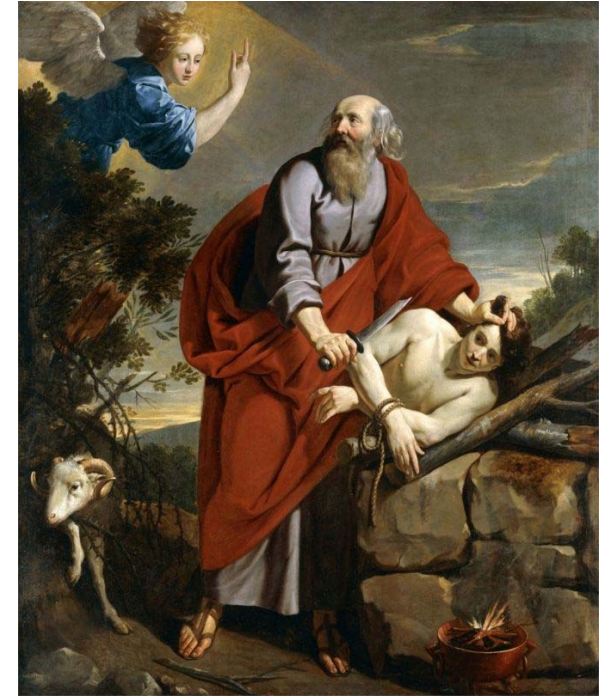


Lesson 9 - “God Will Provide Himself a Lamb”

Purpose: To better understand Heavenly Father’s sacrifice in offering his Son as they learn of Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice Isaac.



My lessons take a different path than the Gospel Doctrine lesson manual. The lesson outline looks closer at the doctrinal topics included in the lesson purpose and scripture block. The lessons are designed to challenge mature, active Latter-Day Saints who have a solid Gospel foundation and are looking for insights into the scriptures that will broaden their faith and understanding.

If you are interested in downloading the Powerpoint file, links to source material or reading posts about improving Gospel Doctrine class preparation, delivery and engagement, you can join my Facebook Group and have full access to the content posted there. The link is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/188904648521022/>

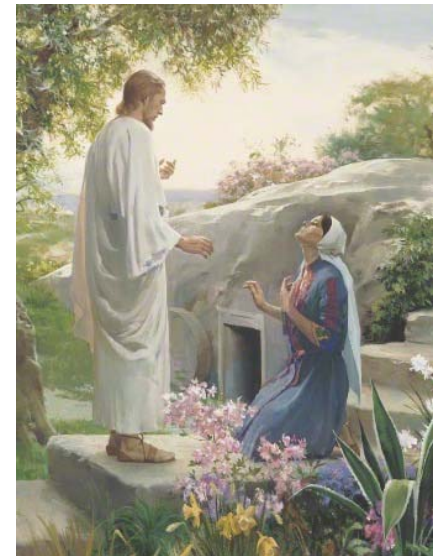
Last Week's Lesson Challenge

Abraham and Lot showed us two faithful followers of Jehovah making choices. It's not an example of good versus bad choices, but likely the choices we will make as faithful followers of Jesus Christ – the choice between good, better or best choices.

We want to make the best choices. Be aware this week of when you make choices that affect your eternal salvation. They can be as small as studying the scriptures or as big as going to your bishop and finding out what you need to do to again get a temple recommend and start attending the temple.

Would anyone share their experiences with being more aware of the choices that they make that affect their eternal salvation.

The Old Testament portrays Jehovah's efforts to prepare His children for the His coming among humankind, His ministry and His sacrifice through the Atonement, Crucifixion and Resurrection. Abraham and Issac's story is one of many that are a similitude of Jesus Christ's sacrifices, given to His children to help them understand the depth and breadth of the Savior's sacrifice.



Gaining a greater understanding of the impact of Abraham's sacrifice of his son, Issac, requires an understanding of the role that human sacrifice played both in Abraham's world and, chiefly, his own life.

Abraham 1 in the Pearl of Great Price tells the story of Abraham's escapade as a young man with human sacrifice.



Book of Abraham Facsimile 1

Abraham 1:1-4

1 In the land of the Chaldeans, at the residence of my fathers, I, Abraham, saw that it was needful for me to obtain another place of residence;

2 And, finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers.

3 It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me.

4 I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood according to the appointment of God unto the fathers concerning the seed.

