

Binding Love: Abraham & Isaac

Parashat Vayeira ([B'reishit/Genesis 18-22](#)) 5783 B"H

Isaac: A Beloved son

If you are a parent, you know firsthand the eager anticipation and joy that comes with pregnancy and the birth of a child.

[Abraham and Sarah](#) had waited *decades* hoping for a child and finally reached the conclusion that they were too advanced in years to keep on hoping.

Sarah laughed when she heard the news she would have a son ([Genesis 18:12](#)).

She was 90 years old, can you really blame her?

According to [Genesis 17:17](#), centenarian Abraham also laughed.

And the child's name would be Yitzhak יִצְחָק (Isaac) meaning, *"he who laughs."*

After waiting that many years, this son was truly *beloved*.

Any child is so dearly loved, but can you imagine the depth of love these new elderly parents would have felt toward their precious child Isaac?

Abraham and Sarah had waited, *given up*, and then, by the grace of the Almighty One, received such an unexpected bundle of joy!

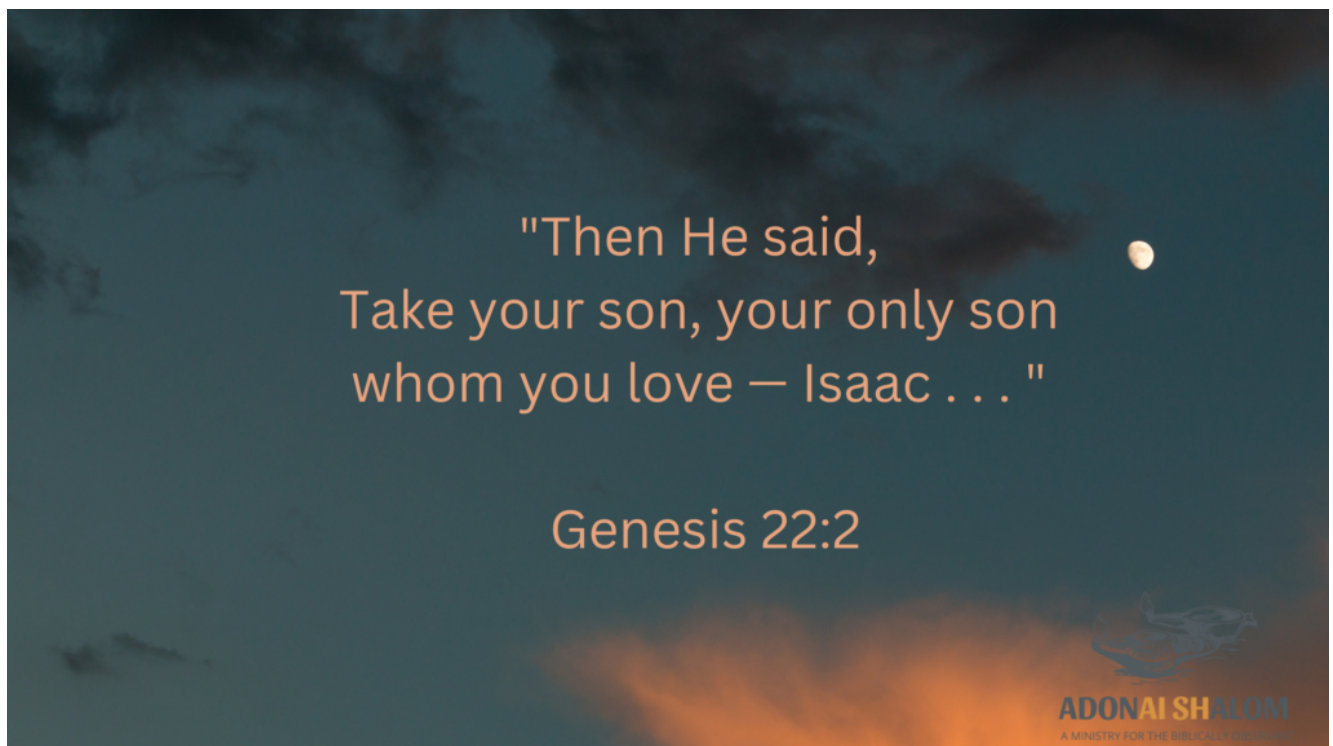
Messiah Yeshua (Jesus): our Heavenly Father's Beloved Son

Our Father in heaven sent His only begotten, beloved Son to earth.

