



**F**OR God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Every natural parent has a begotten son or daughter; and if that son or daughter is an only son or daughter, then they may be referred to as the only begotten son or daughter. My wife and I have seven children – three of whom are begotten of us, and four of whom are adopted. Of course, the adopted children are as much our true family as any others. The family of God is similar as a model of familial life. God has adopted children of every color, tongue and nation; however, God the Father has only One ‘Only Begotten Son’ – the Lord Jesus Christ - who is the central figure of the Godhead. If you are addicted to the false claims of the new Bible versions, you may believe that Jesus is only one more child of God instead of the only Begotten Son. John 3:16, in these modern deceptions, refers to Him as the one and ONLY Son which, of course, makes God to be a liar:

**F**OR as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of ADOPTION, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. (Romans 8:14-17) and please observe this promise of our Father: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my SONS AND DAUGHTERS, saith the Lord Almighty. (2 Cor 6:17-18)

Yes, all who are called and chosen of God (His Elect) are sons and daughters, but in a far different sense than the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus is of the same substance and nature of God the Father and is, in fact, God the Son. We do not share the same power and sinless nature of Christ. We are adopted into His family by His saving Mercy and Grace Alone. But our righteousness is not our own, but that imputed by our Lord.

The definition of the ‘only Begotten Son’ as the only natural son of both a mother and father has its origins at the very calling out of Israel as the Old Testament Church in Genesis. When God called Abram forth from Ur of the Chaldees, He made a tremendous promise to him (which was a mere shadow of that which would follow): *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: 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.* (Gen 12:2-3) This was only a hint of the Promise of a Seed to follow by Whom those families of the world would be blessed. The promise was expanded as Abraham grew to understand it.

Again, the Lord reiterated His promise to Abram in Genesis 13, and here in Genesis 15: . . . *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.* (Gen 15:4-5) and later in other passages.

Now the wife of Abram, Sarai (later Sarah) was growing old and beyond child-bearing age. She was aware of the yearning of Abram for a son. So, she conceived of a man-made plan (instead of God's plan for Abram) to give Abram a son. She would cause Abram to commit adultery with Hagar, her Egyptian servant. It seems that Abram did not require a great deal of convincing as the maid was young and fair. He took her as his concubine and she bore a son to Abram – but Ishmael was not the promised son God intended for he was born out of the bonds of God's first institution among men – MARRIAGE. There is a long train of sorrows that follow in the wake of Sarai's abortive plan. The great woes we witness in the Middle East today derive from that unfaithful plan conceived by Sarai and concurred in by Abram. The children of Ishmael are not people of peace. They form the whole of the Arab nations. If they are not at war with a foreign power, they will war among themselves. An example would be that of ISIS – a Sunni Moslem terrorist group who wages war against men, women, and children of the Shariah sect of Islam (Syria, Iraq, and Iran). But the story of Ishmael is best told under a separate moment.

God renews His promise once more to Abram in Genesis 17, and changes Abram's name to Abraham (which is father of many nations) and also Sarai's name was rechristened, Sarah. Then comes a peculiar exchange: *15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. 17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? 18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! 19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. 20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. 21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. 22 And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham..* (Gen 17:15-22)

A pause would be helpful here for the reader to consider and meditate upon the perfection of God's promises to Abraham – and to us. You will see in following passages in Genesis that Sarah did, indeed, conceive and bear a son – Isaac. Note the corollaries that follow the birth of Isaac to those of our Lord Jesus Christ, for Isaac is a near-perfect type of Christ in the Old Testament – a type intended by God to open our eyes to His grace and mercy towards us.

At God's counsel, Hagar and Ishmael were sent away from Abraham. Abraham was totally devoted to his son, Isaac – Abraham's only begotten son of righteousness to this point. He came by way of miracle since Sarah was above 90 years of age, and Abraham was 100. Jesus Christ also came by miracle of birth albeit even greater than that of Isaac since Jesus was born of a virgin.