Abraham refers “the fathers” in verses 2, 3 and 4. In these verses he is referring to the Ancient Prophets from Adam to Noah.

Abraham 1:5-11

5 My fathers, having turned from their righteousness, and from the holy commandments which the Lord their God had given unto them, unto the worshiping of the gods of the heathen, utterly refused to hearken to my voice;

6 For their hearts were set to do evil, and were wholly turned to the god of Elkenah, and the god of Libnah, and the god of Mahmackrah, and the god of Korash, and the god of Pharaoh, king of Egypt;

7 Therefore they turned their hearts to the sacrifice of the heathen in offering up their children unto these dumb idols, and hearkened not unto my voice, but endeavored to take away my life by the hand of the priest of Elkenah. The priest of Elkenah was also the priest of Pharaoh.

8 Now, at this time it was the custom of the priest of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to offer up upon the altar which was built in the land of Chaldea, for the offering unto these strange gods, men, women, and children.

9 And it came to pass that the priest made an offering unto the god of Pharaoh, and also unto the god of Shagreel, even after the manner of the Egyptians. Now the god of Shagreel was the sun.

10 Even the thank-offering of a child did the priest of Pharaoh offer upon the altar which stood by the hill called Potiphar's Hill, at the head of the plain of Olishem.

11 Now, this priest had offered upon this altar three virgins at one time, who were the daughters of Onitah, one of the royal descent directly from the loins of Ham. These virgins were offered up because of their virtue; they would not bow down to worship gods of wood or of stone, therefore they were killed upon this altar, and it was done after the manner of the Egyptians.

Abraham refers “my fathers” in verse 5. In this and the following verses, he is referring to Terah and other “fathers” of his clan.

Abraham 1:12-19

12 And it came to pass that the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me also, as they did those virgins upon this altar; and that you may have a knowledge of this altar, I will refer you to the representation at the commencement of this record.

13 It was made after the form of a bedstead, such as was had among the Chaldeans, and it stood before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and also a god like unto that of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

14 That you may have an understanding of these gods, I have given you the fashion of them in the figures at the beginning, which manner of figures is called by the Chaldeans Rahleenos, which signifies hieroglyphics.

15 And as they lifted up their hands upon me, that they might offer me up and take away my life, behold, I lifted up my voice unto the Lord my God, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and he filled me with the vision of the Almighty, and the angel of his presence stood by me, and immediately unloosed my bands;

16 And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away from thy father's house, and from all thy kinsfolk, into a strange land which thou knowest not of;

17 And this because they have turned their hearts away from me, to worship the god of Elkenah, and the god of Libnah, and the god of Mahmackrah, and the god of Korash, and the god of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; therefore I have come down to visit them, and to destroy him who hath lifted up his hand against thee, Abraham, my son, to take away thy life.

18 Behold, I will lead thee by my hand, and I will take thee, to put upon thee my name, even the Priesthood of thy father, and my power shall be over thee.

19 As it was with Noah so shall it be with thee; but through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God.

Jehovah delivers
Abraham from his
fathers and he
Priests Elkenah to
lead him to the
Promised Land.

Human sacrifice had evolved among Noah's descendants as an aberration of the Law of Sacrifice that had been taught to Adam and passed down through generations of Ancient Prophets. The people of Abraham's time practiced human sacrifice both as a form of worship and to rid themselves of those wouldn't bow down to their graven images such as the Three Virgins and Abraham as discussed in Abraham 1.

This event, where Abraham is almost sacrificed until Jehovah delivers him, is a precursor to the request that will be made of Abraham many years later when he is asked to sacrifice Issac.

What impact do you believe this event will have on Abraham as time goes on and as he is asked in the future to sacrifice Issac?

