

LESSON 8
Genesis 18-23

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED
GENESIS
CHAPTER 18

Abraham entertains three holy men—They promise that Sarah shall have a son—Abraham will command his children to do justice and judgment—The Lord appears to him—They discuss the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

- 1 AND the LORD ^aappeared unto him (Abraham) in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;
- 2 And he lift(ed) up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three ^amen stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the (his) tent door, and ^bbowed himself toward the ground, (Thereafter Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham as a wife, and she bore Ishmael, so he had seed in that sense. But, that was not to be the royal lineage, and so three men visited Abraham. The Inspired Version of the Bible says they were Holy Men. The account in the King James Version is garbled; it calls them angels. **It seems perfectly clear to us that they were the First Presidency of the Church.** They visited Abraham to give him blessings and are the ones who said that his wife would have a child. That was on the occasion when Sarah laughed and was confused. Bruce R. McConkie, Studies in Scripture, 3:56. **These three men were mortals. They had bodies and were able to eat, to bathe, and sit and rest from their weariness. Not one of these three was the Lord.** Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, 1:16.)
- 3 And said, My ~~Lord~~, (brethren,) if now I have found favour in thy (your) sight, pass not away, I pray thee, (you) from thy servant:
- 4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and ^awash your feet, and ^brest yourselves under the tree:
- 5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and ^acomfort (or sustain) ye your hearts; after that ye (you) shall pass on: for therefore are ye ^bcome to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.
- 6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.
- 7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.
- 8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it (them) before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. (Such hospitality was customary during this time.)
- 9 ¶ And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.
- 10 (And one of them blessed Abraham) And he said, I will certainly return unto thee (from my journey, and lo) according to the time of life; and, lo, ^aSarah thy wife shall have a ^bson. And Sarah heard it (him) in the tent door, which was behind him.
- 11 (And) Now Abraham and Sarah were (being) ^aold and well stricken in age; and (therefore) it (had) ^bceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.
- 12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am (have) waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being ^aold also? (The laughter was most likely not from disbelief, but from joy and wonder.)
- 13 And the (angel of the) LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah ^alaugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am ^bold?
- 14 **Is any thing too ^ahard for the LORD?** At the time appointed(, behold,) I will return unto thee (from my journey, which the Lord hath sent me; and), according to the ^btime of life, and (thou mayest know that) Sarah shall have a son.
- 15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.
- 16 ¶ And the men (angels) rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with

them to bring them on the way.

17 And the (angel of the) LORD said, Shall I ^ahide from Abraham that thing which I (the Lord will) do (for him);

18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty ^anation, and all the ^bnations of the earth shall be ^cblessed in him? (The Lord doesn't want such a wicked city to be so close to Abraham's son and family so he destroys the cities.)

19 For I ^aknow him, that he will ^bcommand his ^cchildren and his ^dhousehold after him, and they shall ^ekeep the way of the LORD, to do justice and ^fjudgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he ~~hath~~ (has) spoken of him.

20 And the (angel of the) LORD said (unto Abraham, the Lord said unto us), Because the ^acry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their ^bsin is very grievous, (I will destroy them);

21 I will (send you, and ye shall) go down now, and see (that their iniquities are rewarded unto them. And ye shall have all things done) whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if (ye do it) not, I will know. (it shall be upon your heads; for I will destroy them, and you shall know that I will do it, for it shall be before your eyes.)

22 ^aAnd the (angels which were holy) men, (and were sent forth after the order of God,) (These men are on a priesthood assignment. They are most likely the First Presidency.) turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham ^bstood yet before the LORD, (remembering the things which had been told him).

23 ¶ And Abraham drew near (to Sodom), and said (unto the Lord, calling upon his name, saying), Wilt thou also ^adestroy the ^brighteous with the ^cwicked? (Wilt thou not spare them?)

24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not ^aspare the place for the fifty righteous that are (may be) therein? (Spare the city for the sake of 50)

25 (O may) That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked. (O God, may) that be far from thee: (for) Shall not the ^aJudge of all the earth do right?

26 And the LORD said (unto Abraham), If I (thou) find(est) in Sodom fifty ^arighteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. (The righteous are protecting the wicked from destruction.)

27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which (is able to destroy the city, and lay all the people in) ~~am~~ but ^adust and ashes:

28 (Wilt the Lord spare them) Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, (their wickedness,) If I find there forty and five (righteous? And he said,) I will not destroy ~~it~~ (but spare them). (for 45)

29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not ~~do~~ (destroy) it for forty's sake. (for 40)

30 And he said (again) unto ~~him~~ (the Lord), Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. (?) And he said, I will not ~~do~~ it, (destroy them) if I (thou shalt) find thirty there. (for 30)

31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: (wilt thou destroy them if) Peradventure there shall ~~be~~ twenty (be) found there. (?) And he said, I will not destroy ~~it~~ (them) for twenty's sake. (for 20)

32 And ~~he~~ (Abraham) said (unto the Lord), Oh, let not the Lord be ^aangry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. (?) And ~~he~~ (the Lord) said, I will ^bnot destroy ~~it~~ (them) for ten's sake. (And the Lord ceased speaking with Abraham.) (for 10)

33 And the LORD ~~awent his way~~, as soon as he had left communing with (the Lord,) Abraham (went his way. And it came to pass that) and Abraham returned unto his ~~place~~ (tent). (Our world is now much the same as it was in the days of the Nephite prophet who said: ... "if it were not for the prayers of the righteous... ye would even now be visited with utter destruction..." Of course, there are many many

upright and faithful who live all the commandments and whose lives and prayers keep the world from destruction.” Alma 10:22. Spencer W. Kimball, CR, Apr 1971, p. 7)

