

Old Testament Lesson 9

“GOD WILL PROVIDE HIMSELF A LAMB”

Prepared by Duane S. Crowther, March 2001

“My people must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them, even the glory of Zion.” (D&C 136:31)

1. Events in the “mid-life” of Abraham (from age 100 to 137)

A. *Genesis 18:1-15*: Three holy men [*The Lord and two angels?*] visited Abraham and Sarah, promised them Sarah would have a son.

B. *Genesis 18:16-33*: Abraham negotiated with the Lord, trying to save possibly righteous people in Sodom and Gomorrah; bargained the Lord down from 50 to 10.

C. *Genesis 19:1-11*: Two angels came to the home of Lot. Sodomites wanted to “know” them and Lot’s daughters. The angels blinded them to turn them away. [*See footnote 5a.*]

D. *Genesis 19:12-30*: The angels led Lot, his wife and two daughters out of Sodom. Lot pleaded to go to Zoar, so they agreed not to destroy that city. His wife looked back and was turned to a pillar of salt. The Lord destroyed Sodom [*see footnote 24c*], Gomorrah, and other cities of the plain. Lot and his daughters left Zoar and dwelled in a cave.

E. *Genesis 19:30-38*: Lot’s two daughters seduced him and lay with him to become pregnant; they each bore sons who became fathers of nations: *Moab* [the Moabites] and *Benammi* [the Ammonites]. [*See footnotes 31a, 35a.*]

F. *Genesis 20:1-18*: Abraham moved south to Gerar [*see maps 2, 10*]. Abimelech took Sarah, who has said she was Abraham’s sister; the Lord closed all the wombs of his house; appeared to Abimelech in a dream. [*Compare with Genesis 12:9-20: Abram and Sarai in Egypt.*]

G. *Genesis 21:1-7*: Isaac was born. Abraham was 100 [v. 5]; Sarah was 90 [Gen. 17:17].

H. *Genesis 21:8-21*: Ishmael [then about age 15: see Genesis 17:24-25] mocked at the feast celebrating Isaac’s weaning; Hagar and Ishmael were sent into the wilderness. Dying for lack of water, they were saved by an angel. Ishmael became an archer, lived in the wilderness of Paran [*map 2, C3*], took an Egyptian wife.

I. *Genesis 21:22-34*: Abraham swore to Abimelech concerning water rights; moved to Beersheba [*map 10*].

J. *Genesis 22:1-19*: The Lord tested Abraham by commanding him to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. They traveled from Beersheba to the land of Moriah [Mt. Moriah is the site where the temple was built in Jerusalem: see 2 Sam. 24:18-25; 1 Chr. 21:18-27; 2 Chr. 3:1] As Abraham was about to take Isaac’s life, the angel of the Lord told him to substitute a ram caught in the thicket.

1. Promises of the Abrahamic covenant were repeated: (1) I will bless thee; (2) I will multiply thy seed as the stars and sands; (3) thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; (4) in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed [vv. 15-18] [*Compare Genesis 17:1-24.*]

K. *Genesis 23:1-20*: Sarah died at age 127 [v. 1] [Abraham was 137; Isaac was 37.] Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah, in Hebron [v. 19], and buried her there. [*See map 10.*]

2. Abraham’s Experiences: from Scriptures Other than Genesis:

A. *JST Genesis 17:3-7: People in Abraham’s day were drifting into apostasy*: God told Abraham: “My people have gone astray from my precepts, and have not kept mine ordinances, . . .” *Examples of changes being made*: anointing, baptism, washing of children, blood of sprinkling, have

said that the blood of the righteous Abel was shed for sins.

B. *JST Genesis 17:11-12: Little children not accountable*: “I will establish a covenant of circumcision with thee; . . . children are not accountable before me until they are eight years old.”

C. *JST Genesis 19:9-15: Lot plead with the angels that he not have to send out his daughters to the sodomites*: “Let me, I pray you, plead with my brethren that I may not bring them out unto you; and ye shall not do unto them as seemeth good in your eyes; for God will not justify his servant in this thing.” [See Judges 19-21 where Benjamite “sons of belial” molest and kill the concubine of a Jewish Levite in Gibeah. All Israel arises against Benjamin, when they refuse to deliver up the men of Gibeah. Twenty-two thousand of the men of Benjamin are slain.]

D. *D&C 132:34-35: God commanded that Abraham have a child with Hagar*: “God commanded Abraham, and Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham to wife. And why did she do it? Because this was the law; and from Hagar sprang many people. This, therefore, was fulfilling, among other things, the promises. Was Abraham, therefore, under condemnation? Nay; for I, the Lord, commanded it.”

E. *Jacob 4:5: Abraham’s offering up Isaac is a similitude of God the Father offering up Jesus*: “It was accounted unto Abraham in the wilderness to be obedient unto the commands of God in offering up his son Isaac, which is a similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son.”

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.

“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.*” [Ensign, November 1992, p. 37]

Elder Hugh B. Brown: God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac because “Abraham needed to learn something about Abraham” [in Truman G. Madsen, *The Highest In Us*, 1978, p. 49]

F. *Hebrews 11:8-19: Abraham and Sarah’s acts of faith*: By faith: (1) Abraham obeyed the call to go out into a place which he should later receive for an inheritance. (2) He sojourned in a strange country. (3) He looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (4) Through faith Sara received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age. (5) [Through Isaac] sprang seed as innumerable as the stars and the sands. (6) These all died in faith, not having received ‘the fulfillment of] the promises, “but were persuaded of them, and embraced them.” (7) Now “they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly.” (8) “God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.” (9) “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: . . . accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.”

G. *James 2:21-23: Abraham’s belief in God was imputed for righteousness*: “Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered his son upon the altar? . . . Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of God.”

H. *D&C 101:4-5*: [concerning the saints who were suffering persecution in Missouri] “***They must needs be chastened and tried, even as Abraham***, who was commanded to offer up his only son.” [See v. 5, 35-38; 122:5-7]

I. *D&C 132:29-37: An extensive passage on Abraham*, explaining various aspects of his righteousness.

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