst the ancient peoples He did not go to the best of the people. He went amongst the ancient Babylonians to a port called “Ur – The Moon City”. The name described the practices of the people. Every family in this place had their own personal gods - little man-made idols – that they knelt and prayed to. Each household had their own gods. If your gods were not like my gods it was of little consequence. I was supposed to respect your gods as you did mine.

Abraham was familiar with household gods. When the

Lord first came to Abraham He told that old man  
“**Follow Me, Abraham, and I will bless you. I will give you a great lineage. You will prosper if you will leave your old household gods behind and believe in Me**”.

Abraham listened to God, and did what God commanded. The God of Abraham was not made with Abraham's hands, nor was He controlled by Abraham in any way. The idols were brought out, worshiped, then just as easily put away. The household gods could be manipulated, carried, buried, or tossed away. This was not the case with the God of Abraham. This God is in control. This God would later command His people:

**Exodus 20:2-5 I am the LORD thy God ... Thou shalt have no other gods before me. {4} Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image ... {5} Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, ...**

The God of Abraham wanted a personal relationship with His people. He wanted to walk and talk with them, to love them, to protect them – if they would only believe in Him. God wanted a people who would trust in Him believing that **He was able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Christ, seeing Christ ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25)**. The God of Abraham was perfect, therefore the patriarch Abraham did not have to be perfect. He just had to follow this Great and True God one day at a time where ever He led.

The God of Abraham is jealous for His people, and wants His people to be jealous for Him. There is a reason for this. An idol is nothing – it has no personality, no power, and no permanence. We who are human are dust, made of the earth. When we make a god with our own hands to worship it we make a powerless thing, a thing that cannot possibly do us any good. There is but One True God, and this is the God Who made Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, you and I. This God made us, and this God calls us to follow Him if we would be blessed.

I cannot form an idol out of mud and clay and ask it, “Let me into the King's Palace”. The idol is a thing of my hands. It has no authority to let me into the King's Palace. If I want to enter into the King's Palace I must seek and accept the invitation of the King.

The Lord “**is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance**” (2 Peter 3:9). He seeks you just as He sought Abraham so long ago. Jesus came “**to call sinners to repentance**” (Matthew 9:13). He loves you, and loves you still. He calls you, just as He called Abraham to salvation. God's love is so big that He continually reaches out to us, calling us to salvation, calling us to the Covenant of Grace, giving us every opportunity to be saved – if we would only believe. Salvation is a Gift of God:

**Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: {9} Not of works, lest any man should boast.**

A gift is neither earned nor deserved – a gift is merely *received* and *believed*. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob believed what God told them, and were richly blessed because of their belief. God made a covenant with these men, and He will make a covenant with you, too, if you will only believe in Him. Put away your “household gods”. Put away the little icons that you have trusted your lives to. Put away your rabbit's feet, your striving to *be good enough*, your possessions, even your families. Put no trust in these things. Believe what God has said. Believe that Jesus Christ is the Savior. Believe that He came and gave Himself for you so that you could be saved. It was a great act of kindness that caused God to offer salvation by faith in Christ to us (**Titus 3:4-6**). Jesus Christ is the only Way unto God the Father (**John 14:6**). Will you believe in Him? Will you, like Abraham, say “**Here I am**” to the God Who is the **Great I AM**? My heartfelt prayer is that you will come to know Him this very day as not just the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, but also the God of YOU!

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

### **1. The Faith That Saves Answers God's Call**

**FOCAL** Genesis 22:1 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, **Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.**

A young man came to Jesus one day and asked the Lord:

**Matthew 19:16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?**

What is the only coin that God will accept as reimbursement for your offenses against Him? What is the cost of admission into God's Heaven?

Man is always looking for some right thing to do to earn his salvation, to make himself acceptable before God. “**What must I do?**” We like to think that God needs our effort to be saved, that Calvary and the offering for sin that was made there somehow fails to satisfy the Lord. Our pride makes us ask God “**What coin will You accept for salvation – and do I have that coin?**”. The unnamed Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas the same thing:

**Acts 16:30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**

to which they answered:

**Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.**

The faith that saves answers God's call in the way that He issues it.

**“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.** This then is what God would have us do, to believe Him, to believe what He has promised. The Bible tells us that Abraham is the **“father of all who believe”** (Romans 4:11), an example to be followed **“that righteousness might be imputed unto them also”**. If I want to be righteous before God then I must follow the example of Abraham in faith. Abraham is **mentioned 230 times in the Scripture, 70 times in the New Testament alone.** Children of God saved by faith in Christ *follow in the footsteps* of Abraham. When the Pharisees said **“we are Abraham's children”** Jesus told them:

**John 8:39 ... If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.**

The children of Abraham, children of faith, *follow the pattern set before them.* They do the works of Abraham.

