

# The Lord will provide

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 10 April 2022

Preacher: Chris Lowe

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Dorothy, thank you. I'd love you to keep your Bibles open there and you might like to have the back of the notice sheet here. I've got a few verses on that we're going to be looking at as we work through Genesis 22 together.

Just as we begin, let me ask the question which I think this passage pushes on to us. Will we trust him? Will we trust our God to provide for us?

As we walk through the good moments of life, as we walk through the hard moments of life, when you're exhausted or worn down or hurting, when obeying God feels impossibly testing, how could I do that?

Or when keeping going as a Christian believer for just another week with living faith seems beyond you. In our lives, now and going forward, will we trust our God to provide what we so desperately need?

Will we trust him? At the start of Genesis 22, Abraham didn't know that his faith was about to be tested. Follow along with me what happens in this story.

[ 1 : 1 1 ] At the start, he just simply hears the voice of his gracious God calling him by name. God said to him, Abraham, here I am, he replied.

He's open and ready to hear his master's voice. But now comes the command, do you see? God said to Abraham, take your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the region of Moriah.

Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain that I will show you. You can't mistake what God commands here. Back in Genesis 8, verse 20, Noah built an altar to the Lord and taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it.

And the Lord smelled the freezing aroma and said in his heart, never again will I curse. A burnt offering is a sacrifice to God. The one who offers the sacrifice kills the animal and cuts it up and burns it whole on the altar.

It's an offering to the Lord, a sacrifice to him. Forgive my sins. I dedicate myself to you. And the Lord sees the offering and smells the aroma and is soothed.

[ 2 : 2 7 ] I will no longer curse. I accept you. Except now in Genesis 22, the Lord commands Abraham to sacrifice not an animal and not a bird, but his son, his only son, whom he loves.

And you read that and you say, what? And we've been walking through the life of Abraham these past few months.

If you haven't been with us, you need to know Abraham and Sarah had waited a lifetime for a child of their own. And finally, when they were 99 and 90 years old, God had promised them their own son.

And Sarah had laughed, I'm worn out and my Lord Abraham is old. But in his kindness, God provided a miracle boy, whom Sarah bore, Isaac, whom they loved.

And now in these verses, this same good God says, sacrifice him to me. It's a command made, if possible, even more shocking.

[ 3 : 3 3 ] When you realise that this son of Abraham, Isaac is not just any boy. He is the child through whom God promises to save and bless the world.

That's the story of Genesis to this point, that the suffering and the death we experience even today, the curse of life in a sinful and fallen world, will be overturned, God promises, through Abraham, through his offspring, Isaac, and spreading from Isaac, Jacob, the 12 tribes, the nation of Israel, Jesus Christ himself.

You see, Isaac's not just a dearly loved son. At this point in the story of the Bible, God's promise to save his world rests on Isaac.

Isaac's survival, Isaac's life, Isaac. Yet the command from God is so clear. Take your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the region of Moriah, sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain.

What would you do? What would you do? When obeying God feels impossibly testing, what does Abraham do?

[ 4 : 55 ] The telling of this famous event is bare and taut and tense. Listen. Early the next morning, Abraham got up and loaded his donkey.

Nothing about what he's feeling or thinking, just prompt obedience. He got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son, Isaac, and when he'd cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.

So with everything he needs, his son in tow, they begin the journey. He's not going to go through with it, is he? It's a three-day journey.

What do they talk about? Does Isaac spot any flicker in his father's face as they walk? We're told nothing until on the third day, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.

They're almost there now. And so Abraham said to his servants, stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there, just the two of them.

[ 6 : 04 ] What are they going to do? We will worship. We'll offer sacrifice. And then we will come back to you. Reading that for the first time, you think, is that a white lie?

Does he not want to upset his son till the last minute? Is he deceiving his servants? Is he hiding from them his intentions? Is he wavering? Is he unwilling to do the deed?

Or in the face of this command, and knowing God's promises and his power, does Abraham reason that, having sacrificed his son, God could even raise Isaac from death, and they could descend the mountain together?

That would be stunning faith in God, wouldn't it? And it's what the New Testament says, Abraham believes at this very moment, that God could even raise his son from the dead.

Verse 6 now. The journey continues. The tension rises. And Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac.

[ 7 : 19 ] And he himself carried the fire and the knife. There is a knife. As the two of them went on together, alone, up the mountain, side by side, Isaac broke the silence and spoke up and said to his father Abraham, father.