Note: The topic of same-sex attraction requires great sensitivity. As your class discusses this issue, ensure that it is done with kindness, compassion, and civility. Explain that in order to understand why homosexual behavior is a serious sin, we must understand the doctrines behind the purposes of marriage and family in Heavenly Father’s plan. To help students understand these doctrines, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (you may want to provide a copy for each student). Ask students to listen for doctrines that can help us understand why homosexual behavior is a serious sin. “We encourage all to bear in mind our Heavenly Father’s purposes in creating the earth and providing for our mortal birth and experience here as His children. ‘God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth’ (Genesis 1:27–28). ‘Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh’ (Genesis 2:24). Marriage between a man and a woman was instituted by God and is central to His plan for His children and for the well-being of society. Strong families, guided by a loving mother and father, serve as the fundamental institution for nurturing children, instilling faith, and transmitting to future generations the moral strengths and values that are important to civilization and crucial to eternal salvation. “Changes in the civil law do not, indeed cannot, change the moral law that God has established. God expects us to uphold and keep His commandments regardless of divergent opinions or trends in society. His law of chastity is clear: sexual relations are proper only between a man and a woman who are legally and lawfully wedded as husband and wife. We urge you to review and teach Church members the doctrine contained in ‘The Family: A Proclamation to the World.’ “Just as those who promote same-sex marriage are entitled to civility, the same is true for those who oppose it” (“Church Instructs Leaders on Same -Sex Marriage,” Jan. 10, 2014, mormonnewsroom. org).

- What are some doctrines that help us understand why homosexual behavior is a serious sin?

- In what ways does homosexual behavior go against Heavenly Father’s plan? Explain that those who experience same-sex attraction can enjoy all the blessings of the gospel as they keep the covenants they have made with God. As they choose to live the law of chastity, they can have pure and virtuous thoughts and avoid lusting. They can counsel with trusted family members and their bishops or branch presidents about how to remain sexually pure. Remind students that any member of the Church who breaks the law of chastity must repent, which includes confession to a bishop or branch president, who will lovingly help him or her obtain forgiveness from the Lord. The Lord loves all His children and wants them to repent and to be clean from sin. Invite a student to read Genesis 18:22–26 aloud.

Ask the class to follow along and look for what Abraham asked the Lord concerning Sodom.

- How did the Lord respond to Abraham’s questions? Explain that Abraham continued to ask the Lord whether He would spare Sodom if any righteous people could be found there.

Invite students to read Genesis 18:27–33 silently and look for the Lord’s responses to Abraham’s questions.

- How did the Lord respond to Abraham’s righteous concern for others?

- What principle about the Lord can we identify from His response to Abraham? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: The Lord listens to our righteous pleas for others.)
- How can remembering and believing this principle help you when you have a family member or friend who needs help?
- When have you experienced the Lord answering your righteous prayers on behalf of others?

Encourage students to set a goal to pray for those people who they know need Heavenly Father's help. Invite them to look for a fulfillment of Abraham's requests to save the righteous as they study Genesis 19 in the next lesson.

Genesis 19

SCRIPTURES:

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED GENESIS CHAPTER 19

Lot entertains holy men—The men of Sodom seek to abuse Lot's guests, and are smitten with blindness—Lot sent out of Sodom—The Lord rains brimstone and fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah—Lot's daughters preserve his seed in the land.

- 1 AND (it came to pass, that) there came ~~atwo~~ (three)^bangels (Heb messengers) to Sodom ~~at even~~ (in the evening); and Lot sat in the ~~gate~~ (door of his house, in the city) of Sodom. And Lot seeing ~~them~~ (the angels,) rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;
- 2 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and ^awash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.
- 3 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a ^afeast, and did bake ^bunleavened bread, and they did eat.
- 4 ¶ But before they lay down (to rest), the men of the city, ~~even the men~~ of Sodom, compassed the house round, (even men which were) both old and young, ~~all~~ (even) the people from every quarter:
- 5 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where *are* the men which came in (un)to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may ^aknow them. (Know is used both in Hebrew and English in this kind of context as a euphemism in place of a sexual word.)
- 6 And Lot went out ~~at~~ (of) the door unto them, and shut the door after him,
- 7 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. (Lot tries to talk the people out of doing their wicked deeds.)
- 9a And they said (unto him), Stand back. (And they were angry with him.) And they said ~~again~~ (among themselves), This one ~~fellow~~ (man) came in to sojourn (among us), and he will needs ~~be~~ (now make himself to be) a judge; now we will deal worse with ~~(thee)~~ (him) than with them.
- (Wherefore they said unto the man, We will have the men, and thy daughters also; and we will do with them as seemeth us good.
- Now this was after the wickedness of Sodom.
- 8 And Lot said), Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, (plead with my brethren that I may not) bring them out unto you; and (ye shall not) do ~~ye to~~ (unto) them

as is (seemeth) good in your eyes;

(For God will not justify his servant in this thing; wherefore, let me plead with my brethren, this once) only, (that) unto these men (ye) do nothing, (that they may have peace in my house); for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

9b And they ~~pressed sore upon the man, even~~ (were angry with Lot) and came near to break the door, (The people of Sodom and Gomorrah engaged in grievous sexual sins. But these sins, while severe, were not the only sins for which the cities were destroyed. Ezekiel 16: 49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister ^aSodom, ^bpride, fulness of bread, and abundance of ^cidleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. 50 And they were haughty, and committed ^aabomination before me: therefore I took them ^baway ^cas I saw good.)

10 But the (angels of God, which were holy) men, put forth their hand and pulled Lot into the house (un)to them, and shut ~~to~~ the door.

11 And they smote the men ~~that were at the door of the house~~ with ^ablindness, both small and great(, that they could not come at the door. And they were angry,) so that they wearied themselves to find the door(, and could not find it).

