

[Lesson 9](#): “God Will Provide Himself a Lamb” (See L9 [Study Guide](#))

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

1. Abraham is nearly sacrificed by the false priests of Pharaoh.

- Read and discuss [Abraham 1:1, 5–20](#).

“Part of this lesson focuses on God’s command that Abraham sacrifice Isaac. To help [us] understand the significance of this command and the depth of Abraham’s faith, the lesson begins with a brief discussion of Abraham’s experience when he, as a young man, was almost sacrificed by a false priest of Pharaoh.” (*Lesson Manual*)

- Abraham 1:1, 5-8, 12. “My fathers, ... turned from their righteousness ... [to] worshiping ... gods of the heathen”.

What did Pharaoh’s false priests try to do to Abraham?

- Abraham 1:15-16, 20.

“I lifted up my voice unto the Lord my God, and the Lord hearkened ... and the angel ... unloosed my bands”.

How might Abraham’s experience on the altar of the false priests have helped him for future trials?

How can our trials help us prepare for future difficulties?

How would this affect his feelings when God commands him to sacrifice his only son Isaac?

2. Abraham has children through Hagar and Sarah.

- Read and discuss [Genesis 15–17](#) and [Genesis 21](#).

- Genesis 15:1-6. “And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless ...?”

- Genesis 16:1-3; [D&C 132:34-35](#). “God commanded Abraham, and Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham to wife”. (D&C)

†1. Sarah and Hagar

- Genesis 16:10-11. “And the angel of the Lord said unto [Hagar], I will multiply thy seed exceedingly”.

- Genesis 17:15-16, 19, 21. God said, “thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: ... and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him.”

- Genesis 17:17. “Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed [HEB (also) rejoiced. JST Gen. 17:23 rejoiced]”.

From this, what can we learn about how God fulfills his promises?

- [Genesis 17:19–21](#). How were God’s promises for Isaac different from those for Ishmael?

3. God commands Abraham to sacrifice Isaac.

- Read and discuss [Genesis 22](#).

- Genesis 22:1. “And ... God did tempt [HEB test, or prove] Abraham”.

Why would this have been a difficult test for Abraham?

- Genesis 22:2-3. “And Abraham rose up early in the morning ... and went”.

What can we learn from Abraham about faith and obedience? (See [Hebrews 11:17–19](#) and [James 2:21–23](#).)

- Genesis 22:3-10. “Abraham ... bound Isaac ... and laid him on the altar upon the wood.” †2. Elder Dallin H. Oaks

- Genesis 22:8, 13. What are some similarities between Abraham’s experience and Heavenly Father’s?

What is the greatest difference? In what way can we be compared to Isaac?

If Isaac represents us, whom does the ram in the thicket represent?

How do these comparisons help you better understand Heavenly Father’s love for you in sacrificing His Son?

†3. Elder Dallin H. Oaks †4. Elder Jeffrey H. Holland

†Similitude. **The Sacrifice of Isaac—A Similitude (OTSM)** †6. Elder Melvin J. Ballard

- Genesis 22:11-12. The “angel of the Lord called unto [Abraham] ... and he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad”.

What did Abraham prove through this test? How does it feel when you are faithful to God?

- Genesis 22:15-18. God said, “thou ... hast not withheld thy son, thine only son”.

Why is Isaac referred to as Abraham’s only son?

“Isaac was the son through whom the covenant would continue. This reference also emphasizes the parallel between Isaac and our Savior, the Only Begotten Son of the Father.” (*Lesson Manual*)

What blessings were assured to Abraham (and us, his seed) through the Abrahamic Covenant?

What are our responsibilities as heirs of the Abrahamic covenant? (See [Old Testament Lesson 7](#).)

Next Week: L10 Birthright Blessings; Marriage in the Covenant; See L10: [Class Member Study Guide](#).

(You can download a free LDS Institute manual at: [Old Testament Student Manual: Religion 301 and 302](#).) † •

†1. **Sarah and Hagar:** “In her old age, Sarah gave Hagar, her maid, to Abraham. Modern revelation indicates that Sarah thereby ‘administered unto Abraham according to the law’ (D&C 132:65), and **more recent scholarship has confirmed the widespread legal obligation of the childless wife in the ancient Near East to provide her husband with a second wife.**” (*Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 1260)

†2. **Elder Dallin H. Oaks:** “When they came to the prescribed place, Abraham built an altar and laid wood upon it. Then, the Bible says, ‘Abraham ... bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood’ (Genesis 22:9). What did Isaac think when Abraham did such a strange thing? **The Bible mentions no struggle or objection. Isaac’s silence can be explained only in terms of his trust in and obedience to his father**” (“[Bible Stories and Personal Protection](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 37).

†3. **Elder Dallin H. Oaks:** “This story ... shows the goodness of God in protecting Isaac and in providing a substitute so he would not have to die. **Because of our sins and our mortality, we, like Isaac, are condemned to death. When all other hope is gone, our Father in Heaven provides the Lamb of God, and we are saved by his sacrifice**” (“[Bible Stories and Personal Protection](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 37).