Yes, my son, Abraham replied. I love walking along with my daughters. Dad, can I ask you a question?

Yes, what is it, love? The fire and wood are here, Isaac said. But where is the lamb for the burnt offering? Is Isaac naive and innocent?

I mean, surely with the wood on his own back, he should realise by now, shouldn't he? What does he suspect? And wants his father to tell the truth? Abraham, full of faith, answered, God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.

God will provide the lamb. And so the two of them went on together, father and son, one to bind and the other to be bound, one to slaughter and the other to be slaughtered.

[ 8 : 46 ] Verse nine, when they reached the place God had told him about, that is, we'd arrived.

There's no turning back. The moment has finally come. And now we're to see in close up, slow motion detail, every movement of what happens.

When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar on top of the wood.

Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. At which point, with knife poised above his son's throat, I guess, the angel of the Lord yelled to him from heaven, Abraham, Abraham!

Here I am, he replied. Do not lay a hand on the boy, he said. And again, do not do anything to him. As Abraham lowers the knife now. Now I know that you fear God. You're a man of the deepest obedience and faith. Because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.

[ 10 : 03 ] And Abraham looked up once again. And there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by his horns. The ram's not there by chance.

It's not a lucky moment. God himself will provide. And now Abraham seems to know exactly what to do.

Look, middle of verse 13. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. Can you see that? He unbound his boy and took him off the altar.

And he sacrificed the ram as a substitute in his son's place. He slipped the ram's throat instead of his son's throat. He cut up the ram's body instead of his son's body.

He burnt the ram whole on the altar instead of his son. The ram died. The ram was sacrificed instead. And his son lived.

[11:10] And I guess as Abraham and Isaac stood together here on the mountain with the flames of the sacrifice subsiding in front of them. Relief flooding through them. One great truth has been seared into them.

The Lord provides. In his grace by his sovereign goodness and power here on the mountain the Lord provides.

The Lord provides a sacrificial lamb so that Isaac may live. And so verse 14 Abraham called that place the Lord will provide.

But it's not just Abraham's name for this mountain in this moment. Because standing back and turning to his later readers to Israel the writer says and to this day it is said on the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.

Not just for Abraham but stretching forth through history into the life of Israel and beyond it is said on this mountain of the Lord it will be provided.

[12:25] A sacrifice. A lamb. So his people may live. Finish the story with me.

In Genesis 22 verse 15 onwards the tension now released. Abraham with his received back from death son next to him the angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time and said I swear by myself declares the Lord that because you've done this and have not withheld your son your only son I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore.

Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed because you have obeyed me you've obeyed me Abraham today says the Lord and so my promises will be fulfilled and through your offspring Isaac and beyond all nations will be blessed.

This is the promise of the gospel for us today through one of your descendants Abraham the world will be saved and blessed forever I swear on my own life declares the Lord and then Abraham returned to his servants and they set off back together for Beersheba and Abraham stayed in Beersheba once more.

So we say so what for us today so what for you and me from this epic moment? Here I think is what we need to know first the mountain on which the Lord promises to provide where is it?

[14:14] In Genesis 22 verse 2 it's in the region of Moriah which is mentioned one other time in the Old Testament in 2 Chronicles chapter 3 verse 1 centuries after Abraham we are told Solomon began to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah where the Lord had appeared to his father David.

In Genesis 22 Mount Moriah is an empty mountain the place where the Lord provides a sacrifice hundreds of years later it's the site of the temple in Jerusalem the mountain of the Lord the place where day after day and year after year burnt offerings and other offerings were sacrificed to the Lord so that the people of Israel might be forgiven and have their sins dealt with and like Isaac not die but live because on the mountain of the Lord it will be provided and yet as the Bible story rolled forward the animal sacrifices in the Jerusalem temple could never really take away sins a lamb a ram a bull a goat none of them really enough to die in my place that I might live and so the stage was set until one day centuries later a man called John looked up and just as Abraham looked up and saw a ram so at the start of John's Gospel chapter 129

