

Old Testament Lesson 8

LIVING RIGHTEOUSLY IN A WICKED WORLD

Prepared by Duane S. Crowther, February 2002

1. Abram's Travels

A. *Last lesson*: From Ur, to Haran, to Canaan, near Bethel [Gen. 12:8].

1. Note the **Lord's appearance** to Abram, where he says: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." [Gen. 12:7; Abra. 2:19]

B. *Gen. 12:9-20*; *Abra. 2:21-25*: Abram and his wife Sarai travel to Egypt to escape the famine, then return to Bethel. *Gen. 12:4*: Abram is 75 or older (*Abra. 2:14*: Abram is 62 or older), Sarai is 10 years younger [Gen. 17:17], yet still is quite attractive. [Gen. 12:11, 14, *Abra. 2:22*]

1. *Abra. 2:22-25*: Abram's telling the Pharaoh that Sarai was his sister, rather than his wife, commanded by the Lord: "**The Lord said** . . . Let her say unto the Egyptians, she is thy sister, and thy soul shall live." Pharaoh took Sarai into his house, but the Lord plagued Pharaoh to cause him to release her. Pharaoh sends them out of Egypt, back to Canaan.

2. See *Gen. 20:1-18*, when a similar situation occurs later, in Gerar. From this account we learn that Sarai really is Abram's half-sister: "Yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife." [Gen. 20:12]

C. *Gen. 13:1-17*: Abram returned north to near Bethel [Beth-el, means *House of God*. It was formally called Luz (Gen. 28:19)] [*Map 10*]

2. Abraham and Lot Separate; Saving Lot from the Northern Kings

A. *Gen. 13:5-13*: Abram and Lot separate: Lot chooses the fertile Jordan River plain, but "pitched his tent toward Sodom" [Gen. 13:12], a wicked city. [Gen. 13:13; *Map 10*] Abram remained in the hills.

B. *Gen. 13:14-17*: **The Lord's promises to Abram**: (1) "All the land that thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. (2) And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth" [many]. (3) Walk through the length and breadth of the land, "for I will give it to thee."

C. *Gen. 13:18*: Abram moves to "the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron." [*Map 10*]

D. *Gen. 14:1-9*: Warring kings battle: five against four [Gen. 14:9]. Chedorlaomer and Amraphel are from Elam and Shinar, far to the northeast, in and east of the Tigris-Euphrates valley. [*Map 9*]

E. *Gen. 14:10-12*: The northern kings sacked Sodom and Gomorrah, took Lot and his goods, and started journeying northward with their captives and loot.

F. *Gen. 14:13-16*: Abram took 318 of his trained servants, pursued the invaders 125 miles north to Dan, then another 50 miles northeast to Hobath (just west of Damascus). He freed Lot and slew Chedorlaomer and the other kings, then brought Lot and his goods back southward. [*Map 10*]

G. *Gen. 14:17-24*: The southern kings held a "welcome home" party. We learn about Melchizedek: (1) pronounced Mel-kiz-uh-deck], (2) he was king of Salem [the *Tel el-Amarna Tablets* of c. 1400 call it "Uru-Salem," which later became Jerusalem], (3) he was "the priest of the most high God," (4) he blessed Abram and praised God for his victory, and (5) Abram paid to him tithes of all he possessed. See Heb. 5:6; 7:1-3; *JST Gen. 14:17-40*; *JST Heb. 7:3*, *Alma 13:14-19*; D&C 84:14; 107:1-4.

3. Abram Receives Visions of the Lord and Is Richly Blessed

A. *Gen. 15:1-21*: *First vision*: (1) The Lord tells Abram "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great

reward” [v. 1]. (2) The Lord promises childless Abram that he will be a father: “he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir” [v. 4]. (3) The Lord promises his seed will be as great in number as the stars in the heavens [v. 5]. *Second manifestation*: (4) “Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years” [a prophecy of Israel in Egypt following the days of Joseph] [v. 13], and (5) “afterward they shall come out with great substance [the exodus, under Moses] [v. 14] and in the fourth generation they will return to the land of Canaan [v. 16; see footnote 16a] . (6) “Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.” [He died at the age of 175: *Gen. 25:7-10*] [v. 15] *Third manifestation, the same day*: (7) the Lord defines in a covenant the boundaries of the inheritance of Abram’s seed: “from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates” [v. 18]. See *Maps 2 and 9*.

B. Abraham becomes the father of two sons:

1. *Gen. 16:1-16*: At the age of 86 [Gen. 16:16], Abraham’s first son, Ishmael [v. 11] is born to Hagar, Sarai’s maid, whom he fathered under Sarai’s direction. The Lord tells Hagar through an angel “I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude” [v. 10] (The Ishmaelites became a wandering race which lived by plunder and intermarried with the nations of Canaan.)
2. *Gen. 21:1-8*. Abraham and Sarah became the parents of Isaac.

4. The Abrahamic Covenant; Names Are Changed to Abraham and Sarah

A. *Gen. 17:1*: The Lord’s appearance to Abram when he was 99 years old [Gen. 17:1-22]: “I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.” *Then, covenants, promises and prophecies*:

B. *Gen. 17:2-4*: (1) “I will make my covenant between me and thee, . . . my covenant is with thee” [vv. 2-3] and (2) I “will multiply thee exceedingly” [v. 2] and (3) “thou shalt be a father of many nations.” [v. 4]

C. *Gen. 17:5*: (4) “Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but **thy name shall be Abraham**; for a father of many nations have I made thee.” *Gen. 17:15-16*: (5) “As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but **Sarah shall her name be**.”

D. *Gen. 17:6*: (6) “I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and (7) I will make nations of thee, (8) and kings shall come out of thee.”

E. *Gen. 17:7*: (9) “I will establish my covenant between me and thee (10) and thy seed after thee in their generations, (11) for an everlasting covenant: (12) **to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee**.”

F. *Gen. 17:8*: (13) “I will give unto thee, (14) and to thy seed after thee, . . . all the land of Canaan, (15) for an everlasting possession; and (16) I will be their God.”

G. *Gen. 17:9-10*: (17) “Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore: thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. (18) This is [the sign of] my covenant: . . . Every man child among you shall be circumcised.” *Details explained: Gen. 17:11-14*. (19) “That soul [who is not circumcised] shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.” [v. 14]

H. *Gen. 17:15-19: About Sarah*: (20) “I will give thee a son also of her, and (21) she shall be a mother of nations; (22) kings of people shall be of her.” (23) Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and (24) I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, (25) and with his seed after him.”

I. *Gen. 17:20-21*: (26) “As for Ishmael, . . . I have blessed him, (27) and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; (28) twelve princes shall he beget, and (29) I will make of him a great nation.” (30) “But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, (31) which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time next year.”

J. *Gen. 17:24*: Abraham was 99 when he was circumcised, and Ishmael was 13 years old.