12 ¶ And ~~at the~~ (these holy) men said unto Lot, Hast thou ~~here~~ any (here) besides? (thy) son(s) in law, and thy (son's) sons, and thy daughters(? And they commanded Lot, saying,) ~~and~~ whatsoever thou hast in the city, (thou shalt) ^bbring ~~them~~ out of this place:(,)

13 For we will destroy this place, because the ^acry of them is waxen great(, and their abominations have come up) before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it. (In the Genesis account it is clear that the people of these two cities had become extremely immoral, engaging in homosexuality and other abuses. But the prophet Ezekiel gave greater insight when he said, "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good." (Ezekiel 16:49–50.) James said that pure religion was to "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep [oneself] unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). Sodom and Gomorrah not only had partaken of the filthiness of sexual immorality but had rejected their fellow men in need.)

14 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, ^aget you ^bout of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that ^cmocked unto his sons in law.

15 ¶ And when the morning ~~arose~~ (came), ~~then~~ the ^aangels hastened ^bLot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

16 And while he lingered, the ~~men~~ (angels) laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being ^amerciful unto ~~him~~ (them): and they brought ~~him~~ (them) forth, and set ~~him~~ (them down) without the city. (Members of the Church need to influence more than we are influenced. We should work to stem the tide of sin and evil instead of passively being swept along by it. We each need to help solve the problem rather than avoid or ignore it. Elder Russell M. Ballard, CR, Apr 1989, p. 101.)

17 ¶ And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that ~~he~~ (they) said (unto them), Escape for ~~thy life~~ (your lives); ^alook not behind ~~thee~~ (you), neither stay ~~thou~~ (you) in all the plain; escape to the ^bmountain, lest (you) ~~thou~~ be consumed.

18 And Lot said unto (one of) them, Oh, not so, my Lord:(!)

19 Behold now, thy servant ~~hath~~ (has) found ^agrace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil (over)take me, and I die:

20 Behold now, ~~this~~ (here is another) city (and this) is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) (and may the Lord not destroy it,) and my soul shall live.

21 And ~~he~~ (the angel) said unto him, See, I have ^aaccepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not

overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

22 Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing ~~thill~~ (until) thou be come thither. Therefore (And) the name of the city was called ^aZoar. (Little thing)

23 ¶ (Therefore) The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. (And the Lord did not destroy Sodom until Lot had entered into Zoar.)

24 (And) Then(, when Lot had entered into Zoar,) the LORD rained upon ^aSodom and upon ^bGomorrah (; for the angels called upon the name of the Lord for) ^cbrimstone (Heb combustible materials (especially sulphur and pitch)) and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

25 And he (thus they) overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

26 ¶ But (it came to pass, when Lot fled,) his wife ^alooked back from behind him, and she became a ^bpillar of salt. (Jeffrey R. Holland: The account of Lot's wife being turned into a pillar of salt has puzzled many commentators. Was this event a literal thing, or was it figurative? There are two indications in the scriptures that the phrase "looked back" was an idiomatic way of saying "she turned back" or "returned to Sodom." When warning the disciples of the destruction which was going to come upon Jerusalem, the Savior warned them to flee without delay, not even going into the house to get their possessions. Jesus said, "And he that is in the field, let him likewise *not return back*. "Apparently what was wrong with Lot's wife was that she wasn't just looking back; in her heart she wanted to go back. . . . "It is possible that Lot's wife looked back with resentment toward the Lord for what He was asking her to leave behind" ("Remember Lot's Wife" [Brigham Young University devotional address, Jan. 13, 2009], 2; speeches.byu.edu). Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:31–32; emphasis added). He then admonished them that he who seeks to save his life will lose it, and he who loses his life will find it. Elder Bruce R. McConkie paraphrased those verses in these words: "Look not back to Sodom and the wealth and luxury you are leaving. Stay not in the burning house, in the hope of salvaging your treasures, lest the flame destroy you; but flee, flee to the mountains. "Seek temporal things and lose eternal life; sacrifice the things of this life and gain eternal life." (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:645.) The implication is that Lot's wife started back to Sodom, perhaps to save some possessions, and was caught in the destruction. Most scholars agree that the most probable site of Sodom is now covered by the southern part of the Dead Sea, a body of water with a high salt content. If Lot's wife returned to Sodom, she would have been caught in the destruction. Her becoming a pillar of salt could be a figurative way of expressing this outcome. But whatever it was that happened to Lot's wife, it is clear that she perished. Student Manual, Old Testament, p. 76)

27 ¶ And Abraham ~~gat~~ (got) up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:

28 And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and ~~beheld, and,~~ (behold,) lo, the ^asmoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

29 ¶ And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God ~~remembered~~ (spake unto) Abraham (saying, I have remembered Lot), and sent ~~Lot~~ (him) out of the midst of the overthrow, (that thy brother might not be destroyed,) when he (I) overthrew the cities (city) in the which (thy brother) Lot dwelt.

30 (And Abraham was comforted.) And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the ^amountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

31 And the ^afirstborn (dealt wickedly, and) said unto the younger, Our father is (has become) old, and ~~there is~~ (we have) not a man ~~in~~ (on) the earth to come in unto us(, to live with us) after the manner of all (that live on) the earth:

32 (Therefore,) Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

33 And they (did wickedly, and) made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

34 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight

with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

35 ^aAnd they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

36 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

37 And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name ^aMoab: ~~the same is the father of the~~ ^bMoabites (the same which are) unto this day.