Genesis 15 – 17

- **15** - Abram desires offspring—The Lord promises him seed in number as the stars—Abram believes the promise—His seed will be strangers in Egypt—Then, after four generations, they will inherit Canaan.
- **16** - Sarai gives Hagar to Abram as his wife—Hagar flees from Sarai—An angel commands Hagar to return and submit herself to Sarai—Hagar bears Ishmael.
- **17** - Abram is commanded to be perfect—He will be a father of many nations—His name is changed to Abraham—The Lord covenants to be a God unto Abraham and his seed forever—Also, the Lord gives Abraham the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession—Circumcision becomes a token of the everlasting covenant between God and Abraham—Sarai's name is changed to Sarah—She will bear Isaac, with whom the Lord will establish His covenant—Abraham and the men of his house are circumcised.

In Chapter 16, Sarai, because she had not been able to bear children for Abraham, gives her Egyptian handmaid, Hagar, to Abraham as a second wife. Hagar conceives and Sarai is angry and lashes out at Hagar. Hagar flees from Sarai.

7 ¶ And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

9 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

10 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

11 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction.

12 And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

13 And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

14 Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

15 ¶ And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

Hagar has a great purpose in Jehovah's plan. While not on the Priesthood path that Sarah is, Hagar bears Ishmael as Abraham's son and she is promised by an angel of the Lord said to her *"I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude."*

Hagar returns to Abraham and Sarah and takes on her role in raising Ishmael. Later in Chapter 21, Hagar and Ishmael are forced from Abraham's home because Ishmael is "mocking" Issac. Abraham is grieved to have to remove Hagar and Ishmael.

Genesis 21:9-11

9 ¶ And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

Ishmael is known as the father of the Arab people.

It was suggested by Louis Massignon that the phrase, "Abrahamic religion" means that all these religions come from one spiritual source. Paul referred to Abraham as the "father of us all".[Rom. 4] There is a Quranic term, millat Ibrahim 'religion of Ibrahim', indicating that Islam sees itself as standing in a tradition of religious practice from Abraham. Jewish tradition claims that the Jews are descended from Abraham, and adherents of Judaism derive their spiritual identity from Abraham as the first of the three "fathers" or biblical Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

All the major Abrahamic religions claim a direct lineage to Abraham, although in Christianity this is understood in spiritual terms:

- Abraham is recorded in the Torah as the ancestor of the Israelites through his son Isaac, born to Sarah through a promise made in Genesis.
- Most Christians affirm the ancestral origin of the Jews in Abraham, but, as gentiles, they consider themselves as grafted into the family tree under the New Covenant: see significance of Abraham for Christians for details.
- It is the Islamic tradition that Muhammad, as an Arab, is descended from Abraham's son Ishmael. Jewish tradition also equates the descendants of Ishmael, Ishmaelites, with Arabs, as the descendants of Isaac by Jacob, who was also later known as Israel, are the Israelites.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abrahamic_religions

Chapter 21 – Sarah bears Isaac—He is circumcised

- 1 And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken.
- 2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.
- 3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.
- 4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.
- 5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.
- 6 ¶ And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.
- 7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.
- 8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.

How Old was Issac When Abraham Was Asked to Sacrifice Him?

Probably the most useful clue to how old Isaac was is Genesis 22:6.

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.

As they climb the mountain, Isaac is the one carrying the large pile of wood. Wood enough for a burnt sacrifice would have been fairly heavy. This fact tells us Isaac wasn't a small child when he was to be sacrificed; he was at least a healthy teenager. Isaac's age also adds an interesting dimension to the story. If he was strong enough to carry the wood up the mountain, then he was probably strong enough to resist being sacrificed and fend off Abraham if he had wanted to.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/how-old-was-Isaac.html>

Genesis 22:7-10

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.

9 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.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

Taking into consideration that Issac was likely a young adult to carry the altar wood up the mountain, Issac could have easily refused to allow Abraham to bound him and place him on the altar. Issac had to willingly do what Abraham asked him to do. Issac shows great faith in his father's faith in Jehovah to willingly allow himself to be sacrificed.

Genesis 22:11-14

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 Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

Genesis 15-19

15 ¶ And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

In the Book of Mormon, Jacob clearly teaches that Abraham's willingness to offer up Isaac is "a similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son" (Jacob 4:5). A similitude is an object, act, or event in physical reality which corresponds to (is similar to or is a simulation of) some greater spiritual reality.

Most readers of the Old Testament can immediately see the similarities between the test of Abraham and the sacrifice of the Father, but many miss the precise detail of this similitude that God used to teach about the future sacrifice of His only Son. The following are some of these significant details.

