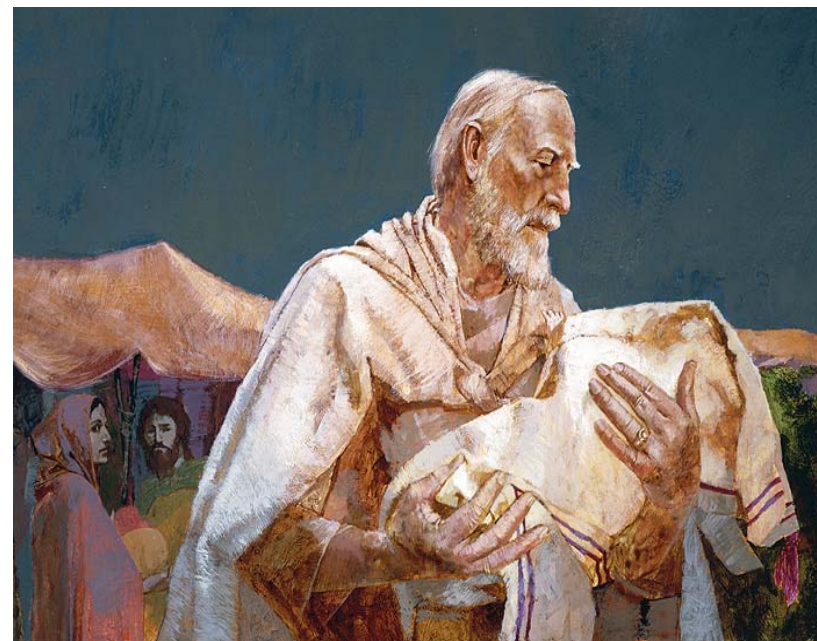


# Lesson 7 - The Abrahamic Covenant

**Purpose:** To help understand the blessings and responsibilities of the Abrahamic covenant.



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

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

## **Last Week's Lesson Challenge**

Last week's Lesson Challenge was:

What steps can we take in our lives to have faith more like Noah? Look for the instances in your life where the Lord, the scriptures or his living prophets ask you live by faith without a test on our part.

Would anyone wish to share instances in their lives where you discovered the need to solely act by faith without the need for some type of reward?

**Today's lesson begins a four part series where we will discuss the Gospel as portrayed through Abraham's faith in Jehovah.**

### **Lesson 7 - The Abrahamic Covenant**

Purpose - To help class members understand the blessings and responsibilities of the Abrahamic covenant.

### **Lesson 8 - Living Righteously in a Wicked World**

Purpose - To strengthen our resolve to hold fast to righteous standards during times of increasing wickedness.

### **Lesson 9 - "God Will Provide Himself a Lamb"**

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

### **Lesson 10 - Birthright Blessings; Marriage in the Covenant**

Purpose - To strengthen our desires to live worthy of their birthright blessings and of eternal marriage.

## **What Do We Know About Abraham's Life (Page 1 of 2)**

- While living in Ur, Abraham sought the blessings of the priesthood and desired to be a greater follower of righteousness. However, his fathers had turned from righteousness to the worship of false gods. Wicked priests attempted to sacrifice Abraham to their false gods, but Jehovah (Jesus Christ) miraculously delivered him. After recounting the story of his deliverance, Abraham explained the origins of the ancient government of Egypt. He also explained that he had been entrusted by the Lord to preserve the sacred records of the righteous. The following is a scripture based chronology of Abraham's life.

Migrated to Haran, where Terah died, Gen. 11:31–32 (Abr. 2:1–5).

Was called by God to journey to Canaan and to receive a divine covenant, Gen. 12:1–8 (Abr. 2:4, 15–17).

Journeyed to Egypt, Gen. 12:9–20 (Abr. 2:21–25).

Settled in Hebron, Gen. 13:18.

Rescued Lot, Gen. 14:1–16.

Met with Melchizedek, Gen. 14:18–20.

Hagar bore his son Ishmael, Gen. 16:15–16.

His name was changed to Abraham, Gen. 17:5.

The Lord told Abraham and Sarah that they would have a son, Gen. 17:15–22; 18:1–14.

## **What Do We Know About Abraham's Life (Page 2 of 2)**

Sarah bore his son Isaac, Gen. 21:2–3.

Was commanded to sacrifice Isaac, Gen. 22:1–18.

Sarah died and was buried, Gen. 23:1–2, 19.