Like God the Father, Abraham loved his son, Isaac, more than anything in the world and beyond; but not more than he loved God his Maker. One day when Isaac had grown to be a lad of perhaps twelve years, the Lord God spoke a very hurtful word to Abraham – a word whose meaning Abraham could not have possibly fathomed;

however, Abraham obeyed without delay or question. God spoke to Abraham thusly: *Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. 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.* (Gen 22:1-2) Can you imagine receiving such a word from the Lord? How would you have responded? How did Abraham respond? *And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.* (Gen 22:3)

Why did God speak such hard words to Abraham? It wasn't only for the sake of testing Abraham's faith, but to bolster ours also. God is demonstrating to us how painful it would be for a father or parent to sacrifice the only child they have, especially one that has been born through a miraculous chain of events. It was the same pain the Lord God felt when He killed an innocent animal in Eden to cover the nakedness (sin) of Adam and Eve, for it prefigured the ultimate sacrifice God would make to cover the sins and nakedness of you and me in the fullness of time. It was the same pain that darkened the skies over the Temple mound of Mount Moriah as Christ suffered there from the sixth to the ninth hour in darkness.

My hands are not worthy to fully expound the beauty of this great illustration of sacrifice that follows. The adoption papers for you and me, and all who belong to the Kingdom of God, were signed, sealed and delivered in the Eternities Past before the worlds were made: *18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, 21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. 22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: 23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* (1 Peter 1:18-23)

Perhaps with a sorrow-laden heart, Abraham proceeded on a three-days journey to Mount Moriah – the same mountain upon which the Temple existed at the time of Christ, and the same upon which, some 2000 years later according to the calculations of Bishop Ussher, the Lord Jesus Christ would carry His wooden cross up Mount Calvary, as Isaac carried his burden of wood, and be offered as a sacrifice for us all.

*4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. 6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. 7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? 8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.* (Gen 22:4-8) It is unlikely that Abraham could imagine what the Lord would do, but his faith was so great that he believed that God would somehow restore his son to him. See how he expresses this to his servants who accompanied he and Isaac: *Abide ye here with the ass; and I AND THE LAD will go yonder and worship, and COME AGAIN TO YOU.*

One great truth that God is illustrating to Abraham, to you, to me, and all believers is this: God will not require any man to be a sacrifice our sins. In fact, no man is qualified – only One, and that is the Son of God. Notice that the wood for the sacrifice, like the wood of the cross, was laid upon Isaac's shoulders as he carried them up Mount Moriah for his own sacrifice. How precisely like Christ is that? *And Abraham took the wood of the*

*burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.*

Now consider what great truth is demonstrated in the next question of Isaac: *And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?* How forlorn this question must have made Abraham; however, Abraham's answer is full of an extraordinary faith and knowledge of the ways of God his Father: *And Abraham said, My son, God will provide HIMSELF a lamb for a burnt offering.* If you remember how to diagram sentences, you will see that the subject of Abraham's sentence is GOD. The verb is WILL PROVIDE. The Object is HIMSELF. How does God describe HIMSELF – as a LAMB for the burnt offering. Whether wittingly or not, Abraham is telling Isaac that God will provide HIMSELF to be the Lamb for the sacrifice – which thing our Lord was at Calvary. God did, indeed, provide a ram in the stead of Isaac. But He provided the Greater Lamb at Calvary. You will note, also, that Isaac was completely obedient to his father in this ordeal just as was our Lord Jesus Christ. *And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.* (Gen 22:9-10)

*11 And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12 And he said, 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. 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. 14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.* (Gen 22:11-14) The name of that place (the same where our Lord was crucified) is Jehovahjireh which, in Hebrew, means "God will provide" – and God DID provide. This is the beginning of Israel – the people of faith.

### **Note**

Israel became the people of that same faith of Abraham – not necessarily his bloodline, for many who had the blood of Abraham did not believe in that promise made to Abraham. Instead, most of temporal Israel looked for a physical king who would come with great military power and overthrow all oppressors. But Spiritual Israel is comprised of all of faith who believed that same Promise made to Abraham and are, therefore, the spiritual sons and daughters of Abraham (and of God). *11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. 13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. 16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,* (Romans 4:11-16)