What did Abraham do to be saved? Look at our focal text:

**FOCAL** Genesis 22:1 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, **Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.**

Abraham was saved by listening to the Word of God.

When God called, Abraham answered. When the Lord first called Abraham we read:

Genesis 12:1, 4 Now **the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred,** and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee ... {4} **So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him...**

When the Lord called Abraham our pattern *acted immediately.* The Infinite God called out to mortal and finite man and offered him eternal life. Look at what the Lord told Abraham:

Genesis 12:2-3 And **I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: {3} And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**

God said **“believe Me, and I will make you greater than you were. I will bless you richly – just follow Me”**. The Lord told Abraham **“in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed”**. Abraham – childless and without any hope of a continued lineage – was given a great promise. What did Abraham do with that promise? *He acted on it.*

If God makes us a promise but we fail to act on it – does the promise do us any good? What did Abraham do? He moved when God said “move”!

The Bible tells us:

**Galatians 3:6** Even as **Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**

**Abraham believed God.** Saving faith is a faith that not only says “I understand what God has said” but also says “I will do what God has said”. Abraham believed – and then, as proof of that faith, *He moved!* He picked up his things and he headed out.

Abraham was *not* justified by his works. The Bible tells us:

**Romans 4:2-3** For **if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.** {3} For what saith the Scripture? **Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.**

**Abraham believed God.** He heard God and, believing on Him and in what He had promised, Abraham stepped out in faith. His moving was immediate. Is the Lord calling you to salvation? If so, He expects you to *believe*

*in Him*, and to *call upon His Name*. God has given but one way to be saved, and that is **by believing the claims of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (John 14:6).**

The works of Abraham *did not* save him – but they were evidence that he had experienced genuine saving faith.

## **2. The Faith That Saves Always Acts According To God's Direction**

**FOCAL** Genesis 22:1-2 And it came to pass after these things, that **God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. {2} And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac,** whom thou lovest,

**The Saving Faith of Abraham Was Evidenced By Action.** There are many who profess to be saved, and yet do nothing for either God or for others. They profess to know Him, but by their works *deny knowing Him*. As Paul told Titus:

**Titus 1:16** **They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him,** being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

The mark of a Christian is that you do the works of Christ. Please understand me, dear ones: You do not

have to work to *be saved* – but if you are saved *you will obey your Heavenly Father*.

You who are saved have experienced the greatest love ever at the moment of your salvation. Those who have experienced much love always respond to the One Who loved them.

The love of Christ compels the believer (2 Corinthians 5:14). When the Apostle wanted to incite the Roman believers to service he said:

**Romans 15:30** Now **I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;**

Those who are saved have experienced the *greatest love ever*, the most *infinite love ever*. When Paul wanted Philemon to treat the slave Onesimus as a brother he said “**for love's sake I rather beseech thee**” (Philemon 1:9). The Christian has been saved from hell. Is it a great thing that the believer obey the Lord Who “**loved him, and gave himself for you**”? (Ephesians 5:25).

The quality of Abraham's faith – of *any saving faith* – is that it will do as the Savior commands.

The faith that will not move is a aborted thing, a thing that probably has no salvific value to it. Abraham

moved when God told him to move – however, his movement was *not perfect*.

When God called Abraham we read the Lord said:

**Genesis 12:1-4** Now the **LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house... {4} So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him..**

Abraham was told “**leave your country and your kin behind**”, yet we see that **Lot his nephew** went with him. Our works *do not save us*. Abraham's works *did not save him*, for his works were incomplete and flawed. He did the best that he was able. **He believed God, and God counted that belief for righteousness**. But Abraham did not do *exactly* as he was supposed to do. We see the *growth of faith* in Abraham, for just a few chapters later he is questioning the Lord:

**Genesis 15:2-3** And Abram said, **Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? {3} And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.**

Many years had passed and Sarah still was childless. Abraham began to think “maybe the Lord wants me to let the child of my servant Eliezer be my heir”. This is the question he brings before the Lord. Yet the Lord says,

**Genesis 15:4-6 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. {5} And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.**

“Look Abraham, look! See the stars. Your seed shall be as numerous as the stars of Heaven. Just believe!”  
The Bible says that

**Genesis 15:6 {Abraham} believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.**

Abraham believed in the Lord, trusted YAHWEH the Infinite God. His faith was imperfect, but saving faith need not be perfect. There *must be a stepping out of faith if that faith has any value*. The Apostle James wrote:

**James 2:23-24 And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and**

**he was called the Friend of God. {24} Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.**

True saving faith always grows in the Christian's life. It is never stillborn, but dynamic and in transition – just as it was with Abraham.