Abraham died and was buried, Gen. 25:8–10.

Abraham's willingness to offer Isaac was a similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son, Jacob 4:5.

Paid tithes to Melchizedek, Alma 13:15.

Foresaw and testified of Christ's coming, Hel. 8:16–17.

Received the priesthood from Melchizedek, D&C 84:14.

The faithful become the seed of Abraham, D&C 84:33–34 (Gal. 3:27–29).

Received all things by revelation and has received his exaltation, D&C 132:29.

Sought for the blessings of the fathers and for appointment unto the priesthood, Abr. 1:1–4.

Was persecuted by false priests of Chaldea, Abr. 1:5–15.

Was saved by the Lord, Abr. 1:16–20.

Learned about the sun, moon, and stars, Abr. 3:1–14.

Learned about pre-earth life and the Creation, Abr. 3:22–28.

*<https://www.lds.org/scriptures/gs/abraham?lang=eng>*

## What is the Abrahamic Covenant?

Abraham made covenants with God when he received the gospel, when he was ordained a high priest, and when he entered into celestial marriage. In these covenants, God promised great blessings to Abraham and his family. These blessings, which extend to all of Abraham's seed, are called the Abrahamic covenant.

Among the promises made to Abraham were the following:

- His posterity would be numerous (see Genesis 17:5-6; Abraham 2:9; 3:14).
- His seed, or descendants, would receive the gospel and bear the priesthood (see Abraham 2:9).
- Through the ministry of his seed, "all the families of the earth [would] be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal" (Abraham 2:11).

We can receive all the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant—even if he or she is not a literal descendant of Abraham—by obeying the laws and ordinances of the gospel (see Galatians 3:26-29; 4:1-7; D&C 84:33-40).

*<https://www.lds.org/topics/abrahamic-covenant?lang=eng>*

President Dallin H. Oaks said the following:

The Bible tells us how God made a covenant with Abraham and promised him that through him all "families" or "nations" of the earth would be blessed. What we call the Abrahamic covenant opens the door for God's choicest blessings to all of His children everywhere. The Bible teaches that "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:29)

The Book of Mormon promises that all who receive and act upon the Lord's invitation to "repent and believe in his Son" become "the covenant people of the Lord." (2 Nephi 30:2) This is a potent reminder that neither riches nor lineage nor any other privileges of birth should cause us to believe that we are "better one than another." Indeed, the Book of Mormon commands, "Ye shall not esteem one flesh above another, or one man shall not think himself above another."

*General Conference Address, April 2006*

It is often said “We (the Latter-day Saints) are a covenant making people”. President Russell M. Nelson said the following about covenants:

One of the most important concepts of revealed religion is that of a sacred covenant. In legal language, a covenant generally denotes an agreement between two or more parties. But in a religious context, a covenant is much more significant. It is a sacred promise with God. He fixes the terms. Each person may choose to accept those terms. If one accepts the terms of the covenant and obeys God’s law, he or she receives the blessings associated with the covenant. We know that “when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.” (D&C 130:20-21)

Through the ages, God has made covenants with His children. His covenants occur throughout the entire plan of salvation and are therefore part of the fulness of His gospel. For example, God promised to send a Savior for His children, asking in turn for their obedience to His law.

*General Conference Address, October 2011*



President Russell M. Nelson continued:

In the Bible we read of men and women in the Old World who were identified as children of the covenant. What covenant? “The covenant which God made with [their] fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” (Acts 3:25)

In the Book of Mormon we read of people in the New World who were also identified as children of the covenant. The resurrected Lord so informed them: “Behold, ye are the children of the prophets; and ye are of the house of Israel; and ye are of the covenant which the Father made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham: And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” (3 Nephi 20:25)

*General Conference Address, October 2011*

President Russell M. Nelson continued:

The Savior explained the importance of their identity as children of the covenant. He said, “The Father having raised me up unto you first, ... sent me to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities; and this because ye are the children of the covenant.” (3 Nephi 20:26.)

The covenant God made with Abraham and later reaffirmed with Isaac and Jacob is of transcendent significance. It contained several promises, including:

- Jesus the Christ would be born through Abraham’s lineage.
- Abraham’s posterity would be numerous, entitled to an eternal increase, and also entitled to bear the priesthood.
- Abraham would become a father of many nations.
- Certain lands would be inherited by his posterity.
- All nations of the earth would be blessed by his seed.
- And that covenant would be everlasting—even through “a thousand generations.”