38 And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: ~~the same is the father of the children of a~~ Ammon (which are Ammonites; the same which are) unto this day. (The account of the incestuous seduction of Lot by his two daughters is a shocking one but one which, again, illustrates that the Old Testament records the evils of the people as well as their righteousness. There is no way to justify the wickedness of what the two daughters did, although it may be better understood when it is considered that the daughters may have thought that the whole world had been destroyed in the holocaust that befell Sodom and Gomorrah and that Lot was the only source of children left to them. Moses may have included this account in the record because it shows the beginnings of the Moabites and the Ammonites, two peoples that would play an important role in the history of the people of Israel. Student Manual, Old Testament, p. 76)

(This story is also a video) Bishop Gary E. Stevenson of the Presiding Bishopric (Now of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles): “Some years ago, John was accepted at a prestigious Japanese university. . . . “Soon after John’s arrival, word of a party to be held on the rooftop of a private residence spread among the foreign student population. That evening, John and two friends made their way to the advertised address. “Following an elevator ride to the top floor of the building, John and his friends . . . began mingling with the others. As the night wore on, the atmosphere changed. The noise, music volume, and alcohol amplified, as did John’s uneasiness. Then suddenly someone began organizing the students into a large circle with the intent of sharing marijuana cigarettes. John grimaced and quickly informed his two friends that it was time to leave. Almost in ridicule, one of them replied, ‘John, this is easy—we’ll just stand in the circle, and when it is our turn, we’ll just pass it along rather than smoke it. That way we won’t have to embarrass ourselves in front of everyone by leaving.’ This sounded easy to John, but it did not sound right. He knew he had to announce his intention and act. In a moment he mustered his courage and told them that they could do as they wished, but he was leaving. One friend decided to stay and joined the circle; the other reluctantly followed John down the stairs to board the elevator. Much to their surprise, when the elevator doors opened, Japanese police officers poured out and hurried to ascend the stairs to the rooftop. John and his friend boarded the elevator and departed. “When the police appeared at the top of the stairs, the students quickly threw the illegal drugs off the roof so they wouldn’t be caught. After securing the stairway, however, the officers lined up everyone on the roof and asked each student to extend both hands. The officers then walked down the line, carefully smelling each student’s thumbs and index fingers. All who had held the marijuana, whether they had smoked it or not, were presumed guilty, and there were huge consequences. Almost without exception, the students who had remained on the rooftop were expelled from their respective universities. . . . “. . . As for John, the consequences in his life have been immeasurable. His time in Japan that year led him to a happy marriage and the subsequent birth of two sons. He has been a very successful businessman and recently became a professor at a Japanese university. Imagine how different his life would have been had he not had the courage to leave the party on that important evening in Japan. . . . “. . . There will be times when you, like John, will have to demonstrate your righteous courage in plain view of your peers, the consequence of which may be ridicule and embarrassment. . . . Be courageous! Be strong!” (“Be Valiant in Courage, Strength, and Activity,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2012, 51–52).

Genesis 20-21

OVERVIEW:

(Whether from a dislike to a neighborhood so lately visited by such judgments, or in quest of better pasturage for his flocks, Abraham left the district of Mamre, and traveled in a south-easterly direction, where he settled in the territory of Abimelech, king of Gerar, in the land of the Philistines. Abimelech seems to have been a royal title, like that of Pharaoh. (Comp. Genesis 26:1, 8) But in this instance, as we gather from Scripture, the possessor of this title was far different from the king of Egypt. In fact, he appears to have been not merely true and upright in character, but to have feared the Lord. Accordingly, when Abraham was once more guilty of the same dissimulation as formerly in Egypt, passing off his wife for his sister from fear for his own life, God directly communicated to Abimelech in a dream the real state of matters. Upon this, Abimelech hastened to amend the wrong he had, unwittingly, so nearly committed. In comparison to the Gentile king, Abraham occupies indeed an unfavorable position. He is unable to vindicate his conduct on other grounds than what amounts to a want of faith. But, as God had informed Abimelech, Abraham, despite his weakness, was "a prophet;" and in that capacity, as already quoted, "He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, He reprov'd kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." Edersheim, OT, Vol 1, Ch 13)

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED GENESIS CHAPTER 20

Abimelech desires Sarah, who is preserved by the Lord—Abraham prays for Abimelech, and the Lord blesses him and his household.

1 AND Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and ^aShur, and sojourned in ^bGerar.

2 And Abraham said (again) of Sarah his wife, She *is* my sister: and ^aAbimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.

3 But ^aGod came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said (un)to him, Behold, thou ~~art but a dead man, for the woman which thou~~ hast taken (a woman which is not thine own); for she *is* a man's (Abraham's) wife. (And the Lord said unto him, Thou shalt return her unto Abraham, for if thou do it not thou shalt die.)

4 ~~But~~ (And) Abimelech had not come near her: (for the Lord had not suffered him.) and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay (me, and) also ^aa righteous nation? (or an innocent nation.)

5 (Behold) Said he not unto me, She *is* my ^asister? and she, even she herself said, He *is* my ^bbrother: in the ^cintegrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. (Elder Boyd K. Packer: "No member of this Church—and that means each of you—will ever make a serious mistake without first being warned by the promptings of the Holy Ghost. "Sometimes when you have made a mistake, you may have said afterward, 'I knew I should not have done that. It did not feel right,' or perhaps, 'I knew I should have done that. I just did not have the courage to act!' Those impressions are the Holy Ghost attempting to direct you toward good or warning you away from harm" ("How to Survive in Enemy Territory," New Era, Apr. 2012, 3).)

6 And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst (do) this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I (not) thee ~~not~~ to touch her.

7 Now therefore restore the man ~~(‘s)~~ ~~his~~ wife (to him); for he *is* a prophet, and he shall ^apray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore *her* not (to him), know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine.

8 Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid.

9 Then ^aAbimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou ^bdone unto us? And (in) what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast ^cdone deeds unto me that ought not to be done.

10 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

11 And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely ~~(assuredly)~~ the ^afear of God ~~is~~ ~~(was)~~ not in this place; and they ~~will~~ ~~(would)~~ slay me for my wife’s sake.

12 And yet indeed ~~she is~~ ~~(was)~~ my ^asister; she ~~is~~ ~~(was)~~ the daughter of my father, (At the death of Sarah’s father, Abraham’s father took her into his house and adopted her. She then became Abraham’s sister.) but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to ^awander from my father’s house, that I said unto her, This ~~is~~ ~~(shall be)~~ thy ^bkindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He *is* my brother.

14 And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and men servants, and women servants, and gave ~~them~~ unto Abraham, and restored (unto) him Sarah his wife.