<https://www.lds.org/manual/old-testament-student-manual-genesis-2-samuel/genesis-18-23-abraham-a-model-of-faith-and-righteousness?lang=eng>

- Abraham obviously was a type or similitude of the Father. Interestingly enough, his name, Abram, means “exalted father,” and Abraham means “father of a great multitude” (see Genesis 17:5). Both are names appropriate of Heavenly Father.

<https://www.lds.org/manual/old-testament-student-manual-genesis-2-samuel/genesis-18-23-abraham-a-model-of-faith-and-righteousness?lang=eng>

- Isaac was a type of the Son of God. One of the meanings of his name is “he shall rejoice.”
 - Like Jesus, he was the product of a miraculous birth.
 - Isaac’s birth certainly was not as miraculous as the birth of Jesus through Mary, but at age ninety, Sarah too was a woman for whom birth was not possible by all usual standards. Yet, through the intervention of God, she conceived and bore a son.
 - Paul called Isaac the “only begotten son” (Hebrews 11:17) when he referred to this event.

<https://www.lds.org/manual/old-testament-student-manual-genesis-2-samuel/genesis-18-23-abraham-a-model-of-faith-and-righteousness?lang=eng>

- The Lord not only asked Abraham to perform the act of similitude of His own future actions but indicated that it had to be in a place specified by Him.
 - This place was Moriah, “upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Genesis 22:2). Today Mount Moriah is a major hill of Jerusalem. The site known traditionally as the place where Abraham offered Isaac is now the site of the Dome of the Rock, a beautiful Moslem mosque.
 - A few hundred yards to the north on a higher point of that same hill system is another world-famous site known as Gordon’s Calvary. Its Hebrew name was Golgotha.
 - Not only did Abraham perform the similitude, but he performed it in the same area in which the Father would make the sacrifice of His Son.

<https://www.lds.org/manual/old-testament-student-manual-genesis-2-samuel/genesis-18-23-abraham-a-model-of-faith-and-righteousness?lang=eng>

- When they arrived at Moriah, the Genesis account says, “Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son” (Genesis 22:6).
 - The Joseph Smith Translation, however, reads, “laid it upon his back” (JST, Genesis 22:7).
 - Some have seen in this action a similarity to Christ’s carrying of the cross upon His shoulders on the way to His Crucifixion (see Clarke, Bible Commentary, 1:139; John 19:17).

Elder Melvin J. Ballard (1873–1939) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote in an article titled “The Sacramental Covenant,” in the Improvement Era, Oct. 1919:

“They ascended the mountain, gathered the stones together, and placed the wood upon them. Then Isaac was bound, hand and foot, kneeling upon the altar. I presume Abraham, like a true father, must have given his son his farewell kiss, his blessing, his love, and his soul must have been drawn out in that hour of agony toward his son who was to die by the hand of his own father. Every step proceeded until the cold steel was drawn, and the hand raised that was to strike the blow to let out the life’s blood when the angel of the Lord said: “It is enough.”

Our Father in Heaven went through all that and more, for in his case the hand was not stayed. He loved his Son, Jesus Christ, better than Abraham ever loved Isaac, for our Father had with him his Son, our Redeemer, in the eternal worlds, faithful and true for ages, standing in a place of trust and honor, and the Father loved him dearly, and yet he allowed this well-beloved Son to descend from his place of glory and honor, where millions did him homage, down to the earth, a condescension that is not within the power of man to conceive. He came to receive the insult, the abuse, and the crown of thorns. God heard the cry of his Son in that moment of great grief and agony, in the garden when, it is said, the pores of his body opened and drops of blood stood upon him, and he cried out: “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me.”

<https://www.lds.org/new-era/1976/01/classic-discourses-from-the-general-authorities-the-sacramental-covenant?lang=eng>

This Week's Lesson Challenge

This week's challenge is two fold.

First, as we study the Old Testament, look for instances where the events you study are in the similitude of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and are designed to help us better understand the eternal nature of the Savior's sacrifice.

Second, the story of Abraham and Issac is a story of great faith, both Abraham's and Issac's. What can we do each day to increase our faith in Jesus Christ and his sacrifice or us and all humankind?.