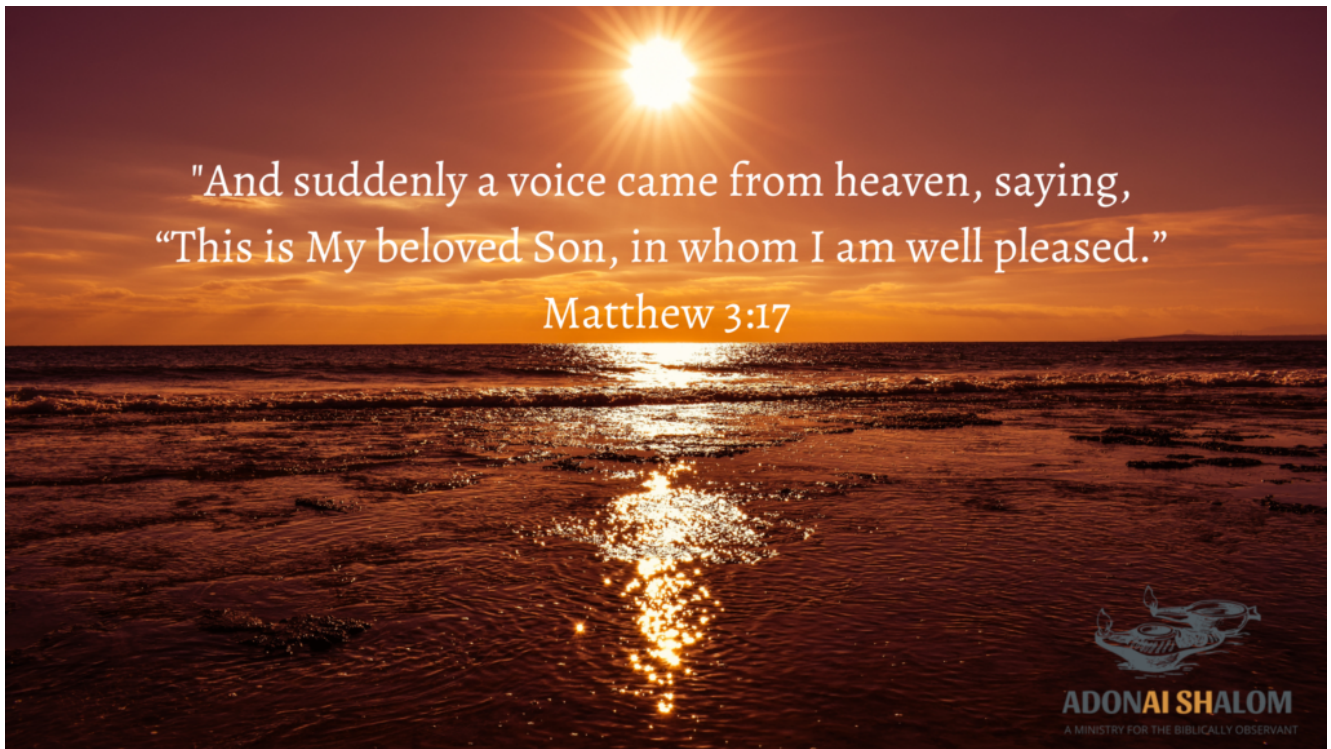
Yosef and Miryam (Joseph & Mary) were certainly surprised by the news that Mary would be the instrument through which Messiah would be born into this world.

There are many parallels between Abraham's son Isaac and our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus), God's Son:

"Then He said, Take your son, **your only son whom you love**—Isaac . . . " Genesis 22:2, *emphasis added*



"And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is **My beloved Son**, in whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:17, *emphasis added*



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"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 3:17

Aqedah אָקֵידָה “binding”

The binding up of Isaac to be sacrificed is known in Hebrew as the *aqedah* (*akedah/akeidah*), which literally means “*binding*.”

Abraham was commanded to offer up his son Isaac as a burnt offering.

Isaac’s father would bind him up and place the boy upon the altar, but before it got to that point, Isaac asked a pivotal question:

“. . . [Where is the lamb](#) . . . ?” [Genesis 22:7](#)



The binding up of a beloved son would demonstrate the greatest of all love: one day the Lamb of God Himself would be bound and beaten, sacrificed in our place.

Do you know the Lamb of God today?

Where is the Lamb in your life?

Have you allowed the LORD to rescue you from bondage?