15 And Abimelech said, Behold, my ^aland ~~is~~ ~~(lieth)~~ before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee.

16 And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy ^abrother a thousand *pieces* of silver: behold, he ~~is to~~ ~~(shall give unto)~~ thee a covering of the eyes, ~~unto all that are with thee, and with all other:~~ (and it shall be a token unto all that thou mayest not be taken again from Abraham thy husband. And) thus she was reproved.

17 ¶ So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid servants; and they bare (unto him) *children*.

18 For (because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife,) the LORD had fast ^aclosed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, ~~because of Sarah Abraham’s wife.~~

(The idea that Abraham, the great man of righteousness, deceived Pharaoh in order to protect his own life has troubled many students of the Old Testament. That his life was in danger because of Sarah’s beauty seems quite clear. It seems peculiar, but whereas the Egyptian pharaohs had a strong aversion to committing adultery with another man’s wife, they had no qualms about murdering the man to free his spouse for remarriage. **“To kill the husband in order to possess himself of his wife seems to have been a common royal custom in those days.** A papyrus tells of a Pharaoh who, acting on the advice of one of his princes, sent armed men to fetch a beautiful woman and make away with her husband. Another Pharaoh is promised by his priest on his tombstone, that even after death he will kill Palestinian sheiks and include their wives in his harem.” (Kasher, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation*, 2:128.) Abraham could validly state that Sarah was his sister. **In the Bible the Hebrew words *brother* and *sister* are often used for other blood relatives.** (See Genesis 14:14, in which Lot, Abraham’s nephew, is called “his brother.”) **Because Abraham and Haran, Sarah’s father, were brothers, Sarah was Abraham’s niece and thus could be called *sister*.** The accompanying pedigree chart shows this relationship. Another ancient custom that might shed light on the relationship permitted a woman to be adopted as a man’s sister upon their marriage to give her greater legal and social status (see *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. “Sarah,” 14:866). **Even though Abraham was correct in calling her his sister, he did deceive the Egyptians. How can this action be justified? The answer is very simple. His action was justified because God told him to do it (see Abraham 2:22–25). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught the following: “That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another. “God said, ‘Thou shalt not kill;’ at another time He said, ‘Thou shalt utterly**

destroy.’ This is the principle on which the government of heaven is conducted—by revelation adapted to the circumstances in which the children of the kingdom are placed. Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire.” (*Teachings*, p. 256.) Since God is perfect and does not do anything that is not right (see Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Samuel 15:29; Alma 7:20; D&C 3:2), Abraham’s act was not wrong.)

CHAPTER 21

Sarah bears Isaac—He is circumcised—Promises to Abraham preserved through Isaac—Hagar and her son cast out of Abraham’s household—The Lord saves Hagar and Ishmael—Abraham and Abimelech deal honorably with each other.

1 AND the LORD ^avisited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto ^bSarah as he had spoken (by the mouth of his angels).

2 For Sarah conceived, and bare (bear) Abraham a ^ason in his ^bold age, at the set ^ctime of which (the angels of) God had spoken to him.

3 And Abraham called the name of his ^ason that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare (bear un)to him, **Isaac**. (The name Isaac in Hebrew means “laughter, humor, amusing or delightful. Abraham and Sarah were delighted. According to the aggadah (Aggadah (Aramaic אגדה: tales, lore; pl. Aggadot) refers to the homiletic and non-legalistic exegetical texts in classical rabbinic literature - particularly as recorded in the Talmud and Midrash. Other terms for this body of teachings are Aggadata (אגדות) lit. “the” aggada, and the Hebrew Haggadah (הגדה; pl. Haggadot). In general, the aggadot are presented as folklore, historical anecdotes, moral exhortations, and business and medical advice, and often refer to mythical creatures, and incredible historical events. Wikipedia), **Isaac was born to Sarah on the first day of Passover. Encyclopedia Judaica Jr. According to revelation, the Savior was born on the same day as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized – April 6, 1830. Using the biblical and Jewish calendar, that day was the first day of the Passover that year. That means that the Son of God was born to Mary on the first day of Passover. Old Testament Supplemental Study Material, p. 17)**

4 And Abraham ^acircumcised his son Isaac(, he) being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

5 And Abraham was an ^ahundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

6 ¶ And Sarah said, God hath (has) made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh (rejoice; and also all that know me will rejoice) with me. (The Heb root tzachak means both to laugh and to rejoice; thus there is double meaning implied in its use here)

7 And she said (unto Abraham), Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? For I (was barren, but the Lord promised and I) have born(e) him (unto Abraham) a son in his ^aold age.

8 And the child grew, and was weaned:(.) And Abraham made a great feast the same (the) day that Isaac was weaned (Isaac would have been somewhere between 1 year old and 3 years old. Ishmael was probably between 15 and 17 years old.) (, Abraham made a great feast).

9 ¶ And Sarah saw the son of ^aHagar the Egyptian, which she (Hagar) had ^bborn(e) unto Abraham, ^cmocking(; and she was troubled).

10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, ^aCast out this bond(-)woman and her son: for the son of this bond(-)woman shall not be ^bheir with my son, even with Isaac. (This is the second time that Sarah casts out Hagar. The first time she was pregnant with Ishmael. Now he is about 15 to 17 years old.)

11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham’s sight (unto Abraham) because of his ^ason.

12 ¶ And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bond(-)woman; in all that Sarah hath (has) said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in ^aIsaac shall thy ^bseed be called. (Isaac has the birthright and the covenant will go through him. Abraham is asked to

have faith that Ishmael will be protected.)

13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a ^anation, because he *is* thy seed.