†4. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** “Nephi testified that **‘all things ... are the typifying of [Christ].’** The literary evidence of that is seen throughout the holy scriptures.” (*Christ and the New Covenant*, 159)

†5. **Elder Melvin J. Ballard:** “**I think as I read the story of Abraham’s sacrifice of his son Isaac that our Father is trying to tell us what it cost him to give his Son as a gift to the world...** I imagine it was about all Father Abraham could do to keep from showing his great grief and sorrow ... but he and his son trudged along three days toward the appointed place, Isaac carrying the fagots that were to consume the sacrifice. The two travelers rested, finally, at the mountainside, and the men who had accompanied them were told to remain while Abraham and his son started up the hill.

...
“It must have pierced the heart of Father Abraham to hear the trusting and confiding son say: ‘You have forgotten the sacrifice.’ Looking at the youth, his son of promise, the poor father could only say: ‘The Lord will provide.’

“They ascended the mountain, gathered the stones together, and placed the fagots 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.’

...
“In the case of our Father, the knife was not stayed, but it fell, and the life’s blood of his Beloved Son went out. His Father looked on with great grief and agony over his Beloved Son, until there seems to have come a moment when even our Savior cried out in despair: ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’

“**In that hour I think I can see our dear Father behind the veil looking upon these dying struggles until even he could not endure it any longer; and, like the mother who bids farewell to her dying child, has to be taken out of the room, so as not to look upon the last struggles, so he bowed his head, and hid in some part of his universe, his great heart almost breaking for the love that he had for his Son.** Oh, in that moment when he might have saved his Son, I thank him and praise him that he did not fail us, for he had not only the love of his Son in mind, but he also had love for us. I rejoice that he did not interfere, and that his love for us made it possible for him to endure to look upon the sufferings of his Son and give him finally to us, our Savior and our Redeemer. Without him, without his sacrifice, we would have remained, and we would never have come glorified into his presence. And so this is what it cost, in part, for our Father in Heaven to give the gift of his Son unto men.

“**How do I appreciate the gift? If I only knew what it cost our Father to give his Son, if I only knew how essential it was that I should have that Son and that I should receive the spiritual life that comes from that Son, I am sure I would always be present at the sacrament table to do honor to the gift that has come unto us,** for I realize that the Father has said that he, the Lord, our God, is a jealous God—jealous lest we should ignore and forget and slight his greatest gift unto us.” (“[Classic Discourses from the General Authorities: The Sacramental Covenant](#),” *Ensign*, Jan. 1976.)

Recommended Reading:

1. Elder Melvin J. Ballard, “[Classic Discourses from the General Authorities: The Sacramental Covenant](#),” *Ensign*, Jan. 1976.

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†Similitude. The Sacrifice of Isaac—A Similitude (Old Testament Student Manual)

“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. (For a discussion of why the Lord uses similitudes, see Enrichment Section C, “Symbolism and Typology in the Old Testament.”)

“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.

“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.

“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.

“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.

“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).

“Isaac voluntarily submitted to Abraham. This important parallel is often overlooked. The Old Testament does not give enough detail to indicate

exactly how old Isaac was at the time of this event, but it is possible that he was an adult. Immediately following the account of the sacrifice on Mount Moriah is recorded the statement that Sarah died at the age of 127 (see Genesis 23:1). Thus, Isaac would have been 37 at the time of her death. Even if the journey to Moriah had happened several years before Sarah’s death, Isaac could have been in his thirties, as was the Savior at the time of His Crucifixion. Nevertheless, Isaac’s exact age is not really important. What is significant is that Abraham was well over a hundred years old and Isaac was most likely a strong young man who could have put up a fierce resistance had he chosen to do so. In fact, Isaac submitted willingly to what his father intended, just as the Savior would do.

“Once the event was over and all ended happily, Abraham named the place Jehovah-jireh, which the King James Version translates as “in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen” (Genesis 22:14). Adam Clarke, citing other scholars, said that the proper translation should be “on this mount the Lord shall be seen.” Clarke then concluded: “From this it appears that the sacrifice offered by Abraham was understood to be a representative one, and a tradition was kept up that Jehovah should be seen in a sacrificial way on this mount. And this renders ... more than probable ... that Abraham offered Isaac on that very mountain on which, in the fulness of time, Jesus suffered.” (Bible Commentary, 1:141.) Jesus was sentenced to death within the walls of the Antonia fortress, which was only about a hundred yards from the traditional site of Abraham’s sacrifice. He was put to death at Golgotha, part of the same ridge system as Moriah.

“Scholars not only have noted the significance of the site for the sacrifice of Jesus Himself but also have pointed out that it related to the site of Solomon’s temple where the sacrifices under the Mosaic dispensation took place. “The place of sacrifice points with peculiar clearness [to] Mount Moriah, upon which under the legal economy all the typical sacrifices were offered to Jehovah; ... that by this one true sacrifice the shadows of the typical sacrifices might be rendered both real and true” (Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary, 1:1:253; emphasis added). (In Old Testament Student Manual: Religion 301 and 302, pp. 77-78)

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