By faith in Christ God sends the Holy Spirit upon you. By faith in Christ God works in your hearts, changing you from a dead thing to a Living Creature. By faith Abram the Babylonian became Abraham the father of all who believe. By faith the life is changed, the heart is changed, *and our actions change*. The Bible tells us that **saving faith always changes the vessel that it touches**. The Apostle wrote to the Thessalonians saying:

**1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.**

The saved life is the changed life. **God is at work in His people**. Abraham believed, responded (albeit imperfectly), and his life was forever changed.

Too many people believe that salvation is a “say these words then go on about your business” affair. No, dear ones, a thousand times no! If you are saved – and you should make sure that you are saved – then the Bible says:

**Philippians 2:12-13 ... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. {13} For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.**

If you are saved, then **God is at work in you both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure.** The Christian is no longer primarily concerned about his own wants and needs, but the Christian is a person like Abraham who *has placed himself under the direction of God.* We do as God directs!

### **3. The Saved Life Will, In Time, Reflect The Glory of God**

**FOCAL** Genesis 22:2 **{God} said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering** upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

What is your main purpose in life? What drives you?

God created man to glorify Him, to reflect His glory, to be in His image. The Bible tells us:

**Genesis 1:26-27 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:** and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. {27} So **God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.**

You are created in the image of God. You are designed to reflect His glory in your life.

We are mirrors. We can mirror God, reflect His glory in our lives, or we can mirror Satan.

Adam and Eve were made in the image of God. They were designed to mirror God's glory in this new world they occupied. Instead they allowed the devil to become their driving force. In so doing, they brought death on us all.

God continually offers us opportunities to glorify Him. If you are His child you should want to praise Him, to glorify Him, to lift Him up in all things. He did so much for you at the Cross of Calvary. Can't we who have been saved all say with the Psalmist:

**Psalms 86:11-13 Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name. {12} I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name forevermore. {13} For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.**

What is the significance of God testing Abraham by telling him to *offer Isaac as a sacrifice*?

God delivered Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, or *Ancient Babylon*. Many of these peoples practiced **child sacrifice**. In fact, when the seed of Abraham – Israel – would enter the Promised Land, God would require that His people not marry the Canaanite women. The message that God gave His people, *always* gives His people is:

**2 Corinthians 6:17-18 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. {18} And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters,** saith the Lord Almighty.

Abraham came out of Babylon, out of child sacrifice, and

left his gods to follow the one True God.

**ILLUSTRATE Abraham's Age and Promises of God**  
This Great God promised Abraham a son and a great lineage when he was 75 years old. Eleven years passed. Abraham made the mistake of bonding with his servant Hagar when he was eighty five years old, and Ishmael would be born to his household when he turned eighty six years old (Genesis 16:16). When Abraham reached his ninetieth birthday God once more promised him an heir (Genesis 17:1). Finally, some twenty five years after God first promised, Abraham celebrated his hundredth birthday with Isaac his newborn son (Genesis 21:5).

Now the Lord comes to Abraham. “Abraham – you only have the one son. Isn't that right?”

“Yes Lord, I only have Isaac.”

“Abraham, you take that boy and go to a mountain I'll tell you about. There you're going to sacrifice your only begotten son.”

Most of the people in this room – myself included – would probably have balked at that. We might have debated the Lord:

“You meant to say that I was supposed to take Isaac, or Eliezar, or one of the other servants, didn't You, Lord?”

That would be our first response. But that wasn't

Abraham's response. He knew the Lord, and had come to trust the Lord with his whole heart. Rather than argue with God **Abraham trusted Him**. This is illustrated in his response to Isaac's question, "Father, where is the sacrifice?" Abraham replied:

**Genesis 22:8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.**

**"God will provide Himself a lamb"**. God will never hurt you, dear believer. He wants you to glorify Him and to trust Him, believing that He only wants your best. Abraham did as God asked. He laid Isaac on the altar, and with resolution in his heart prepared to do exactly what God told him to do. As the knife came down the Angel of God cried out, **"Abraham, Abraham ...**

**Genesis 22:12 ... Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.**

Abraham did not withhold his only son Isaac from God. And then it happened – Abraham looked up and saw that **"the Lamb of God bound in the thorns, prepared to be sacrificed for his sins"**. At that moment God spoke to Abraham's heart. We don't know exactly all that the Lord told him, but we do know that he saw the coming Messiah. Jesus told the Pharisees:

**John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.**

He saw **the Coming Savior, rejoiced, and was glad**. The Messiah – first promised to Adam in the Garden of Eden – was coming. The prophetic utterance **"God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering"** would be fulfilled. Jesus was coming to pay for our sins. Abraham would have never seen this great prophetic illustration had he rejected the call of God. God is calling you, too.

Will you answer His call?

May God touch your hearts with His Word.