John saw Jesus coming towards him and said look the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world not an animal lamb whom God will provide for a burnt offering but a human being a man the offspring of Abraham someone who is able to die in my place for me and John the Baptist pointing at Jesus says look this man before you is the lamb of God whom God himself provides and sends into the world for people like us in fact the stunning thing is this is remarkable the Lord Jesus Christ the lamb of God is none other than God's one and only son whom he loves like Isaac to his father so is the son of God to his father with Genesis 22 in our ears you have not withheld from me your son your only son listen to John chapter 3 verse 16 for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son as Jesus is baptised the voice comes from heaven you are my son whom I love you

are my Isaac

God the father sends his one and only son into the world providing him as the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world sent by his father Jesus Christ set out for Jerusalem and arriving at that same mountain of the Lord he bore the wood on his own shoulders he bore the cross and was crucified and died as a sacrifice instead of many for the sins of many as you imagine back to Genesis 22 and the action on the mountain as you look at the cross of Jesus Christ on that same mountain many years later you are meant to see beyond a shadow of a doubt the Lord provides he provides for you like Isaac without someone who is sacrificed in your place you will perish before God you will die and be burnt up but in his deep love he provides for you so beautifully and generously and graciously the Lord God provides his only son as a sacrificial lamb who dies instead of many in the place of many so that men and women like us who look to Jesus Christ and believe in him might be forgiven and have our sins dealt with and like Isaac not die but live forever for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life

I asked at the beginning will we trust him will we trust our God to provide for us as he did for Abraham as we walk through the hard moments of life when you're exhausted and worn down and hurting when obeying God feels impossibly testing when keeping going for another week as a Christian believer with living faith in God seems beyond you in our lives will we trust our God to provide what we so desperately need I've got one final verse for this morning Romans chapter 8 verse 32 on the sheet this is where I've wanted to get to the apostle Paul is writing to Christian believers and echoing

[ 20 : 12 ] Genesis 22 and speaking of our heavenly father he writes he who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all how will he not also along with him graciously give us all things if this morning you're someone who has put your faith in Jesus Christ know first off that your heavenly father has already provided what you need he provided his son for you he didn't withhold he didn't spare his own son for us but gave him up to be crucified if the Lord who provides has already given his son to die for your sins so that you can be right with God forever and adopted by God forever if he has already provided for you in this way you are meant to know beyond a shadow of a doubt that along with his son he will generously and faithfully provide you with all that you need today and going forward in your life

I wonder if we might believe that and grab hold of it say that say that for you across the board this morning you are exhausted and worn down for some reason maybe not just in your daily life but in your faith too living for God radically and joyfully seems too much you say to yourself I don't have the energy to be a Christian man husband father you say maybe secretly I don't feel I've got it in me to be a faithful Christian girl and maybe you secretly fear I don't know if God will help me I don't know or maybe today you know you should take a next step in obeying God there is a relationship that needs to change

I mustn't hold on to my money like I am doing at school or at work I need to stop hiding away the fact I'm a Christian but you worry what if life gets harder what if I get poorer what if I lose people's respect and you think will God be there for me are you losing the will to love and care for your children well does glad obedience to God feel beyond you do you wonder how long you can keep going for with all the disappointments in your life do you worry you'll end up spiritually dry and fall away from Christ are you desperately scared of dying and fear what's beyond listen to this the Lord will provide he who did not spare his own son but gave himself up for us all how will he not also along with him graciously give us all things he will he will provide us with every material and spiritual blessing we need to live and grow and keep going and serve him until we make it home and see him face to face he will give you the help you need to be a

Christian man he will give you the help you need to be a faithful Christian girl he will be there for you when you take radical steps of obedience when you change your relationship give money away when you stand up at school and say I follow Jesus and I'm not ashamed he will keep you as a Christian believer and when you die he will raise you from the dead and you will join your old brother Jesus Christ in a new creation he will graciously give us all things it's guaranteed because the Lord will provide he will provide for you look at the mountain look at the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ on this mountain the Lord will provide the Lord has provided the Lord will provide to those who belong to him you can trust him you must trust him entrust your life into the hands of the one who has and will provide let me lead us in a prayer let's pray together behold the lamb of

God who takes away the sin of the world for God so loved the world he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life thank you our father that you are the God who has provided and will provide you provided a lamb for the offering as Abraham obeyed you you provided your son as the great sacrificial offering for our sins and you promise that having not spared your son you will along with him graciously give us all things please make us men and women boys and girls who place our trust in you and give ourselves to you in radical obedience whatever the cost and may we together trust and know that you will give us all things we need so help us we pray in

[ 26 : 41 ] Jesus name amen amen Thank you.