14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, ~~putting it on her shoulder~~, and **(she took)** the child, and **(he)** ^asent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of ^bBeer-sheba. (At last the time had come when the great promise to Abraham should receive its fulfillment. The patriarch was in his hundredth and Sarah in her ninetieth year when Isaac was born to them. Manifestly, it had been the Divine purpose to protract as long as possible the period before that event; partly to exercise and mature Abraham's faith, and partly that it should appear the more clearly that the gift of the heir to the promises was, in a manner, supernatural. As we have seen, the very name of their child was intended to perpetuate this fact; and now Sarah also, in the joyousness of her heart, said, "God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me," - literally, "Laughter has God prepared for me; every one that heareth it will (joyously) laugh with me." Thus, as Abraham's laughter had been that of faith in its surprise, so the laughter of Sarah was now in contrast to that of her former weakness of trust, one of faith in its gratitude. But there might be yet a third kind of laughter, - neither of faith, nor even of unbelief, but of disbelief: the laughter of mockery, and it also would receive its due recompense. According to God's direction (Genesis 17:12), Abraham had circumcised Isaac on the eighth day. When the period for weaning him arrived, the patriarch made, after the manner of those times, a great feast. We can scarcely say what the age of the child was, - whether one year, or, as Josephus implies, three years old. In either case, Ishmael must have been a lad, springing into manhood - at least fifteen, and possibly seventeen years of age. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking," - literally, "that he was a mocker." As a German writer observes: "Isaac, the object of holy laughter, serves as the target of his unholy wit and profane banter. He does not laugh; he makes merry. 'What! this small, helpless Isaac, the father of nations!' Unbelief, envy, and pride in his own carnal pre-eminence, - such were the reasons of his conduct. Because he does not understand, 'Is anything too hard for Jehovah?' therefore he finds it laughable to connect such great issues with so small a beginning." It was evidently in this light that the apostle viewed it, when describing the conduct of Ishmael in these words. "As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit." (Galatians 4:29) On this ground, and not from jealousy, Sarah demanded that the bondwoman and her son should be "cast out." But Abraham, who seems to have misunderstood her motives, was reluctant to comply, from feelings of paternal affection quite natural in the case, till God expressly directed him to the same effect. **The expulsion of Ishmael was necessary, not only from his unfitness, and in order to keep the heir of the promise unmixed with others, but also for the sake of Abraham himself, whose faith must be trained to renounce, in obedience to the Divine call, everything, - even his natural paternal affection. And in His tender mercy God once more made the trial easier, by bestowing the special promise that Ishmael should become "a nation."** Therefore, although Hagar and her son were literally cast forth, with only the barest necessities for the journey - water and bread, - this was intended chiefly in trial of Abraham's faith, and their poverty was only temporary. For, soon afterwards we read in Scripture, that, before his death, Abraham had enriched his sons (by Hagar and Keturah) with "gifts;" (Genesis 25:6) and at his burying Ishmael appears, as an acknowledged son, by the side of Isaac, to perform the last rites of love to their father. (Genesis 25:9) Alfred Edersheim, Bible History, Old Testament, Chapter 14.)

15 And **(it came to pass that)** the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

16 And she went, and sat her down over against ~~him~~ **(the child)** a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against ~~him~~ **(the child)**, and lift**(ed)** up her voice, and wept. **(At the moment of great alarm, the last possible minute has come, then God rescues)**

17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the ^aangel of God **(the Lord)** called to Hagar out of heaven,

and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is: (lieth.)

18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make (of) him a great ^anation. **(This promise of God has been abundantly fulfilled. The lad dwelt in that wide district between Palestine and Mount Horeb, called "the wilderness of Paran," which to this day is the undisputed dominion of his descendants, the Bedouin Arabs.** Alfred Edersheim, Bible History, Old Testament, Chapter 14.)

19 And God ^aopened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an ^aarcher.

21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: (he) and his mother (And he) took him a ^awife out of the land of ^bEgypt.

22 ¶ And it came to pass at that time, that ^aAbimelech (Abimelech seems to have been a royal title, like that of Pharaoh. Edersheim, OT, 1, Ch 14) and ^bPhicol (Phicol) the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, ^cGod is with thee in all that thou doest: (.)

23 Now therefore swear (, swear) unto me here (, that,) by (the help of) God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but (that) according to the kindness that I have done (shown) unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned.

24 And Abraham said, I will swear.

25 And Abraham ^areproved Abimelech (,) because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants ^bhad violently taken away.

26 And Abimelech said, (Thou didst not tell me; and) I wot (know) not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet (have I) heard of it, but to (that it was done until this) day.

27 And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them ^amade a covenant.

28 And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

29 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean (wilt thou do with) these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

30 And he said, For these Seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this ^awell.

31 (And because they swore, both of them,) Wherefore he called that place ^aBeer-sheba; because there they swore both of them. (The well of the oath, or well of seven)

32 Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: (.) ^aThen Abimelech rose up, and Phicol the chief captain of his host (s, rose up, and they planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the Lord;) and they returned into the land of the Philistines.

33 ¶ And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, (worshipped) the ^ceverlasting God,

34 And Abraham sojourned in the (land of the) ^aPhilistines' land many days

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED GENESIS CHAPTER 22

*Abraham commanded to sacrifice Isaac, his son—Both father and son yield to the will of God—
Abraham's seed shall be as the stars and the sand in number—In his seed all nations shall be blessed—
Rebekah is born to Bethuel.*

1 AND it came to pass after these things, that God did attempt (try) (Heb test, or prove) Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he (Abraham) said, Behold, here I am.