*General Conference Address, October 2011*

## **Jesus the Christ would be born through Abraham's lineage.**

The rights of “the sceptre” or lawgiver were promised to Judah and his descendants. (Gen. 49:9–10.) The greatest king to be born of Abraham's lineage through Judah was Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:1, 17; Luke 1:68–72), “the King of Israel” (John 1:49).

*<https://www.lds.org/ensign/1973/02/the-covenants-and-blessings-of-abraham?lang=eng>*

**Abraham's posterity would be numerous, entitled to an eternal increase, and also entitled to bear the priesthood.**

Abraham received promises concerning “his seed [that] ... both in the world and out of the world should ... continue as innumerable as the stars. ...” (D&C 132:30.)

“... this right [of priesthood] shall continue in thee, and in thy seed (... the literal seed, or the seed of the body)” ... (Abr. 2:11.)

*<https://www.lds.org/ensign/1973/02/the-covenants-and-blessings-of-abraham?lang=eng>*

## **Abraham would become a father of many nations.**

A “multitude,” even “a great nation,” was also promised through Abraham’s son Ishmael, who was born of Hagar. (Gen. 16:10; Gen. 17:20; Gen. 21:13; D&C 132:34.) Abraham’s wife Keturah bore him six sons; of these, Midian and his descendants are particularly mentioned as a numerous people. (Gen. 25:1–4; Ex. 3:1; D&C 84:6.) It is generally accepted that Ishmael’s descendants form a large part of the Arab nation, and the posterity of Midian are also a part. Through Issac, the covenant son, Jacob and Judah, the Hebrews and Jews would become a great nation.

*<https://www.lds.org/ensign/1973/02/the-covenants-and-blessings-of-abraham?lang=eng>*

## **Certain lands would be inherited by his posterity.**

“... a strange land which I will give unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession ...” (Abr. 2:6.)

In blessing his son Joseph, Jacob prophesied of another land for his posterity with the promise that a remnant would never be destroyed (Alma 46:24–25). Joseph’s descendants were led to this land (1 Ne. 2:20), and it stands consecrated to all whom the Lord shall bring (2 Ne. 1:6–7) upon condition that they serve the Lord (Ether 2:12).

Jackson County, Missouri, is designated as the center place of the “land of promise”—the location of the New Jerusalem. (D&C 52:42) Judah will assemble to the lands given to Abraham. (D&C 109:64.) To the faithful, the earth will eventually be their inheritance in its celestial state (D&C 88:18–20).

*<https://www.lds.org/ensign/1973/02/the-covenants-and-blessings-of-abraham?lang=eng>*

## **All nations of the earth would be blessed by his seed.**

The gospel message of the atonement of Jesus Christ is the single most important blessing for all the families of the earth. (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith) The seed of Abraham (Israel) was scattered among the families of the earth (Deut. 4:27), that “the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles ...” (Gal. 3:14) and the nations.

Through the work of the Restoration at the hands of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the promise is being fulfilled wherein Abraham’s seed would be a blessing unto the “kindred of the earth. ...” (D&C 124:58.)

**And that covenant would be everlasting  
—even through “a thousand generations.”**

“And I will bless them through thy name: ... as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed. ...” (Abr. 2:10.)

Acceptance of the gospel brings into an individual’s life the Holy Ghost: and “as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seeds of Abraham, it is calm and serene; and his whole soul and body are only exercised by the pure spirit of intelligence; while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually the seed of Abraham.”  
(Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith)



President Russell M. Nelson concluded:

When we realize that we are children of the covenant, we know who we are and what God expects of us. His law is written in our hearts. He is our God and we are His people. Committed children of the covenant remain steadfast, even in the midst of adversity. When that doctrine is deeply implanted in our hearts, even the sting of death is soothed and our spiritual stamina is strengthened.

The greatest compliment that can be earned here in this life is to be known as a covenant keeper. The rewards for a covenant keeper will be realized both here and hereafter.

Scripture declares that “ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, ... and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven ... [and] dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness.”

*General Conference Address, October 2011*

## **This Week's Lesson Challenge**

Research the obligations associated with covenants that you have made in baptism, partaking the sacrament, the priesthood, in temple service and others and consider whether you have lived up to those covenants to the best of your ability. Also, consider how you have been blessed by the Lord as He has fulfilled his part of covenants.