Isaac survived because of the intervention of a divine Messenger ([Genesis 22:11](#)).

Abraham's son would be unbound: Isaac was set free, saved from a horrific death.

The first time the word “love” is found in Scripture

The word “love” is not used in Scripture until [Genesis 22:2](#). The first time “love” is mentioned in the Bible occurs in this verse about Isaac, Abraham's beloved son. It might surprise you that a word so central to our faith and to the unfolding

of salvation history wouldn't appear right from the outset, such as with Adam and Eve.

God's Word is truly remarkable. The depth of love that Abraham had for Isaac could be compared to the profound love the Father has for His Son.

"By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. Yes, he who had received the promises was offering up his one and only son— the one about whom it was said, "Through Isaac offspring shall be named for you." He reasoned that God was able to raise him up even from the dead—and in a sense, he did receive him back from there." Hebrews 11:17-19, *emphases added*

Certainly the binding of Isaac prefigures the crucifixion: Abraham had the confidence that the LORD His Provider – YHVH Yireh – would not fail him. The [Hebrews text](#) above tells us that Abraham even reasoned that *resurrection* was possible. ADONAI had promised Abraham that he would be the "father of many nations" ([Genesis 17:4](#)), so by having faith in resurrection, Abraham could reconcile killing Isaac if he truly had to follow through with God's demand. Abraham's hope was that Isaac would be resurrected and continue the lineage, fathering many nations.

Abraham is a model of faith for every generation. He passed the test by maintaining unwavering trust in the LORD. Isaac's father knew God and loved God, and knew first-hand nothing is impossible with God ([Matthew 19:26](#); [Luke 1:37](#)). He had also come to learn that the God of Israel was merciful: Abraham had no reason to doubt God's provision. Yet even so, it is one thing to have the willingness to forfeit one's own life; indeed Abraham was even willing to sacrifice his own self – for what parent could kill their child without losing a part of their own self? The emotional pain would have consumed him, but there was nothing Abraham wasn't willing to do for His LORD. But sacrificing of self is not quite the same as sacrificing one's life entirely. And it is another thing

altogether to have the faith to end one's own child's life if so required. Jewish midrash discusses many instances when God's people have been in situations which required self-sacrifice, or situations in which parents have had to make the difficult decision to encourage their children to give up their lives rather than renounce their faith in the God of Israel.

Is *your* love for God that intense?

Are you truly willing to sacrifice *anything* for Him?

Do you live with this type of faith?

Do you have an unwavering confidence that no matter what, the LORD will see you through?

[“Then He said, “Do not reach out your hand against the young man—do nothing to him at all. For now I know that you are one who fears God—you did not withhold your son, your only son, from Me.” Genesis 22:12](#)

Our children are on loan to us from the Holy One. We must entrust their well-being to the LORD, as He allows us to love and care for them.

Bound together in Love

Abraham loved his son. Surely, the events of the *aqedah* bound him and Isaac together with an even deeper love. The account of Abraham and Isaac (*Yitzhak*) should remind us today of the centrality of love. May we learn to reflect the virtue of Messiah's love to those who are still looking for the Lamb – to those who are bewildered and look all around them, but do not realize the nearness of their salvation.

[“And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” Colossians 3:14](#)

No matter what, always trust in our Loving Father who is full of compassion. He will provide for your every need, bind up the broken-hearted, and save you when you call upon His Name.

[“Then Abraham lifted up his eyes and behold, there was a ram, just caught in the thick bushes by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. Abraham named that place, ADONAI Yireh,—as it is said today, “On the mountain, ADONAI will provide.” Genesis 22:13-14](#)

The Binding of God’s Word

Have you bound God’s Word to your heart?

The first portion of the *Sh’ma* urges us to “bind” the Word of God to our hearts and hands; to walk in His ways at all times and to teach our children to do the same:

[“Hear O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love ADONAI your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These words, which I am commanding you today, are to be on your heart. You are to teach them diligently to your children, and speak of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up. **Bind them** as a sign on your hand, they are to be as frontlets between your eyes, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” Deuteronomy 6:4-9, emphasis added](#)

I encourage you today to seek the LORD and His Word. He is the God of Abraham and Isaac! Worship Him and praise Him for His all-encompassing love! Here are two worship songs that you may enjoy today. The first one is one of my all-time favorites: LORD God of Abraham by Paul Wilbur:

Shalom!

Please leave a comment below and let us know your thoughts! We love hearing from you, friends!