2 And he (the Lord) said, ^aTake now thy son, thine ^bonly son—Isaac, whom thou ^clovest, and get thee into the land of ^dMoriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering **(The Lord told Abraham to take Isaac up on Mount Moriah and sacrifice him. Abraham believed God and knew that if he did offer the sacrifice that God would raise Isaac from the dead. (Hebrews 11:17-19), so that in Isaac his seed would flourish according to the promises. Bruce R. McConkie, Studies in Scripture, 3:57. The Hebrew term for sacrifice, korban, is from a root meaning to draw near, and originally denoted that which was brought near, or offered, to God. It is also possible that the term signified that which brings man near to God, and indeed, a late aggadic source interprets sacrifice in this sense. Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.) upon one of the mountains (of) which I will tell thee of. (The place where Abraham was commanded to sacrifice Isaac was Mount Moriah. In Hebrew, moreh refers to teacher and yah is the shortened version of the sacred name of the Lord, Jehovah. The sacrifice of Isaac was an example of being taught of the Lord. It was part of the profound teaching moment about the Lord, the firstborn son, the Lamb of God, who would be offered on the same mount. In ancient times, sacrifices always took place at the north end of the altar. Leviticus 1:11. The place of crucifixion was at the north end of Mount Moriah, north of the altar. Additional symbolism can be found by comparing the rabbinic tradition that Isaac was in his early thirties when Abraham brought him to Mount Moriah. Jesus was sacrificed on the even of his thirty-fourth birthday (the first day of Passover that year.) Old Testament Supplemental Study Materials, p. 18. We have absolutely no data to determine the exact age of Isaac at the time; but the computation of Josephus, that he was twenty-five years old, makes him more advanced than the language of the Scripture narrative seems to convey to our minds. Alfred Edersheim, Bible History, Old Testament, Chapter 14.)**

3 ¶ And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the ^awood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. **(Notice that Abraham did not waste any time in obeying the Lord. “Until willingness overflows obligation, men fight as conscripts rather than following the flag as patriots. Duty is never worthily performed until it is performed by one who would gladly do more if only he could. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Thomas S. Monson, Be Your Best Self, p. 59)**

4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye (you) here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and ^aworship, and come again to you (again).

6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and ^alaid it upon Isaac his son (his back); **(Symbolic of Jesus carrying his cross to place of sacrifice.)** and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and Isaac his son; and they went both of them together.

7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: **(!)** And he said, ^aHere am I, my son (or yes 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 ^alamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

9 And they came to the place (of) which God had told him of; And Abraham built an altar there, and ^alaid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the ^baltar upon the wood. **(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. 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. CR, Oct. 1992, p. 51. Upon Isaac, also, the event had a most important bearing. For when he resisted not his father, and allowed himself to be bound and laid on the altar, he entered into the spirit of Abraham, he took upon himself his faith, and thus showed himself truly the heir to the promises. Edersheim, Ch 14)**

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. **(Isaac could have easily overpowered his father, but he willingly submitted to his father will. The Savior had power at anytime to**

stop the torture of the Atonement, but He willingly submitted to His father's will.)

11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham;(!) Abraham;(!) and he (And Abraham) said, Here am I.

12 And he (the angel) said, ^aLay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou ^bfearest God, seeing thou hast not ^cwithheld thy son, thine only ~~son~~ (Isaac) from me.

(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.** CR, Oct, 1992, p. 51.)

13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him (a thicket, there was) a ram caught in a thicket (it) by his horns:(.) And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. (A Lamb has been sacrificed in our places, the Lamb of God.)

14 And Abraham called the name of that place ^aJehovah-jireh: (ie The Lord will see or provide) as it is said (un)to this day, ^bIn the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. (or in a mount the Lord shall be manifest (seen)) (Neal A. Maxwell: "The submission of one's will is really the only uniquely personal thing we have to place on God's altar. The many other things we 'give,' brothers and sisters, are actually the things He has already given or loaned to us. However, when you and I finally submit ourselves, by letting our individual wills be swallowed up in God's will, then we are really giving something to Him!" ("Swallowed Up in the Will of the Father," Ensign, Nov. 1995, 24). Elder Melvin J. Ballard: "In that hour I think I can see our dear Father behind the veil looking upon these dying struggles. . . . 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. . . . 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 [Only Begotten] and give Him finally to us, our Saviour and our Redeemer. Without Him, without His sacrifice, . . . we would never have come glorified into His presence. . . . This is what it cost, in part, for our Father in heaven to give the gift of His Son unto men" (in Crusader for Righteousness [1966], 137).)

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

16 And said, (Thus saith the Lord, I have sworn) By myself have I asworn, saith the LORD, for (that) because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only ~~son~~: (Isaac from me;)

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy ^aseed as the stars of the heaven, and as the ^bsand which is upon the sea(-)shore; and thy seed shall possess the ^cgate of his enemies;

18 And in thy ^aseed shall all the nations of the earth be ^bblessed; because thou hast ^cobeyed my voice. (God came to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob and he said to each of them in turn that in them and in their seed all generations should be blessed. And lo and behold, he said the same thing to Joseph Smith in modern times; he said exactly what he said to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The grandeur and the wonder of it is almost beyond belief! Can we think of anything better? Joseph Smith was being told that he was going to receive the kind of blessings that Abraham received. Then the account said that Elijah, the prophet who was taken to heaven without tasting death, came down; and he, of course, as indicated, restored the sealing power. (D&C 110:12-16) ... **Everything comes on the basis of personal righteousness; everyone in the Church who has been married in the temple has received exactly the same promise that God gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Everyone who is married in the temple and who keeps the covenant has the assurance that he or she will have eternal increase, that his posterity will be like the dust of the earth and the stars of heaven in number.** Bruce R. McConkie, Studies in Scripture, 3:60)

19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba. (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." 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” when he referred to this event. (Hebrews 11:17) The site known traditionally as the place where Abraham offered Isaac is not 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. The JST, however, reads, “laid it upon his back.” Some have seen in this action a similarity to Christ’s carrying of the cross upon his shoulders on the way to his crucifixion. 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 very likely 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. 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 would have been in his thirties, as was the Savior at the time of his crucifixion. Nevertheless, the 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.” 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 fullness 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. Old Testament Student Manual, p. 77-78)

20 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, ^aMilcah, she hath also born(e) children unto thy brother Nahor;

21 Huz (is) his firstborn, and Buz (is) his brother, and Kemuel (is) the father of Aram,

22 And Chesed, and Haze(a), and P(B)ildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

23 And ^aBethuel begat ^bRebekah:(.) (This is the Rebekah who marries Isaac.) These eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham’s ^cbrother.

24 And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

(After the offering up of Isaac, Abraham lived many years; yet scarcely any event worth record in Scripture occurred during their course. The first thing we afterwards read is the death of Sarah, at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven. She is the only woman whose age is recorded in Scripture, the distinction being probably due to her position towards believers, as stated in 1 Peter 3:6. Isaac was at the time thirty-seven years old, and Abraham once more resident in Hebron. The account of Abraham's purchase of a burying-place from "the children of Heth" is exceedingly pictorial. It also strikingly exhibits alike Abraham's position in the land as a stranger and a pilgrim, and yet his faith in his future

possession thereof. The treaty for the field and cave of Machpelah (either "the double" cave, or else "the separated place," or "the undulating spot"), which Abraham wished to purchase for "a burying-place," was carried on in public assembly, "at the gate of the city," as the common Eastern fashion is. The patriarch expressly acknowledged himself "a stranger and a sojourner" among "the children of Heth," and the sacred text emphatically repeats again and again how "Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land." On the other hand, they carry on their negotiations in the true Eastern fashion, first offering any of their own sepulchers, since Abraham was confessedly among them "a prince of God" (rendered in our version "a mighty prince"), then refusing any payment for Machpelah, but finishing up by asking its fullest value, in this true oriental manner: "My lord, hearken unto me: the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver (about fifty guineas or about \$7,000 today); what is that betwixt me and thee?" In contrast, **Abraham truly stands out prince-like in his courtesy and in his dealings.** And so the field and cave were secured to him - a "burying-place," Abraham's only "possession" in a land that was to be his for ever! But even in this purchase of a permanent family burying-place, Abraham showed his faith in the promise; just as, many centuries later, the prophet Jeremiah showed his confidence in the promised return of Judah from Babylon, by purchasing a field in Anathoth. (Jeremiah 32:7, 8) **In this cave of Machpelah lie treasured the remains of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebekah, of Leah also, and the embalmed bodies of Jacob and perhaps Joseph.** No other spot in the Holy Land holds so much precious dust as this; and it is, among all the so-called "holy places," the only one which to this day can be pointed out with perfect certainty. (Their bodies have been resurrected when Jesus was resurrected and are exalted.) Since the Moslem rule, it has not been accessible to either Christian or Jew. **The site over the cave itself is covered by a Mahomedan sanctuary, which stands enclosed within a quadrangular building, two hundred feet long, one hundred and fifteen wide, and fifty or sixty high, the walls of which are divided by pilasters, about five feet apart, and two and a half feet wide. This building, with its immense stones, one of which is no less than thirty-eight feet long, must date from the time of David or of Solomon.** The mosque within it was probably anciently a church; and in the cave below its floor are the patriarchal sepulchers. Edershiem, Vol 1, Ch 14)**

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED
GENESIS
 CHAPTER 23

Sarah dies and is buried in the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham buys from Ephron the Hittite.

1 AND Sarah was an hundred and ~~seven and~~ twenty(-seven) years old: ~~these were~~ (and she died: and thus ended) the years of the life of Sarah. (Sarah is the only female in the scriptures whose age at death is given.)

2 And Sarah ^adied in Kirjath-arba; the same is (now called) ^bHebron(,) in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her(, his wife which was dead). (It is often noted that Abraham is the father of the faithful and a tremendous example of faith and righteousness. Yet Sarah stood by his side throughout his life, not often in the limelight, but always as a great example of womanhood, faith, and righteousness. The Doctrine and Covenants speaks of the righteous as being the seed of Abraham (see D&C 84:34), but Peter also suggested that righteous women can be called the daughters of Sarah (see 1 Peter 3:1-6, especially v. 6). Institute Manual, 79)

3 ¶ And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying,

4 I am ^aa stranger (ie resident alien) and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a buryingplace with you, that I may bury my ^bdead out of my sight.

5 And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him,

6 Hear us, my lord: thou *art* ^aa mighty prince (Heb a prince of God) among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury (thou) thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.

7 And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, *even* to the children of Heth. (This is a meeting held in a public place to have witnesses of the transaction.)

8 And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and intreat ~~for me to~~ Ephron the son of Zohar (for me),

9 That he may give me the cave of ^aMachpelah, which he hath, ~~which is~~ in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall (have, if he will) give it me for a possession of a buryingplace amongst you.

10 And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, ~~even of~~ (among) all (of them) that went in at the ^agate(s) of his (the) city, saying,

11 Nay (Hearken), my lord, (and) hear me: the field give I (give) thee, and the cave that *is* therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people(; and) give I (give) it thee: (therefore,) bury thy dead.

12 And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.

13 And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, ~~But if thou wilt give it,~~ I pray thee, hear me: (If thou wilt take it of me,) I will give thee money for the field; ~~take it of me,~~ and I will bury my dead there(, but I will give thee money for it). (This land was all going to be Abraham's. He didn't need to buy he could have taken it, but he is humble and will pay for it.)

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him,

15 My lord, hearken unto me: the land ~~is worth~~ (thou shalt have for) four hundred ^ashekels of silver; what ~~is~~ (shall) that (be) betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead.

16 And Abraham hearkened unto ^aEphron; and Abraham ^bweighed (un)to ^cEphron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, (which was the) current ~~money~~ with the merchant.

17 ¶ And the field of ^aEphron, which *was* in Machpelah, which *was* before Mamre, the field, and the cave which *was* therein, and all the trees that *were* in the field, (and) that *were* in all the borders round about, were made sure

18 Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his (the) city.

19 And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah (which is) before Mamre: the same *is* (called) ^aHebron(.) in the land of Canaan.

20 And the field, and the cave that ~~is~~ (was) therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a buryingplace by the sons of Heth